



Andover Village Improvement Society
Andover's Land Trust
Founded 1894

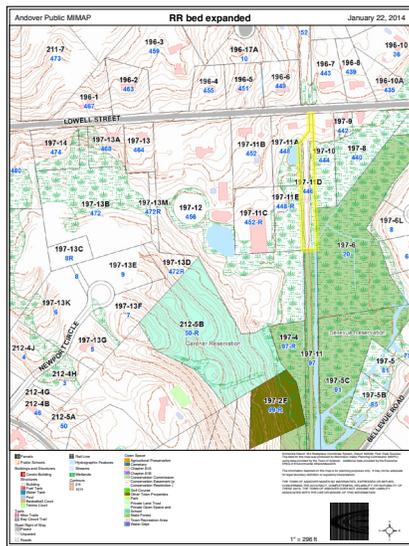
Spring 2015
Vol. 122, No. 1

avis update

AVIS and Ironstone Farm Trade Land

By Susan Stott

As the result of a new residential development off Brown Street, AVIS received about seven (7) acres of land from the Newport Circle developer, Gary Patch. Much of this property is wetlands but some is nice upland. The newly acquired property abuts the Ironstone Farm property on Lowell Street. Prior to installing trails in this new reservation, AVIS recognized that the Ironstone Farm operators had concerns about the closeness of potential Ironstone Farm trails used for horseback riding, particularly by those riders who participate in the therapeutic programs offered by Ironstone Farm. This led to a discussion of how to protect Ironstone Farm clients while still improving the potential for hiking. The result has been an exchange of about an acre of land to Ironstone Farm from the Newport Circle plot. AVIS gets about an acre of land that will



allow the public to use the old railroad bed that crosses Bellevue Avenue and eventually goes behind Haggetts Pond. The stretch just south of Lowell Street was owned by Ironstone Farm and now will be owned and maintained by AVIS. To celebrate this collaboration the organizations are planning a joint party for the Spring. Please stay in touch or check our website to find out when the event will take place.

Ferry Crossing adds to Deer Jump Reservation

By Susan Stott

In January 2015, Joseph Germano transferred two open space parcels, a total of almost five acres, from the Ferry Crossing subdivision to AVIS. Both open space parcels abut and will add to the Deer Jump Reservation along the Merrimack River. The entrance to this new subdivision and the open space parcels is Jillian Way. This donation will significantly expand the Deer Jump Reservation back from the River, protecting the privacy of both pedestrians and homeowners. The developer will install a boardwalk for access across the wetlands at the end of Jillian Way.

Tennessee Gas Pipeline – Northeast Energy Direct Project

By John Hess

Kinder Morgan hosted a series of Open Houses for interested citizens to comment on the proposed Tennessee Gas Pipeline Northeast Energy Direct (TGP/NED) project. The proposed pipeline route will traverse parts of West Andover near the Tewksbury border, including crossing the Merrimack River near the Franciscan Center, crossing River Road, Bailey Road, Lowell Street, and Tewksbury Street just east of I-93 where it parallels the interstate before entering Wilmington on its way from Dracut to Lynnfield and Beverly. These Open Houses were in February in New York, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. Many citizens attended and raised questions about the need for the pipeline in light of increasing emphasis in Massachusetts on renewable sources of energy. Our nearest Open House was scheduled for February 17, 2015 at the Wyndham Hotel in Andover. The Town of Andover (and many others) encouraged Kinder Morgan to change the date of this meeting due to school vacation week. However, as of 2/9/15, they had not made a change.

Please continue to check the AVIS website and the Town of Andover website for updates about the pipeline. A new Facebook group has formed – Andover Pipeline Awareness – to share ideas and news about the pipeline. Even though the proposed route no longer goes through any AVIS properties, we must continue to be vigilant because the route could change at any time.

AVIS Annual Dinner

Please join us on March 10, 2015 at the Andover Town House on Main Street. The speaker is John Kimball and his topic is: Tales from the Ward Reservation: Andover's Stonehenge and Quaking Bog. The evening will start with a social hour at 6:00 pm followed by dinner at 7:00 pm. A short business meeting and the presentation by Mr. Kimball will begin at 8:15 pm. The meeting and presentation are free and open to the public. Please respond by 2/28/15 to Libby Poland at (978) 475-6159 for reservations. We have had to turn away guests in the past due to space constraints and hope that the new location will avoid this dilemma. But, please get your reservation early. See you then.

