

Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows

Steering Committee

Minutes of April 18, 2006. Approved 5/24/05

Present: David White, Mike Tabaczynski, Andrea Golden, John Bartenstein, Sandra Ruggiero, Laurel Carpenter, Don Miller

1. The minutes of the meeting of March 27, 2006 were approved.
2. The next meeting was set for Wednesday, May 24, 2006, location to be confirmed.
3. Financial Report – The current balance in our account with ALT is \$6,327. Mike has plans to spend some of the trail money this summer.
4. Invasive Plants -- The Japanese Knotweed (JKW) Site: Early shoots of JKW are up a few inches, but only in the black plastic area. The plastic which was covering half the plot is torn in many places, letting light and water in. No shoots have been seen in the "cut-cut-cut" area. It was agreed that we will recover the plastic area until Fall, then remove it and plant native wild flowers and graminoids (grasses and grass-like plants). It was agreed that we need much more overlap where the sheets of plastic meet. Sandra will take her botany class to put down the new plastic on April 22. A budget of \$250 was approved for materials.
David, Mike, John, Sandra, Laurel, and Don agreed to continue cutting new stalks which grow in the cut-cut-cut area.

The possibility of burning of the old JKW stalks was discussed. A fire permit requires that a water hose be within 50 feet, which is not possible for this site. Enzymes for composting would have to be kept wet. It was agreed that we will continue to allow the stalks to decompose.

Garlic Mustard in the JKW Site: Garlic mustard is growing in the site we have cleared of JKW. The plants are at optimal picking size now – large enough to get a good grip and pull out the root, but small enough so they are easy to dispose of in the trash for incineration. Don Miller agreed to spend additional hours pulling out garlic mustard in this site and also by the Finger Marsh Boardwalk in the next few weeks. He seeks additional people to help.

Other Invasives—Black Swallowwort: Beyond Finger Marsh there is a blueberry bush which becomes covered in Black Swallowwort, an invasive which is toxic.

Garlic Mustard: It was agreed that we will not organize major work projects for garlic mustard in the interior because the difficult logistics of working with volunteers in these settings.

5. Earth Day is Saturday, April 29, rain date May 6. It was agreed to give \$10 to the Earth Day organizers for a table at the event. It will be set up by Mike and Laurel for the 10:00am opening and staffed later in the day by David and Mike. There will be photos of nature and people working on FoAGM projects, especially the boardwalk construction. Before and after photos of the JKW site will be there, also.
6. Great Meadows Tour Guide Revisions: Andrea will make the revisions we agreed upon and send them to David for review before printing. Maps will need to be pasted into them. A budget of \$250 for printing of 150 more tour guides was approved.
7. General Meeting: It was agreed to change the date to Friday, June 9. The moon will be full on the 11th, so there will be moonlight if the weather allows. More detailed planning needs to be done at the next meeting. Mike offered the use of his telescope.
8. MyRWA "Find and Fix" Program for Sickle Brook: The purpose of this program is to find sources of pollution along the brook and work to stop them. Laurel and Sandra expressed interest in taking the training course and participating in the program.
9. The Big Hole: Arlington Town Counsel John Maher told David that the matter should be taken to the Lexington ConCom since they have jurisdiction. Mike will make some revisions in the draft narrative and email it to the ConCom's chair. Our understanding is that the Lex ConCom will send a letter to the abutters in this area. Mike (?) will organize a volunteer opportunity for High School students to fill in the hole.
10. Dog Issues: We are not aware of any recent problems. We will revisit the issue at the next meeting.
11. Orchard Lane Bridge: Work toward this project will get under way in May.
12. Trail Marking: It was agreed that signage should be minimal, but some modest signs are needed in strategic places to help people find their way. The names of the two boardwalks will be "Finger Marsh Boardwalk" and "Peat Meadow Boardwalk". ***[I know those were the names, but I'm not sure it was "passed" officially at the meeting. Please make any needed revisions - DM]***

The meeting adjourned.

Minutes by Don, edits by David 5/10/06.