Waltham Land Trust

is a non-profit corporation dedicated to preserving our community's natural resources for the future through education, open space acquisition and protection.

JOURNAL SPRING 2008



FOCUS ON GREAT POND CONSERVATION AREA

With several related articles, this issue of the WLT newsletter spotlights the so-called Great Pond Conservation Area, a collection of undeveloped wetlands parcels adjacent to Hardy Pond. "Moving Toward Land Acquistions" (below) describes the efforts of Ward 2 City Councilor Edmund Tarallo, members of the Conservation Commission, and the Waltham Land Trust to acquire some of the privately-owned parcels using CPA (Community Preservation Act) funds.

"Recommendations from the Conway Schoool" (right) gives an idea of what actions might be taken to preserve the natural resourses, while making the area more accessible to the public. Finally, "Lazazzero Playground Improvement Plan" (page 5) describes the efforts spearheaded by the city to improve the city's property that borders Hardy Pond to the south.



Hardy Pond: Moving Toward Land Acquisition

Sue Kelman and David Kehs

At times, the wheels of city government can move in ways not always easy to understand. A process which may look, on paper, to be simple and straightforward may end up being more time-consuming and convoluted than one would have imagined. Thus, we set out to give our readers a brief thumbnail sketch of where the "Hardy Pond Plan #1" is along the process to approval and allocation. This information was generously provided to us by CPA Program Manager Bill Durkee, who adds that he is available and happy to answer any of your questions. You may contact him either by phone at 781-314-3117, or via email at: wdurkee@city.waltham.ma.us.

continued on page 4

GCPA: Recommendations from the Conway School

Susanne Whayne

The value of preserving wetlands, especially in one of Waltham's most densely developed areas, can't be overstated. Wetlands control flooding by storing excess water. This is where water filters through, reaching a pond or river much cleaner than when it arrived. And then there's the beauty of the wetlands. It's not as quantifiable, but anyone who has gazed on the glimmering water, the islands of grass and bushes, and the swooping birds knows it's just as meaningful.

In the spring of 2007 the Conway School of Landscape Design presented a study, commissioned by the Waltham Land Trust, of the twenty-five acres of

continued on page 4

Land Trust Receives \$11,200 in Grants

Waltham Land Trust has received numerous grants in the past six months, in addition to the major CDQ Trust grant highlighted in the last issue of the newsletter. Ranging from hundreds to thousands of dollars, the funding will make a difference in many arenas of the Land Trust's work.

Major membership development support

The George H. and Jane A. Mifflin Memorial Fund and the David Greenewalt Charitable Trust have each awarded WLT a \$5,000 grant to support a membership development program to build our membership base. The goal of the project is to increase membership from its current level of 250 households to 500 households by 2009.

"The Land Trust wants to increase membership not only to provide a stable source of funding for approximately one-third of the organization's annual budget, but also to expand the constituency of support for land preservation in the City of Waltham," notes Membership and Fundraising Committee Chair Diana Young. "We deeply appreciate these two major grants in support of these efforts."

National honor

Waltham Land Trust has received a national honor accompanied by a grant from the **Kodak American Greenways Awards Program**. The \$1,000 grant will help create the Chester Brook Trail between Shady's Pond Conservation Area and the Storer Conservation Area in Waltham. In addition to receiving the grant award, the Land Trust will be showcased as a national model for its innovative efforts to develop a greenway in Waltham.

When completed, the Chester Brook Trail will connect three public schools, a 100-unit affordable housing complex, and numerous single-family and multi-unit residential areas with over 200 acres of city-owned conservation areas. Within a few years, the trail will connect with the rest of the Western Greenway, an area of nearly 1,000 acres of interconnected undeveloped green space.

The Kodak American Greenways Awards—administered by The Conservation Fund, a recognized leader in working with local communities to expand the nation's network of linked open spaces—provide seed grants to nonprofit organizations and government agencies to help develop new greenway projects. The awards are meant to provide initial funding to spark creativity in conservation, outdoor recreation, and trail and greenway development. WLT is one of 31

groups nationwide honored for their innovative efforts in 2007. "This year's award winners represent some of the best grassroots conservation and greenway development efforts in the United States," said The Conservation Fund's president, Larry Selzer. "The Fund is proud to support these thoughtful, action-oriented local initiatives that will serve as models for other communities around the country."

