

Property Management Plan

Deborah and Roger Richardson Nature Preserve

April 2, 2018



1 Property Description

1.1 General Description

The Deborah and Roger Richardson Nature Preserve was acquired by the Attleboro Land Trust in 2016. It consists of about 63 acres on Wilmarth Street in Attleboro, Massachusetts, with additional access from Smith Street.

- An historic house, vacant for over 50 years, dates to between 1706 and 1708. It was first occupied by Benajah and Lydia (Bucklin) Barrows, who were married in 1706, then by their son Joseph and his wife Bathsheba (Woodward), who were married in 1736. The house, and a garage, are surrounded by about one-half acre of open space on Wilmarth Street.
- South of the house, another acre of open space includes a former garden and a shed.
- There are two hayfields totalling about 5 acres.
- The rest of the property is wooded, with wetland draining into Chartley Brook.

1.2 Abbreviations

Preserve - Deborah and Roger Richardson Nature Preserve

ALT - Attleboro Land Trust

CR - Conservation Restriction as amended

CR holders - Attleboro Conservation Commission and Massachusetts Audubon Society

LAND - Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity

BVW - Bordering Vegetated Wetland

WPZ - Wetlands Protection Zone protected under local wetlands ordinance

1.3 Land Use History

During the 18th century, the Barrows family grew crops, raised livestock, and harvested lumber on the land. The lumber was used to manufacture shingles and barrels. A saw mill foundation still exists next to Chartley Brook just before it flows under Wilmarth Street.

The property was passed down to Nancy Barrows, who married Caleb S. Peck in 1848, then to Evelyn A. Peck, who married William F. Pond in 1874, then to their son Stephen H. Pond and daughter Ina E. Pond, who married Arthur E. Merz.

Peck was a wheelwright and had his shop on the site. Caleb's son Edmund started a furniture business on the property before moving it to expanded quarters elsewhere. Remains of the foundations of at least two outbuildings can be found near the house. A descendant of the family has a photograph of an ice business on the site.

A newspaper article by Suzanne Sawyer in the Attleboro Sun in 1941 gave a lengthy history of the property. John and Alice Brin (not descendants of the Barrows family) purchased the house some time after 1941 and lived in the house until 1953. In 1960, Roger and Deborah Richardson purchased the house from the Brins. In the period from 1957 to 1965, the Richardsons acquired several adjacent parcels from other owners. The Richardsons never lived in the Barrows House, but Roger used it as an office and Deborah for storage. They built a new home on Wilmarth Street west of the Barrows House. Deborah was interested in horticulture and planted some unusual tree specimens on the property. Under her direction the hayfields were maintained for the cutting and baling of hay until about 2000. Since that time the fields have been mowed twice a year, but not cultivated or harvested for hay.

Deborah passed away in 2002 and Roger in 2003. In 2004, the 4-acre northwest corner of the property, containing their home and the ruins of the saw mill, were sold to Carl and Nancy Dorrance.

The Barrows House was inventoried and surveyed by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (Inventory #ATT.221) in 2000 with the assistance of students from Boston University. The report incorporates earlier inventory forms completed by the Attleboro Historical Commission in 1969 and 1985.

As noted in these reports, the street address of the house has been subject to some confusion. Wilmarth Street did not exist when the house was first constructed. In fact, the front of the house faced south and was reached by a long lane from Smith Street. Some city records from the 20th century give the house address as 214 Wilmarth Street, but this number would place the house about one mile to the west of its actual location. The house built by the Richardsons in the 1960's is 575 Wilmarth Street. Since being acquired by the ALT, the Barrows House has been assigned the address 577B Wilmarth Street.

1.4 Aerial View



Proposed Richardson Nature Preserve
Wilmarth and Smith Streets, Attleboro, MA

400 0 400 800 Feet



October 2015; boundaries approximate; aerial photography 2009 from MassGIS

1.5 Information Compiled During Acquisition

The following information was compiled as part of the acquisition process. These documents are all available as digital files in the ALT's online file repository.

- Appraisal by Susan Mitchell
- Survey and Plans by Otis Dyer, Jr.
- Environmental Site Assessment by Bruce Nickelsen of O'Reilly, Talbot & Okun Associates, Inc.
- Baseline Documentation Report by Nick Rossi and Amber Carr of Mass Audubon
- Amendment to Baseline Documentation Report to cover land included in Amendment to Conservation Restriction

1.6 Closing Transactions

The property was acquired in two steps.

The 57.7 acre interior parcel was sold by Thomas and Stephen Richardson to Mass Audubon in February, 2016. The Attleboro Land Trust purchased the parcel from Mass Audubon in June, and immediately granted a conservation restriction jointly to the City of Attleboro and Mass Audubon.

