

HOPKINTON AREA LAND TRUST INC.

NEWSLETTER



Volume XXXIII, Fall

September, 2011

A Word from the President

David Goldman

The summer is rapidly drawing to a close and as fall approaches most of you are anticipating the beginning of the school year. As you are all aware with the onset of September, we are preparing for the annual **PolyArts Festival** on the Hopkinton Common. It a good time to enjoy the early fall and to come a chat with your fellow town folks. **Saturday, September 17** is the date, so come to the festival and stop by the Trust's booth. **On the Sunday following PolyArts, the Trust will have its' Annual Meeting (see the next page for the details) but please mark your calendar for Sunday September 25 between 2 and 4 PM.**

In early August, the State's Department of Conservation and Recreation's Recreational Trails Grant Program awarded the Hopkinton Area land Trust \$17,525 for the restoration of an area on the Center Trail that has been badly eroded by heavy rains in the past few years (again see the next page for the full details of the grant).

You may remember that the Trust has been developing a Geocaching program for our trails and properties in order to encourage greater usage of them. The Trust has purchased several "Cache Boxes, Log Books, and other material and will be setting up the Geo-caches in September and October. Once set up they will be registered with the website "GEOCACHING.COM" so that they can be officially sanctioned. The Trust hopes that you will participate in this fun experience that encourages the use of the outdoors and especially the use of our trails and properties. For Geo-caching information see the website <http://www.geocaching.com/> . (Also see the article on page 3 and 4 for more detailed information on Geocaching.)

As always, I must come to you with hat in hand, and plead for your support. We all know that economic times are 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 (free of any charges). 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**, the Trust provides for the preservation of that rural character that we all say we want in Hopkinton. So please help support the Trust so that we can continue to provide this value to you the residents. Thanks for the time you spent reading my letter and please enjoy the beautiful New England fall season.

Very truly: *David Goldman*, President

PO BOX 56, WOODVILLE MA 01784

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Annual Members Meeting

The Hopkinton Area Land Trust 2011 annual meeting will take place on Sunday, September 25, 2011 at 2 PM in the conference room upstairs in the Hopkinton Fire Station.

Meeting agenda:

- Introduction
- Update on The Trust's trails
- Election of one board member
- Conservation Restrictions explained
- Committee formation and discussion
 - o Membership & fund raising
 - o Land use & stewardship
 - o Web site
 - o Programs, education and public relations
- Financial report
- Questions and answers
- Door prize drawing

If you are interested in joining the Hopkinton Area Land Trust, membership information is located on our web site (www.hopkintonarealandtrust.org) or on the last page of this newsletter.

We look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

HALT Is Awarded Recreational Trails Grant

This past July the Hopkinton Area Land Trust was awarded a Recreational Trails Grant from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation for erosion mitigation and improvements to Hopkinton's Center Trail.

The Center Trail provides Hopkinton and surrounding community residents with a 1.1 mile wooded walking trail extending from near the town center off Rt. 135 (across from Hopkinton Lumber) in a southerly direction, crossing the back of the Hopkinton High School property, traversing near some of the athletic fields and ending in a residential neighborhood on Chamberlain Street.

The trail generally follows an abandon railroad line to Milford that was built in 1863 and removed in 1950. There are three short granite bridges on the trail, originally built to allow water to flow under the railroad tracks and now serving the same purpose for water flowing into the wetlands below the trail. All the water on both sides of the trail flows from Indian Brook to the Hopkinton Reservoir to the Sudbury River to the Concord River to the Merrimack River and finally to the Atlantic Ocean.

The Grant award is \$17,525. The Grant funds will be used to rebuild the Center Trail, repair the erosion damage and stabilize the trail base, eliminating any opportunity for future erosion. Although there is always ongoing trail stewardship, the Grant money is expected to provide a permanent solution to the erosion problem, eliminating the need for repeated trail repair, which is not productive or economically feasible. The Hopkinton Area Land Trust plans to install a number of erosion deterrents including crusher run, rip rap, drain pipes and a product called Gravelpave in various portions of the trail bed.

Repairs to the Center Trail are expected to start in the autumn of this year and be complete before winter.

The Recreational Trails Program provides grants ranging from \$2,000 to \$50,000 for a variety of trail protection, construction and stewardship projects throughout Massachusetts. The Program requires that projects be primarily recreation rather than transportation oriented, and gives priority to projects creating or facilitating physical, on-the-ground trail improvements, which protect or enhance the site's natural and cultural resources, and link individuals and communities to these resources.

Sprawl and the Preservation-Revitalization Connection

We lose more than beautiful buildings from sprawl. We also lose the community character that makes each place unique. This character, made up of the architecture, people, and landscape of a particular place, offer regions some of the best opportunities for economic development. Many of the most impressive examples of revitalization around the country, whether urban downtowns or rural Main Streets have had the preservation of historic architecture and character at their core.

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Giant Sucking Sound

Sprawl drains resources away from existing communities. Sprawl's transformation of the American landscape has led to declining cities and inner suburbs, while imposing daunting new infrastructure and public service costs on suburban communities. Because rapid residential growth often fails to pay for itself, many local officials feel forced to accept any commercial development in whatever form it comes – typically, cookie cutter shopping centers and big-box stores. These patterns lead to the same problems – increasing traffic, marginal services, lack of open space and rising taxes – that many residents tried to leave behind.