Solstice stones at the top of Holt Hill



An Interview with Dennis Crispo, Warden of the Hammond Reservation

By Alix Driscoll

What does this long-time climber of major mountains have in common with AVIS? Dennis Crispo, warden of the Hammond Reservation, has on his personal resume the climbing of all the 770 mountains in the Northeast more than 3,000 ft. and all peaks over 4,000 ft. in the same area, in winter. Earning the accolade “High Pointer,” Crispo has scaled all the tallest peaks in each state except Mt. McKinley/Denali.

So why would he come down from the heights to serve as Warden of the Hammond Reservation? “It is serene, close to home, and I enjoy giving back to the environment for all the enjoyment I’ve had in the wilds for more than 40 years,” shares Crispo. He explains “his” reservation is now experiencing a new life cycle of woodland regeneration.”

The beavers, which flooded vast areas of Hammond and Skug reservations as well as the Mary French Conservation Commission lands have moved on or been trapped within the last few years. The former wetlands are drying out as the forest regenerates with

new growth of maple and pine. Hammond includes the old historic dike, built in the late 1800’s as a watering hole for cattle and an ice skating pond. During the “beaver days” Crispo cut a new trail to circumnavigate the flooded trail sections. After AVIS finally obtained approval for a beaver deceiver and the water level was receding, Crispo discovered vast stores of waterlogged bottles and cans in the marsh area. He gathered up the detritus and recycled the containers. Now true to “the broken window” theory of James Q. Wilson, Andover’s own Annie Gilbert’s father, the cleaned up area has not received any more trash.

He enjoys the trail and brush clearing challenge; taking down the widow makers and blow downs give him a fine workout. “I love to use an axe.”

Boy Scout Troop members directed by Eagle Scouts built new boardwalks on Hammond’s “back stretch” and inscribed their troop number in nails on a post on walkway sections. These are beautiful pres-



Dennis Crispo at the Hammond Reservation

sure treated wood replacement for some old rotted out bog bridges.

When he moved to town in the 1990s after four decades in Wilmington, Crispo settled in Ballardvale and began working right away on neighboring Vale and Ballardvale reservations. He earned his Warden’s hat when Marta Hornidge, now AVIS Trustee Emerita, asked him to take over the care of the either Hammond or Skug reservations, which she and her husband, Dick had been protecting for years, and he chose Hammond. These 38 acres had been given to AVIS by Ted Hammond, Jr. in honor of his father, Edmond E. Hammond, a former AVIS president.

An Interview with Gina Bertelli, Warden of the Rafton Reservation

By Alix Driscoll

Surely the newest warden of Rafton Reservation has her reservation well protected. Bertelli, a National Guard member of the Military Police, returning from a deployment to Naval Station Guantanamo Bay in the fall, has recently taken up AVIS warden duties. She is currently a safety officer at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in South Hamilton and will soon become a police officer in Hamilton. One of two Rafton wardens, Bertelli comes to the job with strong connections to this 226-acre reservation. Bertelli had been walking Jimmy and Mary Cuticchia’s dog, Chance, on the Rafton and grew to love it. “I feel very lucky that I am a part of something larger than I am.” Warden Steve Brown shares overseeing duties with Bertelli.

She brought to the job the conviction that “Andover makes its lands open to all as public reservations and AVIS, too. This is an important policy.” She sees her mission to encourage more people to come to the Rafton Reservation,

IMPROVEMENTS AHEAD

“Rafton is so dynamic. It rejuvenates itself every season.” Bertelli is planning to create a blog with photos of the seasonal wonders of the land and to include events on a quarterly basis. “My job as warden is to get people out on the reservation, to understand why we are preserving this land, especially important for youngsters who will be making decisions to preserve land in the future. “

For the kiosk at the trailhead, Bertelli plans to share information on trails, endangered species, flora and fauna, animals and other critters. She is hoping to plan an event in conjunction with Earth Day in April. Look for an Earth Day hike.