The transactions were financed by a combination of the following:

- Commonwealth of Massachusetts LAND grant to the City of Attleboro which was used to fund the conservation restriction
- Foundation grants
- Donations

Five frontage lots were donated by the Richardsons to the ALT in February, 2016. Later, in October, an amendment to the original conservation restriction was recorded, in which a portion of the frontage lots was added to the restricted area.

- Lot 7 and most of lot 6 is under the conservation restriction.
- An existing gravel driveway which is the main entrance to the property, a planned gravel parking lot, and the Barrows house are all on Lot 2, which is not under the restriction.
- Lots 1 and 5 are not under the restriction, as they were considered as possible trade lots, whose sale might be needed to help finance the acquisition.

The donors qualified for a Conservation Land Tax Credit for the donation of Lot 7.

The acquisition was the third time that the Attleboro Land Trust, Mass Audubon, and the City of Attleboro had joined forces to preserve a large tract of conservation land in the city, with the help of a LAND grant. Charlie Wyman, Land Protection Specialist for Mass Audubon, was instrumental in all three acquisitions. He developed the overall strategy, then worked with other team members to make sure the details were flawlessly executed.

1.6.1 Transaction Details

Parcel	Acres	Grantors	Notes	Assessor ID	Value When Acquired	How Value Determined
Interior	57.7	Mass Audubon	Bargain sale to Mass Audubon by Thomas and Stephen Richardson 2/24/16, then sold by Mass Audubon to ALT. Conservation restriction jointly held by Mass Audubon and City of Attleboro.	Map 111: Lot 3	\$ 630,000	Appraisal by Susan Mitchell
Frontage Lots 1, 2, 5, 6, 7	5.28	Thomas O. Richardson Trust and Stephen K. Richardson Revocable Trust	Donated to ALT, with Lots 7 and part of 6 under conservation restriction jointly held by Mass Audubon and City of Attleboro.	Map 111: Lot 3	\$ 620,000	Appraisal by Susan Mitchell