Main Street Inc.

Few places are as hallowed in the American psyche as the classic Main Street. With its human scale architecture of retail shops, offices and apartments above, and wide sidewalks, these places represent some of what is best about American town building. With many suburban-style, generic malls falling out of favor with consumers and developers, the people are returning to Main Street for shopping, strolling or just to find a peaceful place to people-watch.

Preserving character and Economy by Stopping Superstore Sprawl

The following is excerpted from an article by experts at the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

People love what's inside superstores. They hate what's on the outside. It's hard to argue with the popularity of Wal-Mart, Target, Home Depot, Lowe's, and their many imitators.

And yet, at any given moment, hundreds of grassroots organizations across the country are fighting tooth and nail to keep these retail behemoths out of their communities. "Is the worst of the suburbs the best we can hope for?" asks a flier distributed by citizens in New Orleans protesting a proposed 199,000 square-foot Wal-Mart store in the historic Lower Garden District. "We're not gaining a store; we're losing our community," laments a citizens' group in Decorah, Iowa, in an ad placed in USA Today. Opponents of a proposed Home Depot in Mountain View, California, have opened their own office, stocked with lawn signs, literature, and petitions, to protest the giant store. A group called Mainstreet Defense Fund sued the

city of Northfield, Minnesota, over its approval of a sprawling Target store on the outskirts of town.

What's behind these battles? In the view of many, big-box stores impose hidden costs that don't appear on the price tags of the products they sell: traffic congestion; loss of trees, open space and farmland; displaced small businesses; substitution of jobs that support families with low-paying jobs that don't; air and water pollution; dying downtowns with vacant buildings; abandoned shopping centers; a degraded sense of community; and sprawl. The list of problems linked to big-box stores is long. Whether one loves or hates big-box stores, it is indisputable that their effects are long-term and significant.

Local public officials owe it to their constituents to consider these effects—and to become familiar with tools available for mitigating them—before approving bigbox stores. Such tools include impact assessments, design standards, planning moratoria, retail size limits, intergovernmental agreements, and the withdrawal of subsidies for retail sprawl.

From www.smartgrowthamerica.org

Geocaching

Geocaching is an outdoor sporting activity in which the participants use a Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver or mobile device and other navigational techniques to hide and seek containers, called "geocaches" or "caches", anywhere in the world. A typical cache is a small waterproof container containing a logbook where the geocacher enters the date they found it and signs it with their established code name. Larger containers such as plastic storage containers (tupperware or similar) or ammo boxes can also contain items for trading, usually toys or trinkets of little value. Geocaching is often described as a "game of high-tech hide and seek," sharing many aspects with benchmarking, trigpointing, orienteering, treasure-hunting, letterboxing, and waymarking.

Geocaches are currently placed in over 100 countries around the world and on all seven continents, including Antarctica. After 10 years of activity there are over 1.3 million active geocaches published on various websites. There are over 5 million geocachers worldwide.

History

Geocaching is similar to the 150-year-old game

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letterboxing, which uses clues and references to landmarks embedded in stories. Geocaching was conceived shortly after the removal of Selective Availability from GPS on May 1, 2000, because the improved accuracy of the system allowed for a small container to be specifically placed and located. The first documented placement of a GPS-located cache took place on May 3, 2000, by Dave Ulmer of Beavercreek, Oregon. The location was posted on the Usenet newsgroup sci.geo.satellite-nav as 45°17.460'N 122°24.800'W / 45.291°N 122.4133°W. By May 6, 2000, it had been found twice and logged once (by Mike Teague of Vancouver, Washington). According to Dave Ulmer's message, the original stash was a black plastic bucket buried most of the way in the ground and contained software, videos, books, food, money, and a slingshot.

Geocaches

For the traditional geocache, a geocacher will place a waterproof container containing a log book (with pen or pencil) and trade items then record the cache's coordinates. These coordinates, along with other details of the location, are posted on a listing site (see list of some sites below). Other geocachers obtain the coordinates from that listing site and seek out the cache using their GPS handheld receivers. The finding geocachers record their exploits in the logbook and online. Geocachers are free to take objects (except the logbook, pencil, or stamp) from the cache in exchange for leaving something of similar or higher value.

Typical cache "treasures" are not high in monetary value but may hold personal value to the finder. Aside from the logbook, common cache contents are unusual coins or currency, small toys, ornamental buttons, CDs, or books. Also common are objects that are moved from cache to cache called "hitchhikers", such as Travel Bugs or Geocoins, whose travels may be logged and followed online. Cachers who initially place a Travel Bug or Geocoins often assign specific goals for their trackable items. Examples of goals are to be placed in a certain cache a long distance from home, or to travel to a certain country, or to travel faster and farther than other hitchhikers in a race. Higher value items are occasionally included in geocaches as a reward for the First to Find (called "FTF"), or in locations which are harder to reach. Dangerous or illegal items, weapons, and pornography are generally not allowed and are specifically against the rules



of most geocache listing sites

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

Choose your membership level now at:
www.hopkintonarealandtrust.org



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