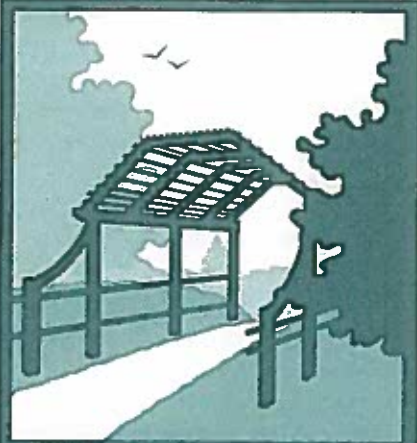


Arboretum Notes



FRIENDS
of the ACTON
ARBORETUM

June 2015 | Volume VII | Issue I

Our Mission

To raise and donate funds, materials and services to the Town of Acton for the development and maintenance of the Acton Arboretum; to educate the community about the unique environmental, horticultural, geological and historical qualities of the Arboretum property, about the process of wetland and field succession, and, in an era of decreasing public funds and natural resources, about conservation, effective horticultural practices; and generally to do all the things permitted to non profit organizations under the provisions of Chapter 180 of the General Laws of Massachusetts and Section 501o3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1984, as from time to time they are amended.

BECOME A MEMBER

FRIENDS of the ACTON
ARBORETUM, INC.

P.O. Box 2607
Acton, MA 01720

President's Report Upcoming Projects



PHOTO: The new Taylor Road sidewalk

Last year, my letter provided a tour of the Arboretum at its spring peak after a snowy winter. This year, while a similar narrative would apply, so much is soon to happen at the Arboretum that I want to describe that instead. All these projects represent long hours by the Natural Resources Department to update and improve the Arboretum's infrastructure, with help from other Town departments, and support by the Friends of the Acton Arboretum. As the numbers of visitors increase, it's especially important to have a safe and accessible parking lot, kiosk, boardwalks, and trails.

- The new Bog Boardwalk is under construction and by the time of the Annual Meeting, it will be complete.
- The Town will bring electrical lines in underground from Taylor Road to provide power to the property. This will be completed before the parking lot project.
- The Town will upgrade the parking by making a paved lot with a one-way traffic flow.
- The Town will construct the storm water retention pond for the new parking lot and the Friends will help design it as a rain garden.
- The old kiosk will be removed with the new parking lot construction and a new one will be built using CPA funds (as part of the parking lot project).
- The 2015 Town Meeting approved CPA funds to dig a water well so that gardeners can have a water source independent of the Acton Water District. The Town will hopefully have the well installed this year.
- The Town received CPA funding to replace the last boardwalk, the one over Mary's Brook. Along with that construction, a large partly dead red maple and 13 black walnut trees will be removed. The maple is too close to the boardwalk for comfort. The walnuts dominate that section of the Arboretum and they exude a toxin in to the soil that severely limits the growth of other species. Planned replacement specimens include flowering trees and shrubs that would brighten the understory. Much of this work will happen next year.

Volunteer gardeners work at the Arboretum at least every Tuesday afternoon and Thursday morning. Their work has brought us beautiful gardens. Last year,



PHOTO: New Taylor Road Parking Lot Plan. Construction is expected to begin late summer.

What's New at the Arboretum



Main Street Sign

The solid mahogany sign created and hand carved by Tom Tidman was refurbished last fall. It is located on the corner of Taylor Road and Main Street. The newly paved sidewalk entrance is located behind it.

Taylor Road Sidewalk

The Town of Acton Highway Department built the second new sidewalk portion along Taylor Road. This section begins at the intersection of Taylor Road and Main Street and meanders past the grape arbor, through the Hosta Garden, under the Crabapple Allee, and ends at the Arboretum driveway. Pedestrians may now safely walk from Main Street to Minot Ave. and to Conant School's side entrance. Plans are underway to build the last section of sidewalk from Minot Ave. to Barker Road.

Bog Boardwalk

The Arboretum Bog Boardwalk is in the process of being rebuilt with Community Preservation Act funds, generous donations from the public, and a donation from the Friends of



PHOTO: Central Street Sidewalk



PHOTO: Former Bog Boardwalk



PHOTO: The new Bog Boardwalk takes Tom Tidman and Bettina Abe within view of a brooding mallard duck and a snapping turtle.

the Acton Arboretum, Inc. It will be made ADA accessible with a paved sidewalk from Minot Ave., similar to the photo example to the left of a sidewalk on Central Street.

The old Bog Boardwalk was built in 1989 by two Eagle Scouts. The new bog boardwalk has fiberglass decking, which is slightly elevated above the bog to give the plants below more light. It will also be fully ADA compliant.

Taylor Road Parking Lot

At April 2014 Town Meeting, Acton citizens approved a plan to improve the Arboretum parking lot. This project will be funded with Community Preservation Act funds as well as donations from the public and the Friends of the Acton Arboretum, Inc. The parking lot will be slightly enlarged, with fixed, marked spaces. It will be paved with asphalt for improved accessibility and a separate one-way entrance will be added. The current entrance will become a one-way exit. This will improve traffic flow. Police believe the new lot will be easier to monitor.

After struggling for decades with potholes, visitors will now have a safer experience when parking their cars. An additional handicap parking space will be added. A large rain garden will be built adjacent to the parking lot to capture storm water and filter out contaminants. The trail head, which contains a kiosk and handicap accessible picnic table, will be reconfigured so that these amenities are universally accessible. The Acton Conservation Commission recently approved the project and issued an Order of Conditions to protect surrounding wetlands.