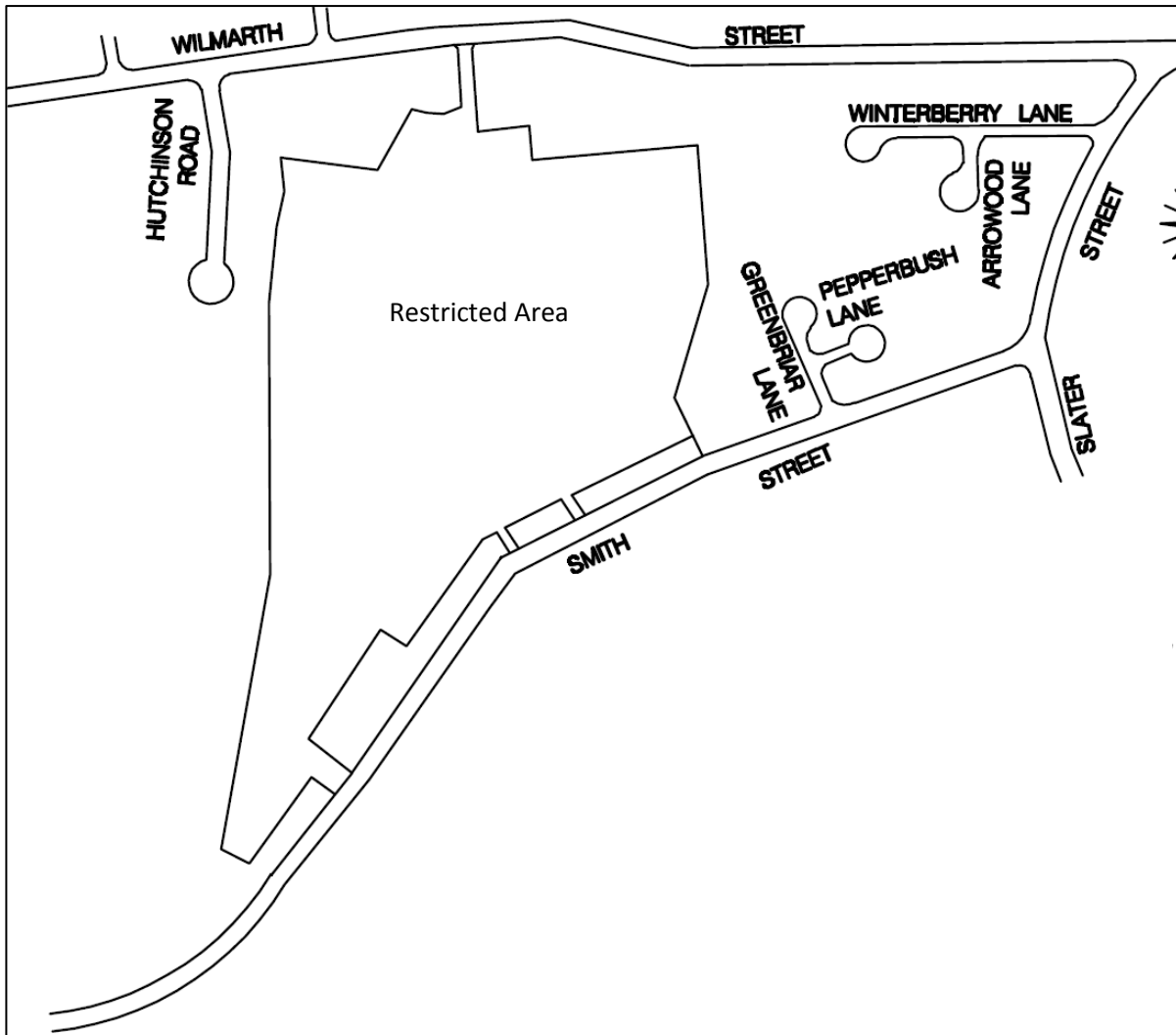
1.6.2 Transaction Documents

Parcel	Date Deed Recorded	Deed Book and Page	CR Granted by Attleboro Land Trust To	Date CR Recorded	CR Book and Page	Date Plan Recorded	Plan Book and Page
Interior	6/20/2016	23049-206	City of Attleboro and Mass Audubon	6/20/2016	23049-212	2/26/2016	503-27,28
Frontage Lots 1, 2, 5, 6, 7	2/26/2016	22821-295 22821-298	City of Attleboro and Mass Audubon (Lot 7 and part of Lot 6 only)	10/21/2016	23335-53	2/23/2016	503-17

1.7 Conservation Restrictions

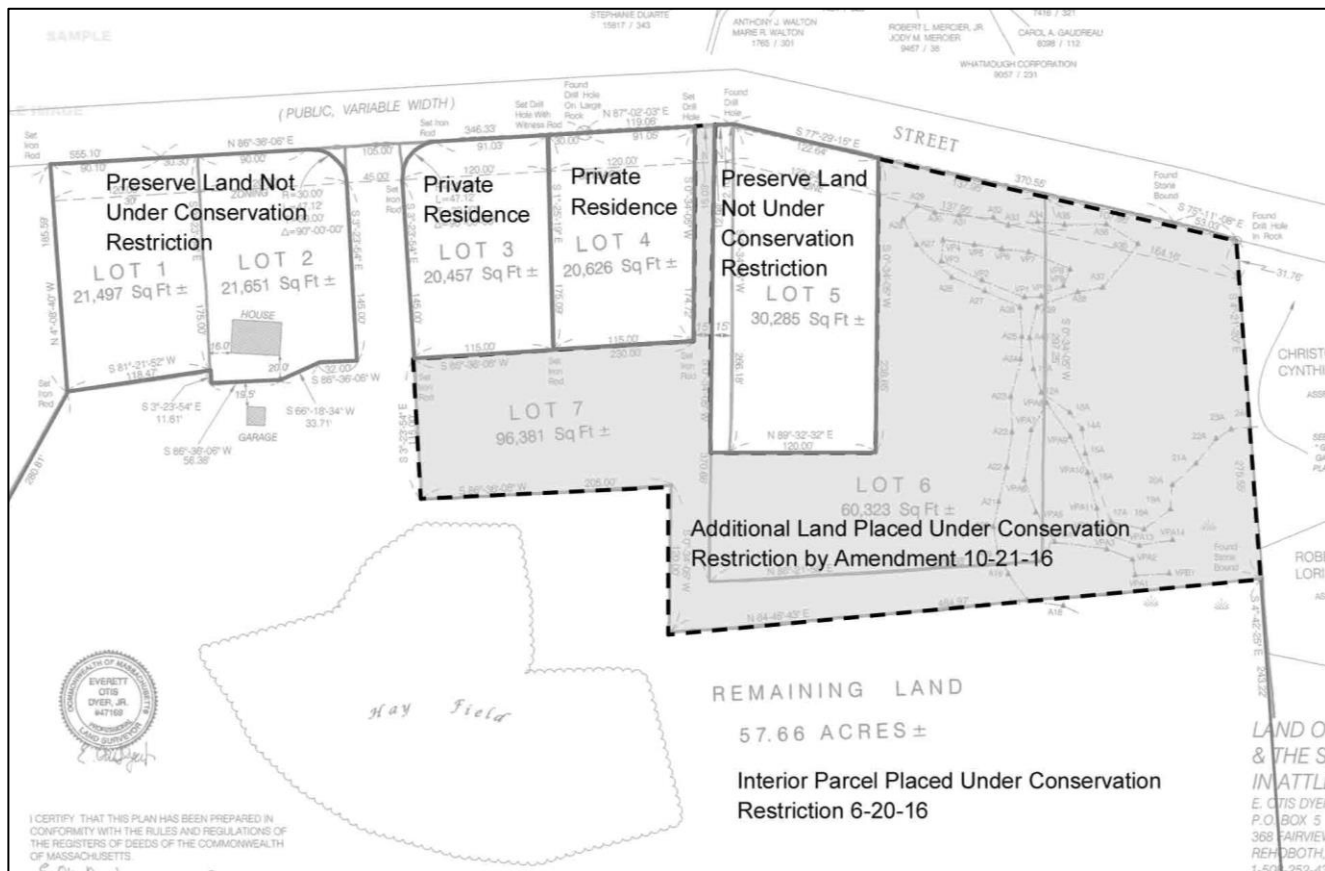
1.7.1 Initial Restriction on Interior Parcel

