

**Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows
Steering Committee Meeting
October 26, 2004
Approved 11/30/04**

Present:

David White	Sandra Ruggiero
Mike Tabaczynski	Don Miller
John Bartenstein	Laurel Carpenter

1. Minutes of the previous meeting of September were approved with minor corrections.

2. Next meetings are tentatively scheduled as follows:

- Tuesday, November 30 at 7:30pm

- Tuesday, January 11, at 7:30pm.

All these meetings to be held at the old Waldorf High School

2A. Financial Report: Nothing new to report.

3. Coming Events:

John Bartenstein discussed his contact with Roger Yocum, who lives on Orchard Lane, a cul-de-sac off of Sanderson Road that dead-ends into an area of Lexington Conservation Land immediately across Munroe Brook on the northeastern border of the Meadows. There is a public pathway, marked with a Lexington Conservation sign, which leads from the circle at the end of cul-de-sac down to Munroe Brook.

About fifteen years ago, shortly after the Orchard Crossing neighborhood was built, Roger and some others constructed a small but well-built, free-standing footbridge over Munroe Brook, about three or four hundred yards in from the LCA playing fields, that provided access from the public pathway into the Great Meadows. There is no other convenient point of access for residents of the Orchard Crossing neighborhood.

Several years ago, a beaver population dammed up portions of Munroe Brook, flooding out the low area where the bridge was located and washing away the bridge. The beavers have since departed, and the brook has returned to its normal channels. Without access to the Great Meadows, the public pathway soon became overgrown, and the small area of Lexington Conservation Land that abuts the Meadows is now isolated. There is a whole neighborhood of potential users of and advocates for the Meadows that is effectively excluded.

Roger and others in the neighborhood would very much like to have the Munroe Brook footbridge replaced. Mike explained that he is familiar with the area and replacing the bridge has been on his mental long term plan, but he cannot make a large time commitment to the project in 2005. He would be glad to give some direction to interested abutters who might wish to take on the project themselves, perhaps with some support from FoAGM. It was decided that Roger be invited to the next FoAGM meeting.

Mike comments in an earlier email that "flooding killed most of the trees and changed the ground characteristics in the area where the old trail passed through, leaving it soft and wet much of the year, similar to the effect experienced after the recent Parker Meadow beaver flooding,

only more pronounced. This means a realignment of the trail between Orchard Lane and Bartlett Ave; probably a new bridge location would need to be investigated. The current overgrown condition of the trail is not a problem. Cutting away brush is easy.”

Other Upcoming Events:

Sandra reported that she and the high school students are working on preparing their fall vernal pool programs for the Brackett school fifth grade students.

The question was raised about a report on the recent Meadow walk lead by Chris Floyd, and Sandra volunteered to check the Menotomy website for a posting. [Addendum 11/2/04: Laurel checked the site and Chris does have a short posting about the walk, but the group focused on Arlington Reservoir and the Cataldo trail and did not enter the Meadow.]

Mike reported that he had heard from the state trails program re the boardwalks proposals at Dunback and the Great Meadow are high on the funding list, but that a review by the State Historic Commission was the current holdup.

4. Annual Report

Committee members discussed a plan for the completion of the annual report. Mike agreed to expand the Resource Management section; John has material for the legal section, and Sandra will reformat the educational section. Laurel agreed to send the summary created for the ALT newsletter to the members of the steering committee.

There was discussion about reviewing and perhaps re-envisioning FoAGM's goals.

David agreed to check with members of the listed committees to see if they wished to be included in the annual report (those who are not on the SC).

It was suggested that Brian of ALT review the report before it goes to press. It was also suggested that the completed annual report be sent to FoAGM's donors, and Laurel volunteered to do this.

David asked members of the steering committee to submit their revised components within one week, and the goal is to have a finished draft before Thanksgiving.

5. Vista Management

The group discussed the walk with Harvey Cote and his approach to managing view areas. Mike had drafted a response with 3 main points and agreed to send this to steering committee members. The general consensus was that FoAGM should give a serious response to Mr. Cote seriously as he is a very active and long time advocate of AGM and has furthermore taken independent action in cutting vegetation. Since he has written to FoAGM, a written response would be appropriate.

The remaining items on the agenda were tabled.

Addendum added 11/2/04: Mike T reports that Dan Reedy, an Arlington eagle scout, contacted him recently about his kiosk project for AGM. Mike reviewed his plans and partial construction, and expects the quality of this kiosk will be at least a cut above the existing kiosk and signs. Dan is planning on installing the kiosk Saturday, Nov 6 around 9am, and Mike inquired if anyone is available to help/supervise.