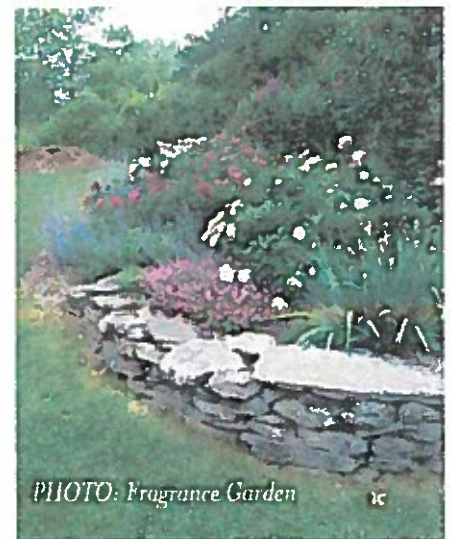


PHOTO: Fragrance Garden

The charm of a woodland road lies not only in its beauty but in anticipation.

Around each bend may be a discovery, an adventure.

Membership Application

Friends of the Acton Arboretum

WHO ARE THE FRIENDS?

We are a group of citizens who care about the natural world and share a vision of preserving and enhancing our natural resources for educational purposes. Friends contribute time, money, plants and other gifts and talents in support of the Acton Arboretum in order to achieve these goals.

Membership benefits for Friends include: a biannual newsletter, seasonal walks, talks and workshops, and civic pride in a special gift of land used for enjoyment and education.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ I am a NEW MEMBER RETURNING MEMBER

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP (CHECK ONE)

INDIVIDUAL | \$15 FAMILY | \$25 SUPPORTING | \$40 CORPORATE | \$100

CONTACT ME FOR VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Commemorative gifts, honoring marriages, births, deaths or other special dates, are gratefully accepted and recorded in a commemorative listing.

PLEASE DETACH AND MAIL TO: FRIENDS OF THE ACTON ARBORETUM, INC. | P.O. BOX 2607 | ACTON, MA 01720

President's Report (con't)

volunteers added plants to the sun meadow and further populated the swale with a selection of plants, from the parking lot north to beyond the footbridge. They planted the area under the grape arbor, adding more grape plants and other perennials. And volunteers added more plants to all gardens, extending some gardens as needed.

Volunteers have also worked hard to eradicate invasive species from some areas of the Arboretum. Each spring crews pull and bag garlic mustard plants. We continuously fight multiflora rose, bittersweet, and honeysuckle, often digging the plants out as completely as possible. Last year the volunteers cleared invasive plants from more of the trail edges between the dug pond and the fern boardwalk over Mary's Brook and from the area above the dug pond by the new Meadow Garden. Stone walls in those areas are once again visible.

This year we added new benches to the Arboretum that had been donated in memory of deceased friends and relatives. The last of the benches we installed years ago was finally replaced! In addition, the Town's insurance helped replace to vandalized curved benches near the Lilac Garden.

Last fall, the Highway Department installed the final section of the sidewalk along Taylor Road, the section from Main Street to the Arboretum driveway. They did a fantastic job protecting the planted materials as they worked. The results were fabulous! Also, given that the sidewalk was plowed this past winter, there was very little damage seen to the Arboretum property.

Volunteers do all the work to make the Arboretum as beautiful as it is each season – from weeding to planting, from buying new plants to donating many plants from their own collections, from organizing workdays to getting

hot and sweaty with the workers – all of it. Town staff helps tremendously mowing lawns and meadows, cutting downed trees, removing large debris, installing benches, delivering load after load of wood chips, mulch, compost, and stone dust. I want to thank everyone for your efforts and hard work. We are especially grateful for the time and effort of Tom Tidman, Acton's Natural Resources Director. His crew helps maintain the property and it's his vision that inspires many new projects.

This coming season we face a few challenges. The new Bog Boardwalk will be completed and Town staff will create a sidewalk from Minot Ave to the new bog boardwalk that meets guidelines for accessibility. A handicapped parking space is planned for Minot Ave at the corner of Forest Ave across from the new boardwalk. When the electrical service is brought into the Arboretum town, staff will use heavy equipment to dig trenches to bury the lines. The biggest project will be paving the new parking lot. It will have one entry drive and another exit drive, helping to ease the congestion frequently happening near Taylor Road. For a time in the late summer when this construction is underway, parking at the Arboretum will not be possible and visitors will only be able to walk into the Arboretum after using remote parking. We will need your patience and understanding during these construction processes.

In addition, we continue to try to conserve our water use by honoring the Town's watering ban by not watering every day. We also carefully select native specimens for gardens whenever possible because they tend to require less water when they are established. During the hottest weather we request that visitors bring drinking water along for your visits and bring water for your dogs too.

Our annual meeting is July 9th at the Arboretum at 4:00 PM. Please join us at the Reading Circle for light refreshments followed by the annual meeting.

Catherine Hatfield, President



P.O. Box 2607 | Acton, MA 01720

Arboretum Notes



What's Happening



*President's Report
Upcoming Projects*

What's New at the Arboretum

Membership Application

PHOTO: Lupines in Sun Meadow

Inside this Issue:

Join us on Thursday, July 9th for the Friends Annual Meeting

Our Annual Meeting is on Thursday, July 9, 4:00pm at the Arboretum Reading Circle. Rain location is Town Hall; room number will be posted at entrance.

WATER ALERT!

Due to irrigation issues under investigation, water has been shut off

at the Arboretum until further notice. Please bring water for yourself and your pets.

Arboretum Notes is produced by Cathy Fochtman with contributions by Bettina Abe and Cathy Hatfield.