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The Boxborough Conservation Trust is a non-profit, tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) corporation with mailing address at 462 Hill Road, Boxborough, MA 01719, telephone (978) 264-0113

This Newsletter is an infrequent publication of the Boxborough Conservation Trust, Boxborough, Massachusetts

Town Center Field of Dreams

Can dreams come true? The Town Center Visioning Committee (TCVC) believes so. Its mission is to create a sense of community and enhance the quality of life in Boxborough. The committee, consisting of town board representatives and local volunteers, and guided by U. of Mass. Professor Dr. John Mullin, carefully examined in brainstorming sessions the town center's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The proposals under discussion mirror the TCVC's heartfelt desire to cooperate mutually with the developer and to reflect the values and aspirations of Boxborough's citizens.

The plan for this mixed residential/commercial development is to augment the beauty of the existing terrain by forming a well-conceived choreography of pond, trees, open space and antique colonials with a new town common. A public library, post office and traditional New England architecture are expected to emerge from the final design, thus shaping a space which invites the public to browse, talk to neighbors and become a greater part of the community.

The town center will bring people together and define the small, rural town we have come to love. As conservationists, we have an extraordinary occasion to not merely mark time, but also to create Boxborough's history. We enthusiastically encourage all BCT members to roll up their sleeves, join the TCVC, and help shape the Boxborough which future generations will cherish. Yes, if you build it, they will come.

Dan MacPhail

Wildlife Tracking Walk

If you are interested in joining BCTrust member Barbara Warren for a wildlife tracking walk once we get snow, please contact her by phone: 635-9428 or e-mail at bwarren@neaccess.net for the date, time and location.

From the President

Recent Activities

This has been a busy year for us. Apart from our regular biweekly Board meetings we have been involved in several activities in town. Together with the Conservation Commission we have established property evaluation criteria and a land ranking model for objectively prioritizing Trust and town land acquisition prospects. We have been in discussions with a number of large land owners regarding their options for preserving their land while meeting their financial needs. We have been working with the Boxborough and Stow Conservation Commissions, Sudbury Valley Trustees and the Stow Conserva-

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BCTrust On-line

We now have a web site, although the content needs some work. You can find us at www.bctrust.org. Ben Hood, an enterprising sophomore at A/B high school, helped us get it launched. Over the coming months we will be adding pages for things like coming events, copies of past and current newsletters, info on how to get involved in Trust activities, book reports, trail maps, space for feedback, links to reference material and other web sites of interest, photographs of Boxborough, etc. The possibilities are limitless.

We welcome any suggestions you might have for things you would like to see included, or ways to improve it. Speaking of opportunities to get involved, we need someone to take over development and administration of the web site. If you have experience in this kind of thing your help would be very much appreciated.

Simon Bunyard



2000 Annual Meeting

Sunday, March 26
4:00 to 6:00 PM
Location to be determined

Mark the date. We are fortunate to have as our keynote speaker John Mullin, professor of landscape architecture at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Those of you who attended the Town Center Visioning Committee meeting this fall will remember how John led the group in a very energetic and productive exercise to examine the core values the town would place on a new town center. John will be talking on the subject of land conservation as an integral part of a comprehensive land use planning process.

As we think about preserving undeveloped land, we must work in tandem with other interest groups to achieve shared goals which are in the best interests of the town. Our joint efforts will more likely lead to achieving the aims of conservation and getting the support of a greater number of people.

We hope you will be able to join us for this celebration as we go into our third year. Be sure to bring with you some non-Trust members who might be interested in joining. Watch for our winter Newsletter which will have more information, and a location.

Upcoming...

Next Spring the BCT will co-sponsor with the Conservation Commission a Wetlands Walk to be led by a wetlands specialist pointing out what makes a wetland and why they are important. We also want to set up guided walks on town conservation land and a trip to a vernal pool.

