

Groton Invasive Species Committee Meeting Minutes

18Oct2021

Committee Members Present:

Jonathan Basch
Olin Lathrop
Adam Burnett (remote)
Charlotte Weigel
Ben Wolfe
Brian Bettencourt

Additional attendees

Deb Fountain (remote)
Garden club guests: Lisa Murray and Donna Nowak
Amelia Lee

Agenda:

- 1) Review of minutes from last two meetings
- 2) Action Items review
- 3) Carol Wheeler Park: Report on invasives on site, recent removal efforts, and future plans
- 4) Status of recent and proposed treatments: Eliades, Priest, Carmicheal, Petapawag
- 5) Update from mapping and prioritization subcommittee including pilot project mapping of knotweed on Nashua River
- 6) Keyes-Parker parcel in Pepperell: approaches taken and applicability to Groton efforts
- 7) Japanese Knotweed along Squannacook River MBTA parcels: options
- 8) Open Discussion

The Meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM.

The first order of business was Review of Minutes from the last two meetings.

Olin moved to accept the minutes
Jonathan seconded
Accepted by unanimous vote

The second order of business was Action Items Review:

1. Jonathan Basch to send the meeting minutes as a draft in word and view at the next meeting.
 - complete
2. Olin Lathrop to send email to confirm date/time for treatment of Phragmites in Carmichael swamp
 - See below
3. Brian Bettencourt to draft a letter of support for state legislation for review by the invasive species committee
 - Pending- Jonathan to take the action to draft letter
4. Champney rd alley agenda topic - contact from public and discussion of treatment
 - No action yet
 - Charlotte Weigel: Will the area be disturbed in the middle school renovation?
 - Olin Lathrop: May not be impacted
 - Brian Bettencourt: landscape architect at middle school could be contacted
 - **Action Item for Brian to follow-up with middle school contacts regarding invasive project**
5. Ben Wolfe to check on another potential Ailanthus in town
 - On closer examination is found to be black walnut

The third order of business was Carol Wheeler Park: Report on invasives on site, recent removal efforts, and future plans

- Brian Bettencourt: Little park in West Groton by post office. Was contacted by Groton Garden Club. Strip of land along the river, bittersweet, barberry and buckthorn. No knotweed observed currently at site.
- Lisa Murray: small growth of bittersweet encroaching on garden club area. Also toadflax. Ground was very hard -was difficult to remove. Large bittersweet cut, but not treated.
- Brian Bettencourt: Still worthwhile effort.
- Lisa Murray: treated the part on Townsend rd not the part adjacent to the river
- Brian Bettencourt: Couple of issues 1) Parks department land managed by the garden club. Donna Main at Parks department 2) For committee to treat we need to prioritize and file an RDA since within 100 feet of wetland
- Brian Bettencourt: If using consumer strength round-up can it be used on public land?
- Olin Lathrop: Need a license since it is public land. Could treat if we have a RDA
- Olin Lathrop: Not a waste of time to cut Bittersweet
- Brian Bettencourt: New shoots will come up in the spring
- Olin Lathrop: Can treat then
- Brian Bettencourt: Does anyone know about yellow Toadflax?
- Olin Lathrop: Is it on the MIPAG list?
- Olin Lathrop: You have agreement from the Parks for treatment?
- **Action item: Committee members to visit and survey and add to list of sites for prioritization**

- Olin Lathrop: How far does the park extend?
- Lisa Murray: extends to the Cannery
- Deb Fountain: Yellow Toadflax not currently listed as invasive
- Brian Bettencourt: [Displaying site on Town map]
- Olin Lathrop: Would be a good site to get volunteers
- Lisa Murray: Could be a neighborhood project
- Lisa Murray: What are the next steps?
- Brian Bettencourt: Recapped the Committee process of ranking the site and get an RDA
- Olin Lathrop: Recommend getting permission from Parks and Conservation Commission
- **Action item Olin Lathrop to file RDA for treatment of site**
- **Action item: Brian Bettencourt to coordinate follow up with Donna Main to communicate to Parks**

The fourth order of business was Status of recent and proposed treatments: Eliades, Priest, Carmichael, Petapawag

