

DATE: July 17, 2023
TIME: 9:21 AM

**Land Management Committee for Lone Tree Hill
Minutes of Public Meeting
June 14, 2023 by Zoom**

Members Attending: Tom Grumble, Radha Iyengar, Steve Kidder, Mark Smith, Michael Macht-Greenberg, Carl Solander, Ellen O'Brien Cushman

Members Not Attending: Adriana Bobinchock

Others Attending: Nancy Kougeas, Leonard Katz, Joe Hibbard, Jeff North, Mary McCarthy from NEMBA

Meeting convened at 7: 04 PM

Minutes

Motion by Carl that minutes from May 4, 2023 be approved, with minor edits. Second by Radha.

Roll Call Vote : Tom, Radha, Steve, Mark, Michael, Carl , Ellen Yes. 7-0-0 Approved unanimously

Invoices

Nunez Invoice INV00647 on PO 203-2300711

\$425.00 - work completed, trails mowing, LONE TREE HILL and heart shaped meadow

Motion by Steve to approve, Radha second

Roll Call Vote : Tom, Radha, Steve, Mark, Michael, Carl , Ellen Yes. 7-0-0 Approved unanimously

Parterre project #9351, 2023 Invasive plant management spring activities. Joe Hibbard and Jeff North confirm that work being invoiced is complete. April 14th Observations include hyssop, mountain mint and black eyed susan seedlings starting to come up. Wildlife sightings including three garter snakes and mourning cloak butterfly. Plan to return later in spring for second treatment of garlic mustard and later treat glossy buckthorn. May 10th Observations include Jack in the Pulpit emerging and goldfinch, tiger swallowtail butterfly. Also observed black swallowwort. Glossy buckthorn saplings and honeysuckle – woody invasive plants will receive treatment in summer per schedule.

April \$1790 Invoice 16235. Garlic mustard, cut and dabbed honeysuckle & project management (Field notes 4/14/23 in A1).

May \$1665 Invoice 15875. Additional treatment of garlic mustard continue treatment in A1. Field notes 5/10/23 in A1) -seedlings have sprouted and manual removal of plants in areas of emerging native plant growth.

Radha noted that the Judy Record Fund has kindly agreed to share the cost and will reimburse the Town at 50% of the total, \$1727.50 once details of request received by JR Fund to Roger Wrubel. Radha will submit.

Motion by Tom to approve payment \$3455 both Parterre invoices, second by Radha –

Roll Call Vote : Tom, Radha, Steve, Mark, Michael, Carl , Ellen Yes. 7-0-0 Approved unanimously

Proposal to perform work in the Pine Alee to address hazards and safety concerns, limbing and work in the crowns of the trees

Asplundh – no proposal has been received yet. Had site visits with Mark, Joe, Jeff.

Tree Specialists – received a proposal from them for \$35,370

Need another firm to be contacted and request a proposal/price for the specific scope of work per the State Procurement laws, must request quotes from at least three vendors, more than \$10K.

The work includes climbing the trees because of the concern over compaction of the ground area between the trees in the Allee – no heavy equipment allowed.

Crowning is requested but the style/solution specifics are up to the vendor.

Joe Hibbard may be able to provide another firm, Michael M-G may as well.

Campsite in the Eastern Woods

After a few years “off” an active campsite has been discovered in the Eastern Woods above Pleasant Street along the area off the Coal Road. Steve received the report from Jack Dawley of Northland and Ellen sent it to the Police Chief. Steve will ask Jack for a more precise location then Ellen will forward it to Police Chief MacIsaac.

New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA Signs) – Mary McCarthy attending later in the evening.

Volunteer Day – May 19th

Belmont Day School students, supervised by Leonard Katz and Nancy Kougeas from the Belmont Conservation Volunteers group, pulled and bagged 16 bags of garlic mustard from Lone Tree Hill. They were reportedly excited and interested and well supervised. The LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE sends our thanks!

McLean Zone 3 Development

Joe Hibbard met with Jack Dawley of Northland. The LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE needs to inform the Office of Community Development that the condition of reviewing the stormwater outfall has been completed. No conflict with trees on Lone Tree Hill. Northland hopes to get the condition confirm so that their building permit is released by June 30th.

Motion by Ellen, second by Radha - On behalf of the LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE, our designated representative Joe Hibbard has made our review of the stormwater outfall and we approve the outlet as shown on the current plan.

Roll Call Vote : Tom, Radha, Steve, Mark, Michael, Carl , Ellen Yes. 7-0-0 Approved unanimously

Pleasant Street Fire Lane/Coal Road Access - Update

Cars are parking at the bottom of the Coal Road, in the Fire Lane for the Open Space and McLean Hospital. Ellen has spoken with the Fire Chief and the Police Chief to change the No Parking sign to be a Fire Lane, No Parking sign. Both Chiefs are fine with the proposal as is Michael Macht-Greenberg, COO of McLean Hospital. The Police Chief believes this request may need to go to the Select Board. Ellen will pursue it to determine the proper process to allow enforcement.

