

**Town of Groton
Invasive Species Committee
17 November 2025
Meeting Minutes**



**Town of
Groton
Massachusetts**

Committee Members Present:

Jonathan Basch
Olin Lathrop
Adam Burnett
Ron Strohsahl
Ann Carpenter

Committee Members Not Present:

Brian Bettencourt
Charlotte Weigel

Agenda:

1. Review minutes and action items from October meeting
2. Plan for *Phragmites* removal as part of Broadmeadow project
3. Spotted Lanternfly Quarterly update debrief
4. Right of Way (ROW) Vegetative management plan
5. Porcelain Berry Brochure
6. Proposal for consideration – secondary committee objective
7. All other business

The Meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

1. The first order of business was: Review action items from the October meeting
 - a. Action Items:
 - i. Assigned Previously:
 1. Adam Burnett followed up with Nod Road dump for Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) and to determine when the public comment period begins
 - b. Review of the minutes from the October meeting will be reviewed at the December meeting
2. The second order of business was: Plan for *Phragmites* removal as part of Broadmeadow project
 - a. Olin Lathrop: Nashua River Watershed Assoc. (NRWA) helping with Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (VMP) grant to engineer a solution to stop Broadmeadow Road flooding, but the grant request also includes money to treat *Phragmites*
 - i. Consultant company proposes to mow *Phragmites* with a swamp buggy
 - ii. Adam Burnett: we should have input on the bid documents
 1. Olin Lathrop has commented on bid as part of Town Conservation Commission
 - iii. Recommend that the proposal needs follow up treatments after first treatment
 - iv. Preliminary grant has been filed, awaiting feedback
 - v. The area is a patchwork of private and public land, and most wetlands are not town-owned. Will be difficult for the contractor to treat all the *Phragmites*
 - b. Jonathan Basch: Pepperell Invasive Species Committee also received Wild and Scenic grant for *Phragmites* treatment
 - i. Contact Pepperell to do find out where and what they are using the grant money on

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- c. Stewardship Committee is submitting Wild and Scenic grant for Carol Wheeler Park adjacent to Squannacook River

ACTION ITEM: Olin Lathrop to contact NRWA regarding the MVP grant

- 3. The third order of business was: Spotted Lanternfly Quarterly update debrief
 - a. Adam Burnett and Olin Lathrop attended
 - b. 50 towns with documented spotted lanternfly, including Fitchburg and Chelmsford (closest)
 - i. Ailanthus mostly absent from Groton
 - ii. Olivia Way former gravel area with Ailanthus
 - 1. We can set up a trap on that area because it is on Town land
 - 2. Adam Burnett: trap would need to be protected to prevent other wildlife from getting stuck
 - 3. Olin Lathrop: use lure traps to funnel them into a trap instead of sticky traps
 - c. MDAR Invasive Pest Dashboard shows spread along interstate and utility corridors
 - d. Adam Burnett: Lanternfly evolving to survive off other plants, including black walnut

ACTION ITEM: Olin Lathrop to contact MDAR for access to lanternfly trap

- 4. The fourth order of business was: RoW Vegetative management plan
 - a. DPW cannot view this as constraining. It should be framed that it enables them to do work that would otherwise not be allowed
 - i. Initial response from DPW was lack of time and resources to complete paperwork
 - ii. Offer to DPW for the invasive species committee to prepare it for them
 - b. Committee can also provide map to DPW to show areas that are near sensitive areas to help them avoid accidentally treating those areas
 - c. Draft for editing by Committee

ACTION ITEM: Ron Strohsahl to produce draft Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) for Committee Review

- 5. The fifth order of business was: Porcelain Berry Brochure
 - a. Jonathan Basch sent email to Ben Wolfe, no response, awaiting existing draft
 - b. Brian Bettencourt will continue working on brochure
 - c. Tabled to next meeting

ACTION ITEM: Jonathan Basch to email Ben Wolfe again for draft porcelain berry brochure