Rafton Reservation, AVIS’s largest, was named for Harold Rafton in 1968 for his legendary ability to persuade landowners to sell or give their holding to AVIS for permanent protection. The Boy Scouts camp out frequently, seniors trek the trails as part of the Center at Punchard activities, and families discover new adventurers in the



Gina Bertelli and her friend Chance

wild. On March 15, the Rafton will host the Trail Animals Running Club, fourth annual Spring Thaw six-hour run/walk.

Bertelli shares that her career goal is to become an environmental police officer, thus protecting all facets of the environment for the Commonwealth; continuing on a larger scale what she has begun as warden of Rafton Reservation.

Trails & Sails 2014

In September 2014 AVIS collaborated with the Andover Historical Society and the Addison Gallery of American Art at Phillips Academy to provide coordinated events in Andover for the Essex National Heritage Trails & Sails event. This was the second year of collaboration on events designed to attract visitors to Andover. As part of over 150 events that highlighted the historic, cultural and natural sites in Essex County, AVIS sponsored two hikes, one along the Shawsheen River and one in the Sakowich/Bakers Meadow reservations. Thanks to Fred Snell and Mike Timko for leading these hikes. Look for information about AVIS hikes as part of the Fall 2015 Sails & Trails event.

Shawsheen River Greenway Update

By John Hess

In April 2013, AVIS hosted over 90 people at the dedication of the Shawsheen River Greenway, an improved trail that stretches from Ballardvale to Central Street near the Horn Bridge. In the nearly two years since that dedication countless individuals have hiked, skied, and snowshoed this beautiful stretch of Andover property. Now AVIS is working with other citizens of the Town who are interested in replicating this Greenway model along further sections of the Shawsheen River. There are beautiful stretches of the River between Central Street and Essex Street. Part of this collaboration includes working with the organizers of Andover Tomorrow, a Town sponsored group that is looking at ways of revitalizing Andover's Historic Mill District near Essex Street at the Shawsheen River. Many communities have reclaimed their riverfronts which have been lost to industrial and commercial purposes for over 100 years. These communities recognize the benefits of creating new uses for these areas and Andover is planning to do the same.



David Dargie leads hikers in Goldsmith Woodland on 2/8/15

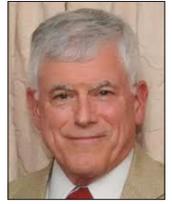
We never can thank our supporters, volunteers, and donors enough. Here are a few we wish to recognize:

- The Boston Foundation for annual grants of \$5,000 from the Bessie P. Goldsmith Fund that are used for improvements and maintenance on the Goldsmith Reservation, as well as necessary tools and equipment.
 - New co-wardens of the Indian Ridge Reservation are Casper Martin and Linda Woolford.
-

www.avisandover.org • 978-494-6089 • facebook.com/avisandover

Letter from the President

By Mike Timko



I ended my letter in the Fall 2014 Update with the admonition to “stay tuned” on two important subjects: the Tennessee Gas Pipeline (TGP) and the Phillips Academy Boathouse. There is significant news on both fronts.

The original plan for the TGP “Lynnfield Lateral” through Andover was for the 20” gas pipeline to include a four-mile long, clear-cut right-of-way through the Fish Brook watershed, past the Wood Hill Middle and High Plain Elementary schools, and through the middle of several AVIS and Andover Conservation Commission conservation areas before passing under I-495 near the MA-133 exit. AVIS worked diligently with the town and other conservation groups to strenuously object to both the need for the pipeline at all and the proposed route. We offered several alternatives, stressing existing infrastructure such as power lines and highways.

In December, the plan for the pipeline was submitted by TGP to FERC, the governing Federal agency, with a revised route that shortens the distance in Andover by about 2.3 miles and places the pipeline along an existing power line right-of-way. Instead of affecting about 104 residents directly it now affects 86 homeowners. While we still believe that the need for more gas infrastructure can be alleviated in other ways, we feel that this route is better than the original. I understand that this is not much comfort to those homeowners who are now affected who previously were not. We are continuing to share the knowledge we have gained with those homeowners. A new group has formed called Andover Pipeline Awareness – they are on Facebook for additional updates.

The other issue from the Fall Update was the Phillips Academy Boathouse. This is an 8-acre parcel of land on the Merrimack River near the Lawrence border which includes PA's old, now unused, boathouse. We encouraged the Town of Andover to spend some of a Town Meeting approved fund (which had been set aside for that purpose) to buy the property for a number of community uses in addition to its conservation value. After much wrangling, the town did make an offer, though not a competitive one. In the end, an adjacent property owner offered far more than AVIS and the town together would have ever been able to afford.

