

HOPKINTON AREA LAND TRUST INC.

NEWSLETTER



Volume XXXVI, Fall

September, 2012

A Word from the President

David Goldman

Summer is almost over and the fall school start is upon us. Events this coming week will be the annual Poly Arts Festival on the Common on Saturday September 15th and the Hopkinton Area Land Trust **Annual Meeting** on Sunday September 16th. The meeting will be held in the **Hopkinton Fire House Training room (2nd floor) from 2 PM to 4 PM.** Members and the public are invited to attend the meeting, where the Trust will review the events of the last year and will be making an award to Anne and Chuck (posthumously) Zettek. Anne and Chuck have provided both their generous, land and financial support to the Trust over the years. Please come celebrate this event with us on Sunday.

The Geocaching program for our trails and properties continues. The Trust has been very lucky in finding a **geocache-master** and we welcome **Dr. Michael Babcock** to the position. The Trust now has geocaches on the following properties/trails: **Whitehall Conservation Area (WCA) (GC34KJH, N 42° 14.142 W 071° 34.298); Karl Mighton Trail (KMT) (GC34X6Q, N 42° 13.065 W 071° 28.329); Deer Run, Andersen's Trail (DRT) (GC34X5Y, N 42° 14.870 W 071° 29.895).** Since May of this year the Trust has had 24 visits to the WCA, 8 visits to DRT, and 2 visits to the KMT. The Trust is planning to place another three caches in the next month or two so stay tuned.

Finally, after approximately 8 years, the Trust and the Sudbury Valley Trustees are beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel for the placement of a Joint Conservation Restriction on the 125 acres of open space in the Fruit Street property. The last/final revision of the CR is at the State DEP for approval. The survey on the approximately 125 acres of open space land is nearing completion and goes to the Planning Board for approval on September 10th. Once approved it then goes to the Selectmen as the final step. It should be noted again that the Town has decided to ban the discharge of any firearms on the entire Fruit Street property (245 acres) because of the danger to kids and adults using the Fruit Street Fields.

Once again, I must appeal to you and plead for your support. We all know that economic times are still tough, and may be getting tougher, but if you think about it, the Trusts' open space in town provides some very real benefits to each of you. It provides open space land that is always open to you and your family for your fun and enjoyment. Also, by maintaining the open space, the Trust is helping to preserve and increase the value of your property in Hopkinton. **We are closing in on 750 acres of open space land in Trust ownership or under Conservation restriction**, that provides for the preservation of that rural character we all want in Hopkinton. So please **help support the Trust, by becoming a member or making a tax deductible donation.** so that we can continue to provide this value to you the residents.

Very truly: *David Goldman*, President

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Honoring Chuck Zettek – A Friend of the Trust and Hopkinton

The Hopkinton Area Land Trust honors Chuck and Anne Zettek for their major and continued support to the Trust over many years. The honor for Chuck is posthumous but well deserved.

First, let's review some of their lives leading up to the award. Chuck was in the Army Air Force flying over Germany in WWII as a bombardier, and he was witness to the destruction wrought by American B-17s, devastation that was necessary for the Allied war cause but that left its mark on his psyche. After narrowly escaping death multiple times and earning several medals, he enrolled in Harvard College at war's end for a planning degree, intending to turn his role in urban destruction into a career in urban renewal. He graduated magna cum laude and worked on redevelopment projects in Lowell and Worcester. "He wanted to help cities and plan for cities and to overcome in a way what he had to go through," said his son, Matt Zettek, a former Hopkinton selectman, who only heard his father's war stories after the patriarch spoke at a granddaughter's class presentation.

