

Charge of the Heywood Meadow Stewardship Committee

Background: Heywood Meadow holds a special place in the hearts and minds of Concord citizens. It is exceedingly rare that such a large plot of land (8.4 acres) so near a town center in the Boston metropolitan area remains undeveloped to this day. This can, at least in part, be attributed to its historical role in the Concord community as this land has borne witness to much of Concord's history almost from the inception of the town. The mill pond was sited on it; the Mill Brook which supplied the pond and powered the mill still flows through it; the British marched past it, and Ralph Waldo Emerson, its most illustrious although by no means its only historically significant neighbor and adjacent landowner, undoubtedly got inspiration looking out his windows onto it. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Concord Monument Square/Lexington Road National Register District, has been inventoried by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, and is part of the American Mile Historic District.

Heywood Meadow has been threatened with development several times in the past 60 years. A visitor's center proposed for Lot 3 on the West Meadow was the most recent in a series of three proposals to devote all or part of Heywood Meadow to other municipal uses including a public safety building and a courthouse. In 1998, as a direct result of the visitor center proposal, Historic Massachusetts named Heywood Meadow as one of its 10 most endangered state historic resources. In the face of each of these threats either individual citizens contributing private funds, the Town or Town Meeting has acted to protect the integrity of the Meadow. In 2000, an alternative site for the proposed visitors center was identified on Middlesex Savings Bank property in Concord Center. The Natural Resources Commission (NRC), which is custodian of the Meadow, discussed and endorsed the idea of appointing a "Heywood Meadow Stewardship Committee" at its meeting on July 19, 2000, to encourage restoration of the Meadow.

Mission: To rehabilitate all of Heywood Meadow to evoke the Meadow's historical and agricultural past. This historic landscape should reflect the period from colonial settlement (1635) through Concord's Literary Renaissance (late 1800's). The rehabilitated Meadow will accommodate passive recreation and be managed in a manner consistent with the conservation goals of the Town of Concord.

Membership: The Heywood Meadow Stewardship Committee shall be comprised of nine members appointed by the Natural Resources Commission. Terms of office shall be renewable every three years at the discretion of the NRC. Vacancies shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term.

When filling a vacancy, the Commission will endeavor to see that the various constituencies of the Meadow are represented on the Committee, including the Concord Independent Battery and neighbors.

Duties and Responsibilities: The Committee shall:

- Prepare a Management Plan for the Meadow which will allow for different management strategies to be used for different parcels of the Meadow, pursuant to the Landscape Plan as revised in 2023.

- Advise the NRC and Natural Resources Director on activities requiring Conservation Land Use Permits; signage (both on the Meadow and in the ROW of adjacent streets and roads); donations of trees and other gifts; and removal of inappropriate features from the Meadow.
- Advise the Town Manager on appropriate use of municipal land adjacent to the Meadow.
- Raise funds, or apply for grants, as funds are needed for maintenance or to support various Committee initiatives.
- Develop educational initiatives to promote enhanced public interpretation of the Meadow and its history.

Amended: May 17, 2023