The Kodak American Greenways Awards are made possible through the support of the Eastman Kodak Company. The Kodak American Greenways Awards Grants Review Committee consists of conservation experts from around the country, and this year grant recipients were selected from 130 qualified applicants.

"We are grateful for the support and recognition this grant provides," says WLT Land Committee chair Marc Rudnick. "The Land Trust is confident that our work preparing and promoting trails on scattered sections of the Western Greenway will get people out hiking and appreciating the land, and will ultimately build a larger constituency for completing the Greenway."

Local support for stewardship tools

The Waltham Community Foundation has provided WLT with a \$200 grant to purchase a Pulaski axe and two McLeod rakes. These U.S. Forestry Service-approved tools will be a great aid in our trail-building and trail-stewardship endeavors. WLT greatly appreciates the on-going support of this local foundation, which has provided numerous grants for very practical purposes often not eligible for funding from larger entities.

Thanks to all these funders for their financial and moral support of our work!

Ride, Row, Ramble Raffle

Win a Trek 7700 bicycle and helmet (\$1179), a Pamlico 100 Kayak and life preserver (\$659), or an outdoor sports store gift certificate (\$150). Tickets are \$25. Only 250 will be sold. The drawing is July 19 at the "On Hardy Pond" event. Tickets can be purchased from board and committee members and at www. walthamlandtrust.org/donate.

Condolences

Long-time WLT member Marianne Lynnworth passed away in December after a long illness. Among her many impacts in our community was helping institute the city's initial recycling program in the 1970's. WLT remembers this dedicated environmentalist and extends its condolences to the Lynnworth family.

Waltham Land Trust Elects New Directors and Presents Environmentalist of the Year Award

At its eighth annual meeting on October 17 at the Waltham Public Library, the Waltham Land Trust presented its Environmentalist of the Year Award and elected new directors.

This year's award was given to Jeremy Price, a local resident and researcher at the Urban Ecology Institute, whose community organizing efforts have led to the preservation of open space on Waltham's Jericho Hill. Jeremy was the evening's speaker as well, discussing ways of collaborating for social change using online resources.

In addition to the award and presentation, WLT members elected four board members to three-year terms. Current director David Kehs was re-elected to another term, and Maureen Bagge Fowler, Dee Kricker, and Dan Taylor were elected to their first three-year terms.

Maureen has worked as the Environmental Health & Safety Coordinator at Framingham State College for the past 12 years. In this capacity, she handles the

day-to-day compliance and management of environmental issues, including water conservation, storm-water management, energy conservation, recycling, hazardous and universal waste management, and airpermitting. She received an MBA with an Environmental Management concentration from UMass Boston in 1998. She and her husband Bill have been members of the WLT for five years. They are both advocates of preserving open space in the City of Waltham for active as well as passive recreational activities.

David joined the Land Trust after attending the annual meeting in 2000. He then made it a point to explore all 50 of the open spaces listed in the WLT inventory. David joined our Board of Directors in 2001, has been an active member of the Land Committee, and has led a number of walks for WLT. He has also served as newsletter editor, Clerk, and Vice President of the organization. David has been an active volunteer for the National Archives and has performed in a number of productions with the Reagle Players and other local theater groups.

Dee, a professional gardener, has served on the boards of Community Farms

Outreach and WATCH, and has been involved with WLT, Green Rows of Waltham (GROW) Community Garden, Friends of Waltham Field Station, and the Hardy Pond Association. She retired as a public school teacher after a 25-year career.

Dan's environmental involvement in his native city began with Dan's Clean-Up Club when he was 11 and later included participation in the early recycling efforts in the 1970's led by Marianne Lynnworth. He has been active on the Waltham Farmer's Market Committee for the past 14 years. A public school teacher, he is the father of Alexandra, 10, Rebecca, 6, and Christopher, 4, all of whom take regular advantage of the natural beauty that exists in Waltham and will work to see that it is maintained for future generations.