After briefly renting in Medway, Zettek and his Radcliffe beau, Anne, settled in Hopkinton. Neighbors soon encouraged his interest in giving back, and he joined the Planning Board in the 1950s, helping work on the town's first master plan at a time when the Mass Pike was under construction, Interstate 495 was being planned and the town's industrial sector on South Street did not yet exist. Chuck served on the Planning Board for 25 years and was also on the Conservation Commission and the Elmwood School Building Committee. He won election to the town moderator's post and was reelected several times. His son recalled not only his "quick mind, unique sense of humor and respect of people," but also his sensitivity and patience for Town Meeting voters not accustomed to public speaking. "He had this perceptive sense of people," Matt Zettek said. When the Chuck's hearing declined, people encouraged him to seek the moderator position again, but he said he felt he couldn't maintain his own high standards for the volunteer post and left after a 15-

year tenure. He drew a standing ovation at the close of his last Town Meeting.

Anne, also volunteered, serving on the School Committee, and Matt Zettek followed his parents' lead, first with a spot as a Framingham Town Meeting member and then with Hopkinton selectmen when he moved back to town. In addition to his career and volunteerism, Zettek wrote a book. Called "The Ten Most Important Words in Your Life," it attempts to reconcile his beliefs in science and God, and is still available at Amazon.com.

The elder Zettek, a longtime Hopkinton resident, passed away last year (2011) at 89 after a long battle with Alzheimer's disease. Known alternatively as "Chuck" or "Charlie," he has been remembered around town for his many contributions to civic life.

Both Chuck and Anne were extremely generous to the Trust over the past several years, with donations of land and financial support. The Hopkinton Area Land Trust's board of directors voted at its July meeting to honor Chuck and Anne, and will present a plaque of appreciation at the Annual Meeting on September 16, 2012 (2 PM) to be held at the Hopkinton Fire Station Training Room.

From Portions MetroWest Daily News

HALT Scholarship Recipients – 2012

By Gail Clifford

Hopkinton Area Land Trust is pleased to present scholarships to two graduates of Hopkinton High School, Jake LeSuer and Max Vumbaca.

Jake LeSuer, who will attend Connecticut College in New London, Connecticut, plans to pursue a degree in Environmental Science. Interested from a young age in nature photography, he has used his technical photographic knowledge to help complete the complex process of certifying a vernal pool. Jake states that "photography encourages me to be a patient and keen observer", qualities which are very necessary to a successful scientific career.

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Jake sent the Directors of HALT a Thank-You letter on a card made with one of his excellent nature photographs. In the letter he shared the information that his application for vernal pool certification has been approved by the National Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP).

Max Vumbaca will be attending Harvard University to pursue his interests in the “protection of nature and responsible use of land”, possibly by majoring in environmental science or environmental law. Activities involving environmental protection and correct land use are very important to Max. For his Eagle Scout project, he conceived, developed, and constructed a community garden, with plots available to local families who wish to grow flowers, fruits, and vegetables on their own. A large part of the garden is set aside to grow produce for the food pantry at Project Just Because.

In his Thank-You letter to the Directors of HALT, Max stated that he, “like many of my peers, believes strongly in the importance of protecting the natural world...Thank you for acknowledging my efforts.”

HALT applauds both of these young men, not only for their impressive academic achievements at Hopkinton High School and their equally impressive achievements in the local community environment, but also for their ambitions to remain environmentally aware and to work in careers that help to sustain nature and its benefits to humanity.

Terry Property

In April 2012 the Hopkinton selectmen voted to not exercise the town's right of first refusal for the 204-acre Terry property that was subsequently purchased by Paul Mastroianni for \$3 million.

And so goes another large tract of land given up to commercial development. The trend to encourage the development of apartments/town houses and strip malls continues.

The land borders Lumber, West Main and Chamberlain streets, as well as the Hopkins/Middle School/High School property.

The proposed development (named The Acres) of the land calls for the following:

- A 20,000 square foot building for retail stores
- A 29,000 square foot commercial building with restaurants, shops and offices
- A 4,000 square foot building
- Another building to be determined
- 200 apartments

Various studies show that commercial development does not lower taxes. Commercial development causes traffic and pollution to increase, so roads need to be widened and repaired, and local quality of life deteriorates leading to lowered property values. Also, office buildings don't change hands as often as houses do, so their taxable value doesn't come as close to inflation. Thus, the proportion of taxes paid by commercial property generally declines over time.