- 6. The sixth order of business was: Proposal for consideration – secondary committee objective
 - a. Pepperell Committee is named “Invasive and Native Plant Advisory Committee”
 - b. Groton Invasive Species Committee also recommends native species for landscape plantings, and controlling invasives supports native species
 - c. Is it worth updating the Committee charge/statement regarding our purpose?
 - d. Adam Burnett: by adding “native plant” are we excluding work with native wildlife?
 - i. Committee agrees to change charge to “native species”
 - e. Olin Lathrop: reviewed the charge
 - i. Suggests we are already providing the support for natives
 - ii. Possible changes to the charge:
 - 1. “Educate the public on invasive and native species”

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2. "Provide advice to Town bodies and public on invasive and native species"
- f. Jonathan Basch: the change is to be more intentional about our mission statement and gives us an opportunity to do more than we already are
 - i. Add educational and other activities supporting native plants
 1. Example: brochures for native plantings
 - a. Olin Lathrop: Conservation Commission has native lists available for the public
 - g. Adam Burnett what is the process for changing the charge?
 - i. Olin Lathrop: Selectboard has to approve updated charge at a public meeting

ACTION ITEM: Olin Lathrop will update original document for the charge and add updated points

7. The seventh order of business was: All other business
 - a. Pesticide sprayer
 - i. Adam Burnett provided three pesticide sprayer extension options
 - ii. Preference to telescoping version that is self contained. The preferred extension does not have joints, which can be a source of leaks
 - iii. Ann Carpenter moves to purchase the extension and authorize up to \$200 for purchase
 1. Olin Lathrop seconded
 - a. Passed by unanimous motion
 2. Adam Burnett will consult town for Amazon tax exemption, Olin Lathrop provided tax ID number for Town

ACTION ITEM: Adam Burnett to purchase pesticide spray extension and inquire about tax exemption

- b. Japanese Knotweed at:
 - i. Nod Road (old treatment site; it's back)
 - ii. Boutwell School
 1. Ann Carpenter: area is very treatable I think; grounds chief told me they'd be interested in treatments from Committee
 2. Ann Carpenter identified cup plant (*Silphium perfoliatum*) behind *Boutwell House*. It is similar looking to Japanese knotweed, and is considered invasive in CT and potentially invasive in MA

ACTION ITEM: Ann Carpenter to visit Boutwell School regarding investigating grounds chief's observations

- iii. W. Groton Fire Dept.
 1. Area is treatable but might get into neighbor's private land

ACTION ITEM: Olin Lathrop to visit W. Groton Fire Dept. and survey extent of Japanese knotweed

- c. Wooly adelgid at the Hallett land
 - i. Olin Lathrop has not seen Wooly adelgid there ever
 - ii. Jonathan Basch and Olin Lathrop observed it elsewhere in town, but not recently
- d. American chestnut trees along the Squannacook River
 - i. Jonathan Basch also located some >30-foot trees in Wharton Plantation
- e. Japanese knotweed points along Nashua River
 - i. Follow up from last meeting
 - ii. Points are located on Town land, but best access to points is probably through the Groton School boathouse

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- f. Suggest additional locations for Invasive Species Committee signs
- 8. Meeting Adjournment
 - a. Adam Burnett moved to adjourn
 - b. Ann Carpenter seconded
 - c. The motion to adjourn approved by unanimous roll call vote

The meeting adjourned at 8:19 PM.

OLD ACTION ITEMS + NEW:

- 1. Olin Lathrop to contact NRWA to close loop with MVP grant
- 2. Olin Lathrop to contact MDAR for access to lanternfly trap
- 3. Ron Strohsahl to produce draft VMP for Committee Review
- 4. Jonathan Basch to email BW again for draft porcelain berry brochure
- 5. Olin Lathrop will update original document for the charge and add updated points
- 6. Adam Burnett to purchase pesticide spray extension & inquire about tax exemption
- 7. Ann Carpenter to visit Boutwell School regarding investigating grounds chief's observations
- 8. Olin Lathrop to visit W. Groton Fire Dept. and survey extent of Japanese knotweed