These four join continuing directors Kate Buttolph, Marie Daly, George Darcy III, Susannah King, Daniel Melnechuk, Joris Naiman, Stephen Rourke, Marc Rudnick, Michael Squillante, Nadene Stein, Lesya Struz, Inge Uhlir, and Diana Young on the board.

New officers of the WLT are Nadene Stein, president; Diana Young, vice-president; Marc Rudnick, Treasurer; and David Kehs, Secretary/Clerk.



Jeremy Price receives Environmentalist of the Year award presented by WLT Vice President Diana Young.

NGE UHLIR

GPCA from page 1

wetlands that abut Hardy Pond. This land, to be known as the Great Pond Conservation Area (GPCA), is currently made up of more than fourteen parcels, many under private ownership. Only five parcels are owned by the city and only one by the WLT. The study supports placing all of the twenty-five acres under a conservation restriction and has two important recommendations for the area. The first is to restore the wetlands to their natural state, and second is to create public access without disturbing the area's wildlife and flora.

Restoring the wetlands means removing fill that has been dumped in several places and is impeding the flow of water throughout the area. Removal will enable the wetlands to fulfill their crucial functions of flood control and maintaining water quality.

After fill is removed, the study recommends the planting of indigenous trees and shrubs. Until the plants are established the area should be monitored to prevent invasive species from taking hold.

The study concludes by recognizing that the best way to protect the GPCA is for people to understand its value and appreciate its beauty. To achieve these goals the Conway School recommends a system of controlled public access to the area. Boardwalks would be constructed to lead hikers through marsh, swamp, and wet meadow habitats. A platform at the pond's edge of the pond will provide a lookout area for wildlife. And to further enhance the public's appreciation of the area, a kiosk in Lazazzero Playground, a site of well-attended baseball games, would provide information about the unique habitats and functions of the wetlands.

Hardy Pond from page 1

"Hardy Pond Plan #1" is a proposal that, when approved, will cost about \$392,000, funds which will be made available through the Community Preservation Act. Specifically, this proposal was put before the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) by Ward Councilor Ed Tarallo and would consolidate a number of parcels (about 20 in all) adjacent to Hardy Pond, along with some land already owned by the City of Waltham. Nearly all these properties exist as wetlands and are virtually unbuildable today. The proposal would act to preserve these wetlands, placing them under the protection of the City.

Councilor Tarallo's application came before the CPC on November 19 for their January 8 meeting. It was approved then and forwarded to the Waltham City Council as a CPC recommendation for their approval. At the February 4 meeting of the City Council Long-Term Debt Committee, they received the Recommendation in order to evaluate the proposal. At the last minute, before the Long-Term Debt Committee could present its evaluation for funding or denial, the City's Law Department stepped in to suggest that the language of the Recommendation needed improvement before it could be formally heard. (Are you still with us?) Those revisions have been undertaken and the proposal was finally heard and approved by the City Council at its meeting on March 10.

Meanwhile, the Waltham Land Trust's Land Committee, chaired by Marc Rudnick, has drafted "Hardy Pond Plan #2", a plan that involves acquiring title or easements for still more Lakeview area properties in need of preservation. This plan was proposal was presented to the Community Preservation Committee on March 18 and to the City's Conservation Commission in April.

Lazazzero Playground Improvement Plan

Debbie von Rechenberg

Bordered by Lake Street, Shore Road, Princeton Street, and the south shore of Hardy Pond is the 4.3-acre Lazazzero Playground. It contains two Little League baseball fields, a lighted basketball court, and a wading pool. The many visitors currently park in a de facto parking area along the shore of the pond. But that's soon to change.