On June 20, 2016, a conservation restriction was placed on the 57.7 acre interior parcel.



1.7.2 Amendment to Conservation Restriction

On October 21, 2016, the initial conservation restriction was amended by adding approximately 3.5 acres.



2 Protection and Preservation of Natural Features

The natural landscape of the Preserve includes:

- Forested upland
- Forested wetlands
- Open wetlands
- Vernal pools
- Natural stone formations

To protect and preserve these natural features, the ALT will be guided by the following:

- Conservation restrictions cited above
- State and local wetlands laws and regulations
- ALT property management policies and procedures

3 Management of Cultural Features

3.1 Cultural Landscape

There are features in the northern part of the Preserve that can be considered together as part of the cultural landscape that is the result of human activity on this land over many years. These features include three structures:

- Barrows House
- Garage
- Garden Shed

and five open spaces:

- Lawn (surrounds Barrows House)
- The Glen
- Deborah's Garden
- Upper Hayfield
- Lower Hayfield

Not as prominent, but also deserving attention, are stone constructions that may be of historical or archaeological significance.

3.1.1 Aerial View of Prominent Cultural Landscape Features



4 Management Policies

In acquiring this Preserve, the ALT has been presented with a wonderful opportunity to preserve a site with historic and natural features that will afford many educational, environmental, and recreational benefits for the community.

We are also confronted with the need to make choices in the kinds of policies we will adopt in governing our management of the Preserve. The most significant policy decisions we face are as follows:

4.1 Policy Options

Feature	Discussion of Policy Options
Barrows House	<p>The ALT has taken steps to maintain the exterior of the structure, but we have not entered into any obligation to restore the building. We do not see such an endeavor as within our core mission.</p> <p>We have not identified a productive use for the building, although we are finding it useful now for storage.</p> <p>Because of the peeling paint inside the building, we will not open it to the public. We will welcome offers from historic preservation organizations to find ways and means to preserve the house, whether to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make the minimum improvements required to allow the public to view the inside of the house during supervised visits (not necessarily including the restoration of electricity, water, and sewer) • bring it fully up to code to allow modern uses of the building, or • undertake a historically accurate restoration of all or part of the building.
Upper and Lower Hayfields	<p>We initially considered three possible uses for the hayfields:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of hay • Recreational area for people • Wildlife habitat <p>While we don't see any market potential now for the harvesting of hay, we could still choose to maintain the characteristics of the hayfields as cultural artifacts.</p> <p>Or we could focus on making the fields more inviting to visitors for recreational activities such as flying kites, playing frisbee, or walking their dogs. In this case, the poison ivy needs to be brought under control.</p> <p>A third choice would be to emphasize the value of the hayfields as wildlife habitat. The best management practices in this case would require further study. We have not done a species inventory. There are various management options from taking a hands off approach and letting nature take its course to taking deliberate steps to shape the environment and introduce or attract certain species.</p>

Feature	Discussion of Policy Options
Deborah's Garden	<p>Deborah Richardson's garden has a history that will be appreciated by visitors who love gardening. The garden was very overgrown when we acquired it. Volunteers have cleared much of the brush and identified a few surviving plants. There are some very significant tree specimens.</p> <p>The loop trail will pass through the garden.</p> <p>The CR permits horticultural operations and community gardens.</p> <p>We are planning to do a few plantings and place a bench, to honor Deborah's memory. One educational purpose under consideration is to focus on native species vs. invasive species. However, we are trying not to be overly ambitious, as we don't want to create a need for a lot of volunteer work to maintain the garden.</p>
Archaeological Features	<p>Our site steward team has identified some interesting stone structures on the Preserve. We need to have a qualified person tell us whether these are of historic or archaeological significance. If so, we need to determine what steps, if any, we need to take to protect these features from unauthorized tampering. At the same time, it would be of educational value to inform the public of whatever knowledge is to be gained by studying these features.</p> <p>According to the CR, we must "make every reasonable effort to prohibit any person from conducting archaeological field investigation including metal detecting, digging, or artifact collecting without approval of the State Archaeologist of the Massachusetts Historical Commission..."</p>

5 Start-Up Plans

The ALT plans to carry out the following construction and major maintenance projects as part of the start-up phase of this management plan.