HOPKINTON BRANCH RAILROAD COMPANY

By Gail Clifford

The Boston & Worcester Railroad Company was chartered on 23 June 1831, and construction began in Boston in August of 1832. The railway was opened in sections, reaching Ashland in September of 1833, Westborough in November of 1834, and Worcester on 6 July 1835.

Ashland prepared a major celebration for the coming of its railroad. Captain John Stone had built an inn next to the tracks in anticipation of the revenue that the railroad would bring. Massachusetts Governor John Davis, previous Governor Levi Lincoln, and many other dignitaries attended the festivities. The celebration was all the sweeter because the railway was originally intended to run more northerly than Ashland Center, parallel to Route 9. However, the Worcester Turnpike Association was concerned that they might lose toll revenue and effectively forced its location to South Framingham which then guaranteed passage through Ashland.

In the 1840s and 1850s, the Milford & Woonsocket Railroad was incorporated. Service was flowing

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northward from Providence and connections to the Boston & Worcester Railroad were considered necessary. On April 19, 1854, a Commonwealth of Massachusetts Act incorporated the Hopkinton Branch Railroad Company to Lee Claflin, Silas

Mirick, and Erastus Thompson. This corporation was empowered to locate, construct, and maintain, with one or more tracks, a branch railroad that would connect downtown Hopkinton to the Boston & Worcester Railroad at Cordaville. If the location of this railway branch was not filed within sixteen months, and the railroad not constructed within three years from the date of this Act, then the Act and corporation would be null and void. Nothing came of this, and the Act was rendered powerless.

In 1869, another Act was passed to incorporate the Hopkinton Branch Railroad Company, Number Two, to Lee Claflin, Jefferson Pratt, and Alvin A. Sweet. This Act was to locate, construct and maintain a railroad, commencing at some convenient point near the center of the town of Hopkinton, running northerly by the most direct and feasible route, to the Boston & Albany Railroad, at or near Indian Brook in Ashland. By 1862, the Boston & Worcester Railroad had consolidated with the Western Railroad (Worcester to Springfield, then to the border of New York), and became the Boston & Albany Railroad.

The Hopkinton Railway was leased in 1870 and opened in 1872, continuing the Milford & Woonsocket Railway north from Milford to Ashland. The Milford & Woonsocket actually purchased the Hopkinton Branch in 1884. The Milford & Woonsocket Railroad was operated by the Providence and Worcester Corporation. Part of the Hopkinton to Milford line is now the Center Trail, running from Rt. 135 across from Hopkinton Lumber to the loop road behind the high school.

A depot and car shops were built for the railroad near the town center about 1872. By the 1920s, however, the railroad was pretty much abandoned. According to Hopkinton Historical Commission records, the last passenger ticket was sold in 1912, although hauling freight continued into the 1930s. Sometime in the 1940s, the depot building was moved to a backyard in Woodville and used as a shed. Around 2002, the building was removed from that backyard to another backyard, and plans were made to reconstruct and restore the depot. Approval by necessary town boards, funding, hiring of contractors, adoption as an Eagle Scout project, and hours

and hours of volunteer carpentry later, the restored depot sits about a half-mile west of its original location. It is now used as a warm-up shed for ice skaters at Ice House Pond on West Main Street.

You can take an important step for your community: Offer your leadership, political support, and charitable gifts to a land trust. Better yet, consider donating a conservation easement on your land. It is an investment in the future that offers attractive tax benefits and the satisfaction that the land you love will be protected forever.

Become a Member of HALT

| | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Family | \$30 _____ |
| Sentinel | \$50 _____ |
| Centurion | \$100 _____ |
| Steward | \$250 _____ |
| Protector | \$500 _____ |
| Conservator | \$1,000 _____ |
| President's Circle | \$1,000+ _____ |

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone _____

Email Address _____

All contributions to HALT are deductible for income tax purposes.

**Mail to:
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Or email: info@hopkintonarealandtrust.org

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