As reported by the *Daily News Tribune* on July 26, 2007, a plan to improve the playground area has been agreed upon. The plan includes improvements to the baseball fields, play area, and basketball court, the construction of 29 paved parking spaces off Princeton Street, a conversion of the wading pool to a water spray park facility, and the addition of two new fishing piers and a boat ramp. New tree plantings will set off the parking area and will also fill in the open area

between the baseball fields and the pond. The plan was developed through input from the community, the Recreation Department, the Hardy Pond and Lazazzero Playground Committee, and the Hardy Pond Association. Eugene Bolinger, vice president of Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc., was hired by the city to develop the plan based on input from the various groups.

Sandra Tomasello, Director of the Waltham Recreation Department, added recently that the bid to convert the wading pool has been received, and the city plans to award the contract for construction to take place this spring, with the new spray park facility to open some time this summer.

All involved with this project are to be congratulated for coming up with an outstanding plan. While we eagerly anticipate the completion of the plan, we must also be very grateful for the hard work and dedication of so many committed to protecting and caring for Waltham's open spaces.

A Winter Walk

by Alexandra Taylor, age 10

On January 1, 2008, the Waltham Land Trust sponsored a hike up Prospect Hill, one of the only preserved

public hills for hiking. It was a wonderful experience hiking up the hill. I think people should do it more often.

I really enjoyed going up. I met my friends Zena and Cora. The whole time snow fell heavily. It kept falling in my eyes and on my nose, so I licked it off if I could. At the top there was a lady who had brought some things to eat and drink. I had hot cocoa and hot cider. We had brought up some food also, but we didn't eat much of that. It took about ½ an hour to get up to the top, when we got there it snowed harder, and also it started blowing sideways. At the top there were no birds that I could hear. We made up a game where you look up in the sky, find a snowflake, and follow it until it gets close to the ground and then you try to catch it on your tongue. It was fun! I wish I could go there more often because it is really nice. We are fortunate to have such a wonderful green resource in Waltham.



WLT New Year's Day hike at Prospect Hill Park



That Dirty Water: Charles River Water Quality

Susanne Whayne

Do we still love that dirty water? Sure, as much as ever, but can we swim in it? On November 29, WLT sponsored an engrossing talk by Julie Dyer Wood of the Charles River Watershed Association (CRWA) to give WLT members and the public the latest "Report Card" results. There's reason for optimism: in 1995 the USEPA, which rates the water according its *e. coli* count,

continued on page 7

Fourth Annual Green Space Jazz Jam Nets \$8,000

Cool music, great food, and good company, all in beautiful surroundings. Could it get any better than this? Not on Friday, November 2, when the Waltham Land Trust held its fourth annual Green Space Jazz Jam at Stonehurst, the Robert Treat Paine Estate. The estate, a National Historic Landmark surrounded by over 100 acres of conservation land, was an elegant and symbolic venue for this benefit event.

Attendees listened to the Nathan Berla-Shulock Band while dining on food from Little India, Beijing Star, and Taqueria Mexico, followed by ice cream from Lizzy's, cake from Costco, and signature chocolate chip cookies from the DoubleTree Guest Suites. The evening also included a silent auction featuring hotel stays, restaurant gift certificates, gardening, architectural and genealogical consultation, original art, and more.

Mayor Jeannette McCarthy and State Representative Tom Stanley, both sponsors, were among the elected officials at the Jazz Jam. Also attending were city councilors George Darcy, Stephen Rourke, Ed Tarallo, and Sarafina "Sally" Collura.

Hobbs Brook Office Park was the major sponsor for this event, donating at the "Naturalist" sponsorship level of \$2,500. Additional support came from AutoDesk, Inc., City of Waltham Planning Department, Benjamin Franklin Bank Charitable Foundation, Capitol Waste, Committee to Elect Bill Fowler, Lizzy's Ice Cream, Minuteman Press, RTN Federal Credit Union, Sodexho at Framingham State College, State Representative Tom Stanley, Waltham West Suburban Chamber of Commerce,

Watertown Savings Bank. Other sponsors included Little India Restaurant, Costco, the DoubleTree Guest Suites, JenniferFuchel/designer,JFFDesign/Architects&Planners, JohnsonDrug/AWholePersonPharmacy,MayorJeannette A. McCarthy, Myofascial Pain Treatment Center, Louis J. Nocera, City Councilor Patrick O'Brien, Gordon's Fine Wines and Liquors, Robert Eagle, and Party Needs.