5.1 Start-up Construction Projects

Project	Purpose	Description	Notes
Parking lot	Visitor convenience	A gravel parking lot will be constructed in front of the Barrows House on Wilmarth Street, in alignment with the existing gravel driveway.	A design has been completed and a zoning variance and a Storm Water Management Plan have been approved by city authorities. Location not subject to CR.
Gates/barriers	Deter vehicle entry	A system of gates and barriers will surround the parking lot to prevent vehicles from further access unless authorized. A gate on the driveway into the lot will provide the option of closing the parking lot at night.	Design should allow for snow plowing and storage. Location not subject to CR. City fence permit not required since further than 8 feet from property line.
Trails	Recreation, education	Establish a trail system, to include existing trails, new trails, and boardwalks across wetlands. Directional signposts will be installed at trail junctions.	Initial phase will include one loop beginning at Barrows House and a branch leading out to Wilmarth Street. Loop trail to be named for Charlie Wyman. A wetlands permit was approved and three boardwalks were constructed as of November, 2017.
Fence/barrier on Wilmarth Street	Control access to trail entrance and vernal pool	A split rail fence with a narrow opening, along with explanatory signage and additional fencing, will discourage a past practice of neighbors dumping yard waste near the vernal pool at this location. Accumulated yard waste will be removed under the direction of the Conservation Commission.	According to CR, impact on wildlife movement should be minimal. Written permission required from CR holders. City permit required for fences within 8 feet of property line.

Project	Purpose	Description	Notes
Fencing along some boundaries	Mark boundaries and control access	Sight-pervious fences (split rail or wire mesh) will visually identify boundaries, prevent our visitors from entering the private residential lots of our neighbors, deter encroachment, and deter entry of off-road motorized vehicles from neighboring properties.	According to CR, impact on wildlife movement should be minimal. Written permission required from CR holders. City permit required for fences within 8 feet of property line.
Landscaping along boundaries	Visual screening	Trees will be planted along boundaries to block views into neighboring residential lots and provide our neighbors with privacy.	
Landscaping around Barrows House	Visual enhancement, education	Plantings around the Barrows House will be consistent with historical practices on the property, including the horticultural interests of Deborah Richardson, who gardened on the property for many years.	Significant tree specimens planted by Deborah near the house include Osage orange and Chinese chestnut. Location not subject to CR.
Landscaping of Deborah's garden	Visual enhancement, education	Plantings will be consistent with the interests of Deborah Richardson, who gardened here for many years. A bench will also be installed.	Need for water?
Entrance sign	Identify Preserve for approaching pedestrians and motorists	A two-sided sign identifying the Preserve will be located on Wilmarth Street.	A zoning variance was granted in July, 2017, reducing the required setback from the property line from 30 feet to 1 foot. In December, 2017, a sign ordinance went into effect eliminating the setback requirement for "Open Space Identification Signs."
Recognition sign	Recognize all parties contributing to the acquisition of the Preserve	One sign panel has already been installed, recognizing the contributions of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the City of Attleboro through a LAND grant. Two matching panels will be added, recognizing the Richardson family, foundations, and other major donors.	

5.2 Start-up Maintenance Projects

Feature	Improvements Planned	Status	Notes
Barrows House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor repairs to exterior siding, doors, and windows. • Painting of exterior. • Caulking and sealing. 	Painting and most repairs were completed as of Nov. 2017	<p>Powder post beetle infestation should be treated if funds become available.</p> <p>Location not subject to CR.</p>
Upper and Lower Hayfields	Eradication of poison ivy	<p>In fall of 2016, herbicide (Round-up) was applied outside the WPZ. Portions of field inside WPZ were furrowed to loosen poison ivy roots.</p> <p>The poison ivy came back in 2017.</p> <p>For 2018 we are considering frequent close mowing as an alternative strategy.</p>	Herbicide use requires written permission of CR holders.
Upper and Lower Hayfields	<p>Restoration of commercial hay crop, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applying lime and fertilizer • Seeding 	<p>In fall of 2016, lime was applied to the fields.</p> <p>Because of the limited prospects for harvesting and marketing hay locally, we are no longer considering cultivation of hay as a goal.</p>	Work inside wetland WPZ requires permission of Attleboro Conservation Commission.
Upper and Lower Hayfields	<p>Trimming of growth along edges of hayfields, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overhanging branches which might pose a danger to the operator of a mowing vehicle • Invasive species • White pine saplings 	<p>Some trimming was done in 2017.</p> <p>Further work is subject to evaluation of various policy options for the use and maintenance of the hayfields.</p>	Work inside wetland WPZ requires permission of Attleboro Conservation Commission.