New Memberships This Year

Peter and Patricia Joy
Karen and Lew Smolin
Robert Fraser and Patricia Fraser
Mr. & Mrs. T. Bieber
The Pavlik Family
Barbara & Ted Warren
Jim & Carla Bacharach
Scott & Anne Spalding
Tara Zantow and Tim Blankenship
Alan Burroughs Clemence
Nancy Settle-Murphy & Michael Murphy
Bill & Caroline Crosby
Larry & Rita Grossman
Rich & Ginny Scarlet
Handler Schragger Family
The Scherfling Family
Bruce & Deborah Gray
Karyn & Richard Kealty
Tom and Jenny Michaels
David and Amy Burke
Mike and Tami O'Leary
Bruce and Paula Taylor
Anonymous
Denise Theodores and Andrew Rodwin
Cory Atkins
Karen & Andrew Metheny
JoEllen Baird and Hal Rosenstock

Privacy Policy

Our policy on protecting the privacy of our members is this: We will include the names of members in lists published by the BCTrust, unless requested to make those names anonymous (as above). We will never give out to a third party the names or any other information about our members.

Communicating With Our Members via E-mail

We have found that one of the most effective, and definitely the most efficient, methods of communicating with our members on most issues is e-mail. We have e-mail addresses for about half our members. About the beginning of November we sent out an e-mail with a notice about an upcoming trail clearing day. If you did not receive it, it means we do not have an e-mail address for you. **If you want to be included in future e-mail correspondence like this, please forward your e-mail address to Simon Bunyard at scb@ccgi.com.**

We will continue to use the US mail for important correspondence which needs to go to all members, but cost prohibits its use for everything.



The 1999 T-shirt by Danielle Forshay

A Picture Is Worth a Thousand Words

Beavers, woodchucks, hawks or owls. Or maybe a stately beech behind a stone wall. The fourth grade students at Blanchard are gearing up for the annual BCT T-shirt contest. Ms. Dian Hosmer, the art teacher, has started her students talking about what conservation is, and what it means to them.

This is the third year that BCT has sponsored the T-shirt design contest with Ms. Hosmer's students. The finished designs are submitted to our board of directors. A winner and four honorable mentions are chosen. The winner gets a \$25 prize and his/her winning design is put on T-shirts which the Trust then sells as a fund raiser.

This year's winning entry, above, was done by Danielle Forshay, a 4th grader. You may have seen it around. We have already sold 96 T-shirts with her design on them. So they should be showing up frequently.

We look forward to this year's entries. There are always some wonderful surprises. Thanks to the students and Ms. Hosmer for a great effort.

Ken Fabian



*Continued from page 1
from The President*

tion Trust on a joint management plan for the newly acquired Flagg Hill conservation areas. A number of members were involved with clearing trails on town conservation lands, doing roadside cleanup on Liberty Square, Stow, Burroughs and Old Harvard Roads and mowing the fields on Steele Farm. Several Board members are involved in town committees such as the Town Center Study Committee, the Town GIS Committee and the Affordable Housing Committee to ensure the needs of land preservation are adequately addressed in those important discussions. For the third year we are sponsoring a T-shirt design contest for fourth graders at Blanchard Elementary School. We had an active booth at Fifer's Day dunking some of Boxborough's finest citizens (much to the amusement of the many onlookers), talking with prospective members about the Trust's activities, and raising almost \$2000 for the cause. We had a booth at the Grange Fair where we gained some new members, Cory Atkins among them. We have launched a study of the long-term financial impact of big-box retailing on small towns. And we have launched a web site as a means of better communicating with and serving the citizens of Boxborough.

Your small board cannot and should not work alone, however. If you would like to attend a board meeting, check with me regarding time and location of the next meeting. We want the help and involvement of our members. Please contact any board member to tell us what you would like to do to help the BCT preserve the quality of life and protect the environment in Boxborough. We need people willing to play either a supportive administrative role, or a leadership role, as we work to preserve and protect Boxborough's undeveloped land.

Frank Coolidge

Ice House

Our kudos to Duncan Brown and the hardworking members of the Historical Society and Steele Farm Advisory Committee who, along with other volunteers, are reconstructing the 100 year old ice house on Steele Farm.