Silent auction donors included Blondie Salon and Spa, By Bernice, Charles River Recreation, The Chateau, Courtyard by Marriott, DoubleTree Guest Suites, Elephant Walk, Hair Crew, Home Suites Inn, JFF Design/Architects & Planners, New England Revolution, Amy Rothstein/Pond Productions, Solea, Tempo, Unlimited Plant Care Service, Waltham Car Wash, Watch City Brewing Company, and Yolanda, as well as Laura Chan, John Crookes, Marie Daly, Maureen Bagge Fowler, Susy King, Dee Kricker, Carol Malone, Joris Naiman, Jennifer Rose, Donna Rourke, Nadene Stein, Lesya Struz, Inge Uhlir, and Diana Young.

Thanks in great part to all these generous donors, the event was the most successful fundraiser for the Land Trust, netting more than \$8,000.

The hardworking Green Space Jazz Jam committee included Bill Fowler, Maureen Bagge Fowler, Susannah King, Dan Melnechuk, Doug Prentiss, interim program manager Jennifer Rose, Mike Squillante, and Nadene Stein, with additional help from WLT board members Marie Daly, Joris Naiman, Stephen Rourke, Lesya Struz, Inge Uhlir, and Diana Young. Former program manager Karen Patterson and intern Carly Goteiner also helped with the event.

Anyone interested in volunteering for next year's event should contact the Land Trust office or email info@walthamlandtrust.org.

Charles River Water Quality from page 6

had given the river a D. This meant that the water was safe for swimming only 19 percent of the time and for boating only 39 percent. While better than thirty years before, when the Standells first declared their love for the river, it was far from ideal. By 2005, however, the grade had risen to a B+. The water was now safe for swimming 50 percent of the time and for boating 97 percent. The CRWA's goal is an A+ water grade by 2010; Ms. Wood gave an overview of the problems in meeting that goal as well as the projects that are helping to overcome them.

As you might expect in an area that has attracted settlers for 6,000 years, urbanization is the major impediment to clean water. Today a million people live in thirty-five towns within the 308 square miles of the watershed. Storm drains are overloaded; natural water cycles are disrupted when water can't percolate into the ground, and flooding is a common occurrence. Compounding the problem are the combined sewer systems of some towns, which send storm and sewer water into the same pipe; when overloaded, raw sewage flows directly into the river. Incorrect or illicit pipes connected to storm sewers send in more sewage.

Of all the pollutants brought in by runoff, phosphorus is one of the biggest problems. This prime ingredient in fertilizers continues to do its job in the water with unfortunate effects. Invasive water plants and toxic algae flourish. Large-leafed water chestnuts block sunlight in the water, and dying algae blooms deplete the river's precious oxygen as they decompose.

To combat these problems the CRWA has several on-going projects. The CRWA has conducted, for twelve years, monthly water-quality monitoring at 35 stations along the river, including Beaver Brook. The Find It and Fix It Program, funded by the Massachusetts Environmental Trust, locates and monitors storm water systems and Charles tributaries. Education and outreach programs inform people of the problems that accompany fertilizers. Low-impact development is also promoted to encourage green area landscaping which will withstand flooding.

And what is a better sign of a river's health than fish? The CRWA's fish passage improvement project is creating fish passageways along the sides of dams for migratory species to travel upstream to lay their eggs. But perhaps most exciting is the shad restoration project. It's been a while since shad swam up the Charles to spawn, but those days should soon return. Since 2006 two million shad have been released. The first marked juveniles will mature in three to five years and begin their upstream journey in 2009, revitalizing the waters as they go. They'll love that much cleaner water—and we will, too.

Get Involved!

Membership & Fundraising Committee

Committee purpose: Work to recruit, retain and activate members and to research and write grants and undertake other fundraising initiatives. Skills needed include: marketing, outreach, member recruitment, grant-writing and fundraising expertise. Meets the first Thursday of each month. Chair: Diana Young, dyoung@walthamlandtrust.org.