5.2.1 Wetland Protection Zones within the Hayfields

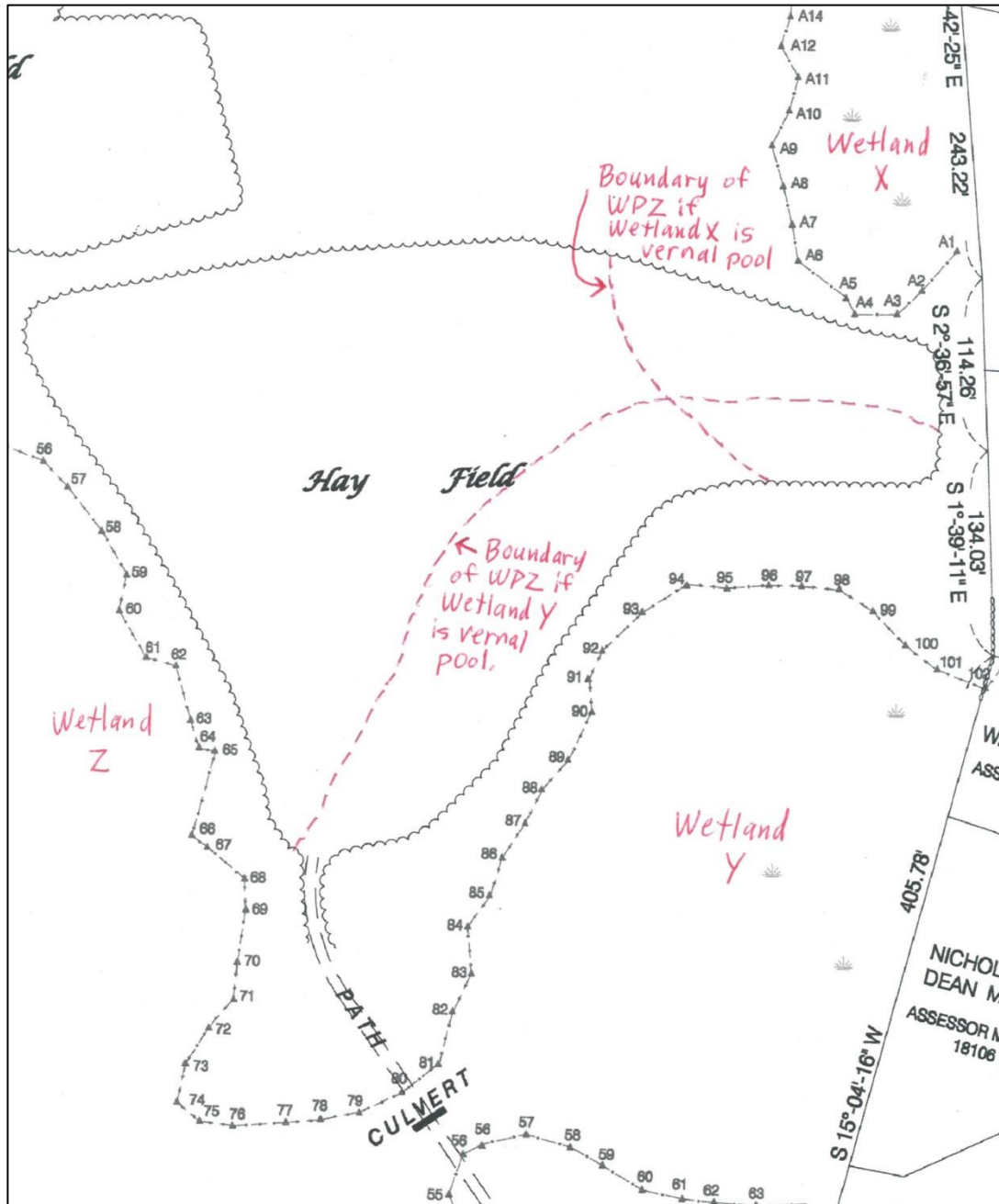
There are no WPZs within the upper hayfield.

The sketch below shows which portions of the lower hayfield are possibly within Wetland Protection Zones. Wetlands X, Y, and Z were flagged as bordering vegetated wetlands. BVW boundaries are usually determined by plant and soil evidence and extend beyond the edge of standing water. The WPZ extends 25 feet beyond the BVW boundary.

These three wetland areas were not mapped as vernal pools or certified as such. Fairy shrimp have been observed in Wetland X. Wood frogs have been heard in Wetland Y, but there is an outflow at the southwest corner of Wetland Y through a culvert. There have been no observations that would indicate a vernal pool location in Wetland Z. The WPZ for vernal pools extends 125 from the high water line of a vernal pool.

The boundary of a BVW would probably not coincide with the high water line of a vernal pool. But if they did, the WPZs in the lower field would cover the area shown in the sketch below.