AVIS's Land Acquisition Committee has several other properties in its sights, and a new one came to the forefront a few months ago. A 20-acre piece of land along the Shawsheen River at the Tewksbury border has come on the market. Because it has been taxed as agricultural land in the past, the Town of Andover has the right of first refusal to purchase the land for whatever a private buyer offers. The Town can also transfer that right to a conservation organization such as AVIS. Again, AVIS has encouraged the Town to consider buying all or part of the land as conservation land, primarily to protect the river. At this writing, discussions are continuing. Stay tuned! The right-of-first-refusal ends near the end of April 2015.

These are just a few of the projects that AVIS has gotten involved with recently to ensure that development is balanced by conservation. We use our voice as we have for 120 years to maintain the quality of life in Andover. We could not do it without your support. Thank you!

Avis Membership

Name: _____

Address: _____

Town, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Dues: \$25 Individual \$100 Sustaining
 _____ \$40 Family _____ \$10 Student & Senior

You can join or renew online at www.avisandover.org/join.html or make check payable to "AVIS" and mail to :

AVIS
PO Box 5097
Andover, MA 01810.

For information about planned giving or stock donations contact info@avisandover.org. Contributions and dues are tax deductible to the extent permitted by federal regulations. Thank you!

AVIS
PO Box 5097
Andover, MA 01810

Non-Profit Og.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Permit No. 344
Andover, MA 01810

Spring 2015 Calendar

Tuesday, March 10, 2015 Annual Dinner

Andover Town House, Main Street, Andover

6:00 Social Hour, 7:00 Dinner, 8:15 Presentation. The speaker is John Kimball and his topic is: Tales from the Ward Reservation: Andover's Stonehenge and Quaking Bog. The meeting and presentation are free and open to the public. Please respond by 2/28/15 to Libby Poland at (978) 475-6159 for reservations.

Saturday, March 28 Work Party

9am - 3pm

All volunteers invited. Park at the end of Raven's Bluff off of River Rd., follow the trail to the left to the Deer Jump Reservation meadow. We will be removing the dead trees from the meadow and scattering them into the woods. A pizza lunch will be provided. Led by David Dargie, david@dargie.com, 978-996-4475.

Sunday, April 12 Work Party

1pm - 4pm

All volunteers invited. Park on Inwood Ln. off of River Rd., follow the trail to the left on the Deer Jump Reservation. We will be hand pulling invasive plant species, Garlic Mustard and Narrowleaf Bittercrest. Led by Amy Janovski and Susan Hegarty.

Saturday, April 25 Work Party

9am - 3pm

All volunteers invited. Park on Bannister Rd. for the Amy Rollins Greene Reservation's Beautification Project. We will be cleaning up the area along Bannister Rd. A pizza lunch will be provided. Led by Paul Dick, paul_dick@us.ibm.com, 978-475-4646.

Sunday, May 3 Work Party

1pm - 4pm

All volunteers invited. Park on Nolle Dr. off of River Rd. follow the trail to the right on the Deer Jump Reservation. We will be hand pulling invasive plant species, Garlic Mustard and Narrowleaf Bittercrest. Led by Amy Janovski and Susan Hegarty.

Saturday, September 12, 2015 Andover Day

Main Street, Downtown Andover

10:00 am - 2:00 pm

AVIS will have a booth with literature and maps about AVIS reservations. Good opportunity to interact with the citizens who use the lands that are set aside and maintained by AVIS for public enjoyment. You can volunteer to help at the booth by contacting John Hess at (978) 470-0806 or hess.john@att.net.

For additional AVIS events, see avisandover.org. For AMC walks, see amcboston.org/andover. To check for other hikes, visit andovertrails.org.

The AVIS Update is a biannual publication of the Andover Village Improvement Society. The mission of AVIS is to acquire and preserve Andover land in its natural state. More than 1,000 acres of land are managed by AVIS and are open to all for passive recreation.

Mike Timko President
Rob Ciampa Membership
John Hess Editor
Lindsey Timko Designer

PO Box 5097 Andover, MA 01810
www.avisandover.org
update@avisandover.org