- Eliades -end of September treated Phragmites – no one has been back to check
- Priest – treated fall and fall spring treatment locations. Previously treated Phragmites was stunted
- Carmichael- still too wet – postponed to next year
 - Adam Burnett: Can grow in a foot of water
 - Brian Bettencourt: Beavers are damming the outlet on a weekly basis
 - Brian Bettencourt: high priority. Need to plan ahead for next year,
 - Charlotte Weigel: currently rates as a 2 on our prioritization list
- Petapawag -RDA approved for treatment of invasives at site
 - Olin Lathrop: Working on a memorandum of understanding for blanket treatment
 - Olin Lathrop: Can cut and spray large bittersweet stems
 - Adam Burnett: Could hand pull barberry
 - **Action item: Olin Lathrop to schedule treatment**
 - Olin Lathrop: Can leave stems and let it rot in place

The fifth order of business was update from mapping and prioritization subcommittee including pilot project mapping of knotweed on Nashua River

- Last Subcommittee meeting was not well attended
- Charlotte Weigel: Plan to meet again in November or December when people have more time and discuss working plan for next spring
- Charlotte Weigel: Met with Amelia from Groton School visited the river next to the boathouse – mapped Knotweed on MDD maps. Amelia will continue the work in ArcGIS
- Couple of spots near the boat house and further along the river
- Charlotte Weigel: EDD Maps needs data approvers. Charlotte Weigel is validated as a verifier and validated Amelia's observations
- Reviewed EddMaps on screen- reviewed locations on Campbell site

- Charlotte Weigel: One site on Groton school property
- Brian Bettencourt: evaluate this information in the prioritization list
- Olin Lathrop: No evidence at Shattuck Homestead of Knotweed
- Brian Bettencourt: End of Hayden rd looks good

The sixth order of business was Keyes-Parker parcel in Pepperell: approaches taken and applicability to Groton efforts

- Deb Fountain: Brand new committee, would like to have sample property and develop a management plan. Used grant funds from wild and scenic. One applicant with background in sustainable agriculture. Used template for management plan from Suasco CISMA. Walked the property and identified invasives. 60-acre total park. Mapped the meadow area – loaded with invasives. Flows into Sucker brook and Nissitit river. Used EDDMaps. Two members of the Pepperrell committee becoming verifiers. No one licensed in town for herbicide treatment. Report recommendations under consideration. Using to develop town plan – target for February. One verifier a plant ecologist.
- Charlotte Weigel: we could split up verifier responsibilities.
- Adam Burnett: What is required to become a verifier?
- Charlotte Weigel: Power point training.
- Adam Burnett: Interested in becoming a verifier
- **Action item: Charlotte Weigel to provide Adam Burnett Deborah's email, Adam Burnett to become verifier**
- Charlotte Weigel: How did you decide on the two-acre plot?
- Deb Fountain: Popular area, Sucker brook is designated for a dam removal. Concern of invasives spreading through the watershed. Some other sites were too large
- Brian Bettencourt: Good to think of the impact of dam removal ahead of time
- Charlotte Weigel: will the treatment precede the dam work?
- Deb Fountain: Will not be able to treat prior to the dam work
- Charlotte Weigel: Does it have natural heritage designation?
- Deb Fountain: Yes, species of special concern present in Sucker Brook. Will go through Mass Wildlife
- Charlotte Weigel: Used layers from Oliver?
- Deb Fountain: Yes

The seventh order of business was Japanese Knotweed along Squannacook River MBTA parcels: options

- Brian Bettencourt: Land owned by the T. Ron scouted – Rail corridor to Bertozzi. There is more knotweed north. Contacted MBTA – may be able to arrange treatment on their end

The eighth order of business was Open Discussion

- Olin Lathrop brought autumn olive jam
- Ben Wolfe: should porcelain berry be on our list?
- Brian Bettencourt: yes – likes the milder weather [range moving North]

- Jonathan Basch: Hurd property and Phebe Keyes two invasive species sites observed during Groton traverse. Porcelain berry, Phragmites, and Bittersweet at Hurd property at the entrance next to CVS. Knotweed stand at Phebe R Keyes near the Peabody entrance
- Brian Bettencourt: Should contact owners
- Brian Bettencourt: grab a handful of brochures to hand out.

Jonathan basch Moved to adjourn.

Olin Lathrop Seconded.

The motion to adjourn passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at ~8:25 PM.