Invasives – Belmont Conservation Volunteers

Leonard reported that the Belmont Conservation Volunteers continue their dedicated work on Saturday morning at LONE TREE HILL removing garlic mustard near the cell tower kiosks and the McLean Barn. They also remove knotweed after a rain storm.

Dogs off leash – information and enforcement

There's a concern that clear and correct information related to members of the public walking their dogs on Lone Tree Hill is not being provided. Ellen was asked to remind Suzanne Trasavage the Animal Control Officer that dogs are permitted on LONE TREE HILL but not in Highland Meadow Cemetery. Apparently there is a question about the "inactive" cemetery portion of Lone Tree Hill in the heart-shaped meadow, the trail parallels the cemetery roadway. Dogs on leashes of 6 ft or shorter are permitted on that trail in LONE TREE HILL but not on the Cemetery lawns or roadways. Ellen agreed to do so.

New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA) – Mary McCarthy joined the meeting

A question was posed to Mary – Can NEMBA perform regular monitoring in the Eastern Woods/McLean Woods and report quickly to the LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE any rogue trails they notice are developing or showing some effort? This would cut the time to our response and possibly limit expansion activities. In other words, can NEMBA act as "eyes on the ground – if you see something, say something"? This is not asking NEMBA to be an enforcement agent, but an information sharing agent in real time.

Tom suggested the establishment of one pathway for direct communication from NEMBA directly to LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (Radha and Tom). Riders could relate their real-time trail experiences. Mary will mention this to the Trail Leaders in NEMBA, again verifying that NEMBA would not be involved in enforcement but in identifying growing activity.

Signage

Tom displayed a recommended "Trail Closed for Restoration" sign which would be printed at 8x12 inches and contain the QR code to the LONE TREE HILL webpage with contact information. The sign is intended for use for rogue trails. There was a strong feeling that when the LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE does not recognize something as a trail, we should be careful not to use the word Trail when we refer to the rogue construction/destruction activity. It was decided that the sign should more appropriately state:

CLOSED – NOT A TRAIL

Please respect this closure. This rogue trail was created without permission from the Land Manager. It is not sustainable and does not fit the ecological plan for the property

LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE likes the existing little brown "mini kiosk" signs that show the rules and are graphically appealing, and would like to have the new trail maps and priority items only placed at different places on the property. Mary indicated that NEMBA can probably help select locations and install the small signs. In addition, the LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE would like to install pictorial sign, very small, that indicate trails that may be used by mountain bikes as well as pedestrians. They should show a graphic of a bicycle and be placed along the approved bike-use trails to reinforce for riders that if they don't see the little signs they shouldn't be riding the trail.

Deployment of signs on site – how?

Intersections should have 4X4 inch posts

Named trails with sign containing the name

Labeled one mile loop perhaps

These are examples of what was done in Burlington, a project that NEMBA helped on – could they help us? Can someone help us to get this to deployment, finalize all of the decisions, what material we should use for signs, where they should be placed, what's missing from our plan

Mary McCarthy – the quantity discount for signage is real. Apparently NEMBA may be able to help with installation but there may be someone/an entity that helped in Burlington or has this expertise. She will check and get back to Tom.

Active Trail maintenance – NEMBA has done some active trail construction and maintenance projects for us at LONE TREE HILL . Leonard asked what it would take to have NEMBA add LONE TREE HILL to their list for routine projects? How can we get our urgency to rise? Mary indicated that there are a group of properties and NEMBA chooses the schedule. IF LONE TREE HILL is rising they could perhaps schedule some more regular visits – they pitch in to do berming, solving water issues, particularly on bike-allowed trails. Leonard suggested that we may be able to reach out to pedestrians to help with walking only trails such as the Pine Allee, the Lone Tree trail across the great meadow.

Mary summarized the items she will discuss with the NEMBA Trail Leaders to see how they can/are willing to help us:

1. Desired “Additional small kiosks” at bottom of Coal Road and at Mill Street
2. Designation locations
3. Sign Edits
4. Energy around the signage
5. Work the graphics for 8.5 x 11 inches
6. LONE TREE HILL on the Maintenance Roster for NEMBA
7. Eyes on the Ground communications chain.

Belmont Conservation Volunteers

They have a website and would like the LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE website to link to it. Tom will send the correct link to Ellen and she'll arrange for it to be loaded.

Next meeting – July 12th. Steve recommended that we consider taking August off or have only a very short business as required meeting. There was general consensus but no vote.

8:45 PM Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ellen O'Brien Cushman
Cemetery Commission Appointee