5.2.1.1 Sketch of Lower Hayfield



6 Ongoing Maintenance

The following maintenance tasks are anticipated on an ongoing basis.

Feature	Maintenance Task	Frequency	Notes
Upper and Lower Hayfields	Mowing	2-3 times per year	More frequent mowing under consideration as a poison ivy control strategy (see section 5.2).
Trail segments which cross hayfields	Mowing	1-2 times per month during growing season	
Trails through woodlands	Trimming of overhanging brush, clearing of fallen trees	as needed	
Garage	No definite plans		Currently used for storage. Future options include continued use or demolition.
Garden Shed	No definite plans		Future options include use or demolition.
Lawn (surrounds Barrows House)	Mowing	twice a month during growing season	
The Glen	Mowing	twice a month during growing season	
Deborah's Garden	Cultivation, weeding	during growing season	Water needed?

7 Management of Visitor Activities

7.1 Standard Regulations

The sign below will be posted at all Preserve entrances.



7.2 Dogs

After complaints at another preserve (Nickerson Walking Woods), we posted a sign saying, "For the comfort and safety of all, please leash your dog."

We have not received complaints at our other properties, and so have not posted this sign anywhere else.

However, we will post this sign at entrances to this Preserve.

7.3 Archaeological activities

Until such time as we update our standard sign, we will post a sign at all entrances to the Preserve saying:

"No metal detecting, digging, or artifact collecting"

8 Special Events

During the acquisition process, the ALT contemplated uses of the Preserve, and particularly the five open spaces, for special events. These might be events sponsored by the ALT, events sponsored by other organizations, or family social events.

The CR permits "Use of the Premises for up to ten events each year, which may involve the erection of temporary structures and the designation of temporary parking areas, provided that the total number of days for which the Premises are occupied by such events and associated activities (including set-up and tear-down) does not exceed 50 days per year, and provided that such events are conducted in accordance with the Guidelines for Special Events..."

The CR further states that the Guidelines for Special Events must be "approved by the [CR holders], which Guidelines will address duration, periods for set-up and removal, parking, and other activities that if not conducted properly could damage the conservation values of the Premises."

The ALT will monitor all events for impact on the conservation values of the Preserve and review the Guidelines annually.

