

**Acton**  
**Land Stewardship Committee (LSC) Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, July 15, 2025, 7 P.M., Hybrid**

**Attendees (in bold)**

Full (voting) members: **Bettina Abe, Jon Campbell** (Vice-Chair), **Dale Chayes**, Aaron Moore, Bruce Rachman, **John Watlington, Joe Will** (Minutes), **Tom Wolf** (Chair)

Associate (nonvoting) members: Ken Appel, Josh Haines, **Jody Harris, Rebecca Harvey**, Mel Lima, Bob Mackin, Adam Nolde, **David Pinsky**, Jim Salem, Bill Smith, Jason Temple, Todd Tsakiris, **Bob Walton**

Others: **Nik Mani** (Acton resident)

Tom opened the meeting at 7:08 p.m. Attending the meeting was Nik Mani who is interested in volunteering as Great Hill steward. Absent from the meeting due to illness was Ian Bergemann, Acton Community Conservation Specialist.

**Review & acceptance of May 20 and June 17 Minutes**

May Minutes accepted as presented. June Minutes not yet available.

**Concerns from the public**

None.

**Invasive plants, July 2025**

Bush honeysuckle — Much of the information John shared can be found on John's "Invasive Plants in Acton, Acton LSC Meetings and Public Presentations, Revised Spring 2025", found at

<http://bit.ly/42ByCPB>

and featuring bush honeysuckle at

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Qdc6kGhXJJt->

[Ysk2ur7vsB5nWtp61v2osP29GydaT28/edit?slide=id.gc802792aaa\\_0\\_51#slide=id.gc802792aaa\\_0\\_51](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Qdc6kGhXJJt-) which John used with his presentation.

**Boardwalk Design Guide project**

This is Bob's ongoing project. Monthly, Bob leads a technical discussion on the Design Guide contents. You can find his latest information at

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vqgZpeE5wAlpT0Fd2Fy7jKuWsIBtPfjM1gZYLssWVOc/edit?tab=t\\_0#heading=h.wzmt52hjqwbe](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vqgZpeE5wAlpT0Fd2Fy7jKuWsIBtPfjM1gZYLssWVOc/edit?tab=t_0#heading=h.wzmt52hjqwbe)

At this meeting the LSC commented on and then accepted components [9] through [12] to read as follows:

[9] All bolts, nuts, and washers should be hot dipped or stainless steel.

[10] Lag screws (lag bolts) must be mounted with a pilot hole extending the entire length of the bolt and a shank hole equal to the diameter of the bolt extending the length of the shank (the shank is the part of the bolt next to the head that has no threads - drill the shank hole first).

Lag Screw Size	Shank Hole Drill Size	Pilot Hole Drill Size	Withdrawal Force per Engaged Inch
1/4 in	1/4 in	5/32 in	260 lbf
3/8 in	3/8 in	1/4 in	350 lbf
1/2 in	1/2 in	3/8 in	430 lbf

The 1/2 inch tapered tip of the lag screw does not count as engaged thread. For withdrawal from the end grain, withdrawal force must be multiplied by 75%. Withdrawal forces are applicable only to Southern Yellow Pine.

Non-lag screws must not be driven into end grain.

See 2024 National Design Specification for Wood Construction (NDS) 12.1.4.

[11] Carriage bolts should not be used, with the exception that a carriage bolt with its head in the pad should be used to secure a pad to a corrugated pipe sill.

Instead use hex-head bolts with flat washers and a nut. It may be necessary to use two wrenches to tighten or loosen the nut, in order to prevent the bolt head from turning when the nut is turned.

For hex-head bolts usually only 1 inch is threaded, so care is required in specifying the length of the bolt. For attaching 2x stringers to T-straps, a 2 1/2 inch bolt should be used.

[12] Wood should be ground contact Southern Yellow Pine. Treads and stringers should be #1, sills may be #2 or #1.

Sometimes #1 lumber pieces are delivered with defects and should not be used. Particular defects are knots that go all the way through the board and may pop out, and splits that go all the way through the board and may expand with time and separate the board into parts. Another defect is bow which develops over the first months after delivery: it appears that the heartwood side (of an occasional board) has moisture left over from kiln drying and contracts more than the green side

See NATIONAL GRADING RULE for DIMENSION LUMBER.

For the next LSC meeting, the LSC suggests that Bob send out, sometime before the meeting, information on what part of the Design Guide he intends to discuss at the meeting. Also, Bob or the agenda could provide the link (shown above) to the current version of the Guide. Committee members then would have the opportunity to chat with other members beforehand about the upcoming topics (“one on one” — being careful to not violate the Open Meeting Law).

#### Conservation updates

- Trail Design – Moritz Forest Conservation Land

Jody shared a map of the parcel (shown at the right) and updated the LSC on the status of its trail system. The LSC recommended the following:

- There be no rerouting of trails for “transient” hornet nests.
- Make what is labeled “Potential red trail connection” (see map) as the red trail link to the Wetherbee parcel. Do not make what is shown as a red trail in the lower left of the map an official trail.
- Mainly for sawyers: The trees on the property are riddled with wires, bolts, and junk, so be careful with any tree work!



- 549 Main St - Update

Ian is planning for a Fall grand opening and is helping confirm a trail map. Still “up in the air” at this time is whether the LSC will be responsible for supervision of the Acton Water District property.

- Meadow Management

This is an Ian (absent) topic, so it is tabled. Anyone interested in invasives, particularly the bittersweet, in the Nagog Hill meadows north of the main parking lot, can communicate with John about it.

- Miscellany from Ian notes: Tom shared updates on Heath Hen Meadow and the Great Hill encroachment at 187 Main Street.

Other updates

- John will try to get the flat tire that's on the trailer for the field mower fixed this week.
- John will voice his concerns to Ian about the brush cutter — the only working one — that has been missing for some time from the shed. John will research brush cutters that are available, both gas-powered and battery-powered, and share the information with Ian along with a suggestion that either the missing one be located or the Town purchase a new one.

Next month's (08/19/25) agenda

The Boardwalk Design Guide (Bob); perhaps an update on the Moritz parcel; more on a brush cutter.

Evaluate meeting

Skipped.

**Adjournment**

At 8:08 pm.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, August 19, 2025, at 7 p.m.