From the BCT Bookshelf *by Linda Coe*

How Superstore Sprawl Can Harm Communities

A recent addition to the BCT Bookshelf is a 1994 publication from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, How Superstore Sprawl Can Harm Communities: And What Citizens Can Do About It, by Constance Beaumont. The last decade has seen a proliferation of sprawling discount superstores like Home Depot and WalMart (often ranging in size from 90,000 to 250,000 square feet) located in rural areas near major highway interchanges. The immediate benefits of a huge discount superstore on the edge of a small town – shopping convenience, affordable prices, job creation, and contributions to the local tax base – can be dwarfed by hidden impacts:

- huge increase in local town-wide traffic, as many as 10,000 car/truck trips a day, with significant air and water pollution consequences;
- creation of massive parking lots up to 10 or more football fields in size;
- increased demands on local police, fire, and highway maintenance services;
- the “magnet effect” of attracting additional superstores, fast food outlets, etc. exacerbating sprawl concerns;
- documented evidence that superstores drain the life out of town centers, undermining a sense of community and displacing small locally-owned businesses.

This guide explores economic, social, and environmental reasons for reducing or preventing superstore sprawl. It describes zoning, planning, and other tools citizens can use to stop or abate sprawl as well as tips on dealing with the media. It includes case studies (eg. Westford, Greenfield, and Burlington) and a list of helpful resources. As many Boxborough residents work to define and create a town center reflecting the rural character valued by so many, this guide may help in safeguarding the success of their effort.

(For more information see the National Historic Trust website at www.nationaltrust.org, and for info opposing superstores see [Sprawl-busters](http://www.sprawl-busters.com) at www.sprawl-busters.com)

A copy of all books reviewed here will be donated to the Boxborough library by the BCTrust where they will be easily available to the public.

Member Feedback!?!

We very much want to get your comments and suggestions, on anything we do, or don't do.

One member commented on their renewal form they didn't want to see their money go to fancy newsletters. That was after we sent out the color version of this Newsletter last January. Just to assure our members, that newsletter was printed (somewhat laboriously I might add) on a home ink-jet printer. It was not done by an outside printer, and it did not cost very much, if that is the impression it gave. But we do agree it would be a good idea to make it a little less splashy, so this time we are going with the plain version. In the future, we may simply post it on our web site to save the mailing costs which are steep.

We would like to publish your letters, e-mails, or paraphrased verbal comments. Please send them to the president, Frank Coolidge, at 462 Hill Road, or call or e-mail any of the Board of Directors listed on page 4.

Had a Good Year?!? Tax deductible year-end gifts to the BCT would be much appreciated and may be mailed to Sam Fisk, BCT Treasurer, 60 Barteau Lane, Boxborough, MA 01719. And be sure to give the green New Member Form to a friend interested in joining us, a great way to start the Millennium!!!!

Need A Gift Idea?

We have just received a big shipment of the simple logo T-shirts. These are the ones with a small tree and stone wall logo on the left breast, not the big annual T-shirt graphic. They make great presents for Christmas, Hanukkah, birthdays, or just a gift to yourself. Call Ken Fabian at 263-6524 for ordering information. Operators are standing by!!!

Our new year 2000 T-shirts will be ready for sale at the annual meeting in March. Be sure to get yours while they last to make your collection complete. Remember, there is a new edition of these wonderful designs by Boxborough's children every year.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- newsletter (desktop publishing)
- trail maintenance
- book reviews
- stewardship of conservation land
- web site design and administration

If you are interested, please call Frank Coolidge at 264-0113

The Boxborough Conservation Trust

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Call or e-mail us with your questions or comments any time.

Name Your Newsletter

We need a better name for this newsletter, don't you think? *Newsletter* just seems a little dull. Recently the Sudbury Valley Trustees named their newsletter *The Wren*, which has a certain cache. Some suggestions so far have included *Vernal Voices*, *The Whimsical Whippoorwill*, and *The Boxborough Beaver*. Any ideas? I am sure you can do better than that.

Can you guess the tracks?



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