Land Committee

Committee purpose: Maintain, protect, preserve land through monitoring, grants, stewardship, partnerships, tours. Skills needed include: monitoring, trailblazing, leading hikes, grant research and writing, legal, working with property owners and city. Meets the second Wednesday of each month. Chair: Marc Rudnick, mrudnick@walthamlandtrust.org.

Special Events Committee

Committee purpose: Plan, publicize and run special fundraising events. Skills needed include: event planning, fundraising, marketing, flier-posting, ticket sales, day-of help. Meets the third Wednesday of each month. Co-chairs: Suzy King, sking@walthamlandtrust.org, and Nadene Stein, nstein@walthamlandtrust.org.

Program Committee

Committee purpose: Plan, publicize and run educational, social and other programs. Skills needed include: event planning, educational background, marketing, flier-posting. Meets the second Tuesday of each month. Contact: info@walthamlandtrust.org.

Newsletter Committee

Committee purpose: Assign, write, edit, produce and distribute newsletter. Skills needed include: Writing, editing, design skills, mailings. Meets as needed. Editor: David Kehs, dkehs@walthamlandtrust.org.

Waltham Land Trust Journal

is published by Waltham Land Trust, Inc. PO Box 541120

Waltham MA 02454-1120 www.walthamlandtrust.org © 2008 Waltham Land Trust

Waltham Land Trust, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charitable corporation, and is a member of the Land Trust Alliance and the Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition.

Officers: Nadene Stein (President), Diana Young (Vice Pres.), David Kehs (Clerk), Marc Rudnick (Treasurer)

Directors: Kate Buttolph, Marie Daly, George Darcy III, Maureen Fowler, Susanna King, Dee Kricker, Daniel Melnechuk, Joris Naiman, Stephen Rourke, Mike Squillante, Lesya Struz, Dan Taylor, Inge Uhlir.

Waltham Land Trust's Mission

We are a group of Waltham residents and others who want to save open space in our city. Our mission is to acquire, preserve or restore land in a way that

- balances conservation and access.
- maximizes the natural value of land,
- reduces habitat fragmentation, and
- permanently protects and conserves natural resources;

So that

- public appreciation of natural resources grows,
- native habitat is preserved and restored, environmental quality of life is improved (air, water, noise and light pollution are reduced),
- biodiversity is increased, and
- a legacy of conservation is perpetuated in Waltham.

Printed on recycled paper.

Waltham Land Trust PO Box 541120 Waltham MA 02454-1120

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG. U.S. POSTAGE PAID BOSTON MA PERMIT NO. 56470

Upcoming Events

Sustainable Lawns: Taking Care of Our Personal Green Spaces

Saturday, June 14, at 1 p.m.
Umass Field Station,
240 Beaver Street, Waltham
WLT board member Dee Kricker,
a landscaper and gardener, will
discuss how to make your yard
more environmentally sustainable.
Her talk will be followed by a walk
around the Field Station grounds,
which include GROW (Green Rows
of Waltham) Community Garden
and Waltham Community Farm.

"On Hardy Pond" Cookout, Boating and Family Fun

Saturday, July 19, 5–9 p.m. Lazazzero Park, Waltham

Join WLT and the Hardy Pond Association for an evening on Hardy Pond and gathering for the drawing of the winners of the Row, Ride, Ramble Raffle!

П

ī

ı

П

These events are free and open to the public. They are part of an ongoing series of events sponsored by Waltham Land Trust in order to highlight Waltham's many green spaces.

Chateau Restaurant Fundraiser

Support Waltham Land Trust and have a delicious dinner at the same time!

Date: June 10, 2008 Time: 5–8 p.m.

Chateau Restaurant of Waltham

Italian Family Dining 195 School Street, Waltham, (781) 894-3339

25% of the food and beverage proceeds to benefit Waltham Land Trust

Only one ticket per table needed. Take-out orders included. Does not apply to delivery orders.

PRESENT THIS TICKET WITH YOUR ORDER