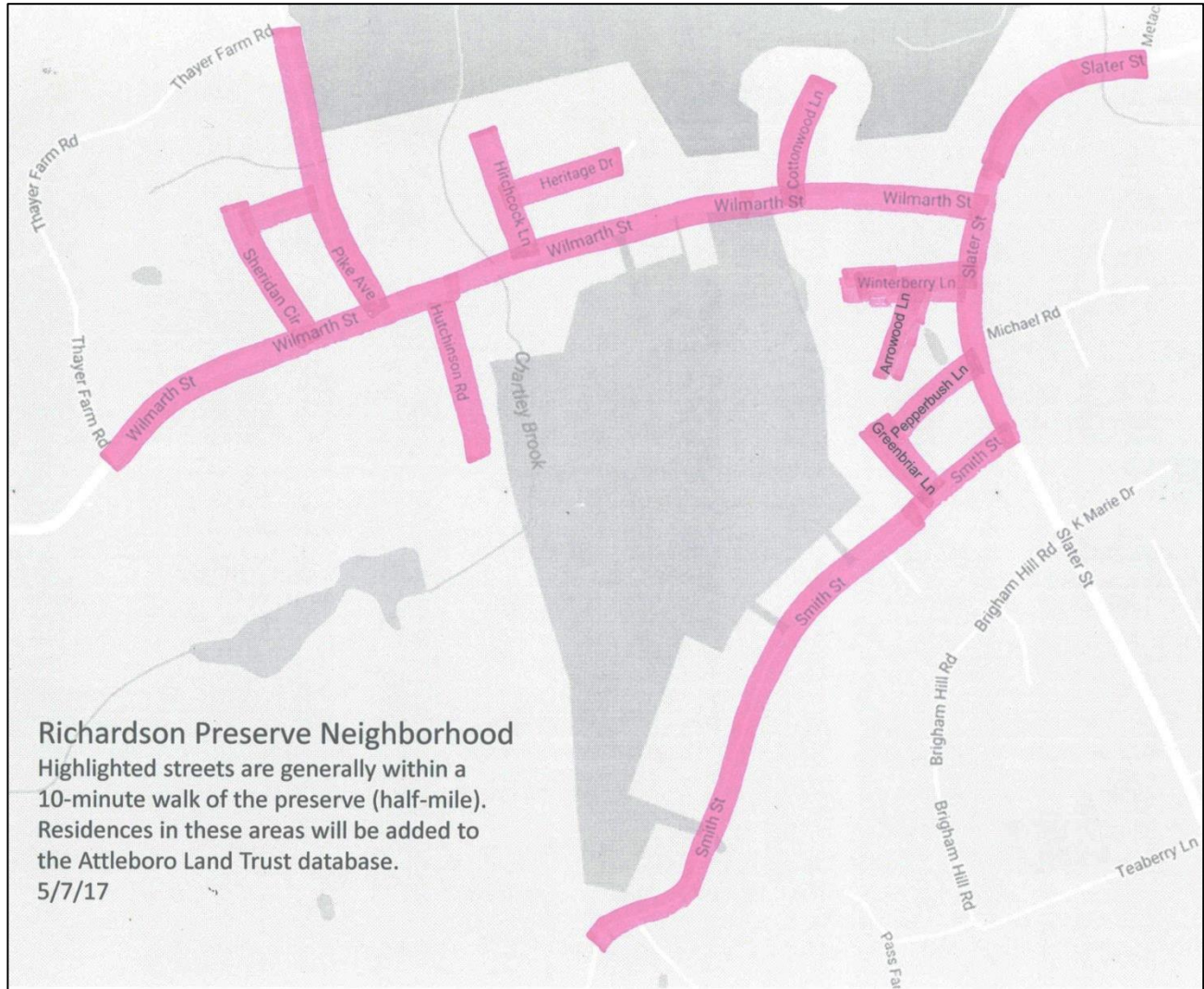
8.1 Guidelines for Special Events

- The number of guests present at the event at any one time shall not exceed 200.
- The number of staff present at the event at any one time shall not exceed 50.
- Temporary structures will be permitted, at the discretion of the ALT, on the Lawn, The Glen, Deborah's Garden, the Upper Hayfield, and the Lower Hayfield, excluding Wetland Protection Zones.
- Temporary parking for up to 100 guest vehicles will be permitted on the Lawn, The Glen, Deborah's Garden, and the Upper Hayfield, within specific areas to be designated by the ALT. Temporary parking for up to 10 staff vehicles will be permitted in the above areas or the Lower Hayfield, excluding Wetland Protection Zones.
- The duration of an event should not exceed 3 days, with up to 2 additional days for set-up and 2 additional days for tear-down.
- Prior to scheduling an event, the ALT shall review the event program with the event organizer to ensure it poses no risks of fire or other damage to Preserve.
- A damage deposit and evidence of insurance may be required. An ALT representative should do a walk-through of the property with the event organizer before the event, and again after the event, before releasing the damage deposit.
- Portable toilets must be supplied in adequate numbers by the event organizer.
- The event organizer will be supplied with a copy of the Event Guidelines.
- The event organizer will be required to submit a written event plan demonstrating compliance with the Event Guidelines. Permission for the event will be subject to review and approval of the event plan by the ALT.
- Proposals for youth camping events will be considered by the ALT.
- Events organized by the ALT shall not count towards the 50 day per year special event maximum if they are educational or recreational events, open to the public, attended by no more than 50 people, of 3 hours duration or less, require no temporary parking outside the Lawn, and require no temporary structures.

9 Outreach to Neighbors

About 200 neighbors have been identified within a half-mile walk from the Preserve. This includes the currently planned entrances on Wilmarth Street and anyone within a half-mile walk from the narrow strips of land connecting the Preserve to Smith Street--possible future trail entrances.

All 200 households have been entered into the ALT database. These households will be contacted to invite them to get involved and to enlist their cooperation in abiding by regulations protecting the Preserve.



10 Amendments to this Plan

Amendments to this plan that apply only to portions of the Preserve not under the conservation restriction (Lot 1, Lot 2, Lot 5, and a 15'-wide portion of Lot 6, as shown in section 1.7.2) may be adopted by the ALT without the permission of the CR holders.

Otherwise, amendments to this plan shall require the approval of the ALT and the CR holders.

11 Approvals

By their signatures below, the parties signify their approval of this management plan.

ATTLEBORO LAND TRUST, INC.

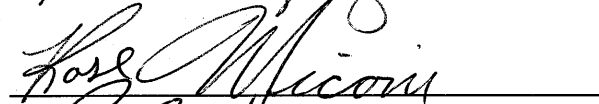
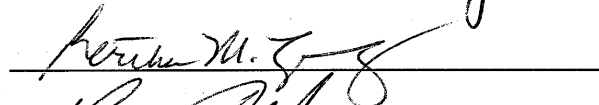
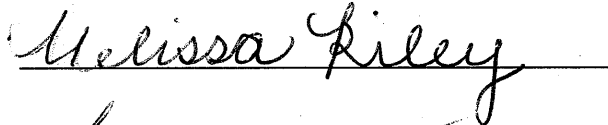
Date: April 4, 2018



Roy Belcher, President


ATTLEBORO CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Date: April 4, 2018



MASSACHUSETTS AUDUBON SOCIETY

Date: April 17, 2018



Nick Rossi, Conservation Restriction Stewardship Specialist