



# East Greenwich Municipal Land Trust

**Monday, May 15, 2023 at 10:00 AM**

**IN-PERSON MEETING ONLY**

**Site visit to Tanner-Clark Preserve, East Greenwich RI 02818**

## East Greenwich Land Trust

Meeting Minutes

May 15, 2023

### Description

Site visit to Tanner-Clark Preserve parcel, and the Steam Museum parcel at 725 Tillinghast Rd with a public-access easement, for the purpose of assessing the desirability, feasibility, requirements, and considerations of establishing primary public parking and access to a new trail system proposed for the Tanner-Clark Preserve.

An additional site visit was also made by some attendees to the recently-acquired parcel at 1140 Tillinghast Rd, for the purpose of gaining an introduction to the property and familiarity with its current state and features.

### Attendees

Land Trust board members: Derek Steinbrenner, Kevin Guerette, Lizzie Hunt

EG Town Staff: Andy Wade

Guests: Ben Collins (trail consultant and designer, founder of The Trail Building Company)

### Minutes

The group met at the Tillinghast entrance to the public access easement on the Steam Museum parcel.

Proposed parking area:

- Consensus was to create a stabilized parking area for ~10 cars immediately inside the entrance from Tillinghast
- Entrance through the stone wall needs to be widened for safe vehicle passage
- Mr. Wade recommended an entrance wide enough to allow simultaneous bidirectional traffic—this would require removal of at least one tree

Footpath across easement from parking area to trail system

- Foot traffic would leave the parking area and proceed to the south of the copse of trees and rocks that would form the western edge of the parking area
- The footpath through the low-lying area would need to be enhanced due to how wet and muddy it gets
- Mr. Collins remarked that we would need the parcel boundaries marked by a surveyor to ensure that the trails don't cross into abutting parcels

#### Access to Tanner-Clark property trail system

- From there we walked into the greenbrier, over a stone wall, and into the Tanner-Clark parcel
- We eventually reached the high point to the east of the White Tail Lane neighborhood before turning back
- The group discussed the option of foregoing the small loop trail conceived in the original design proposal, given the quality of the experience forging through greenbrier, and instead cutting a more direct path into the main body of the Tanner-Clark preserve where the much larger loop trail could be established as the initial trail instead
- Mr. Wade indicated that the town has Brush Hog equipment that could clear the access trail
- We returned to the parking area and Mr. Wade departed for other obligations.

#### Whitetail Lane access path

- The rest of the group drove to the end of the Whitetail Lane cul-de-sac, to enter the main Tanner-Clark parcel and follow the originally-proposed white trail
- We discussed the need for a bridge path through the lowland boulder field to the northern parcel spur that would become the primary access from the public-access easement
- Ms. Hunt observed Beech trees suffering from the Beech Leaf Disease that is spreading across Rhode Island, and the URI research that is showing some success with the use of PolyPhosphite 30 soil amendments to mitigate the infection

#### 1140 Tillinghast ("Pine property")

- Mr. Guerette departed, while Mr. Collins, Ms. Hunt, and Mr. Steinbrenner drove to 1140 Tillinghast, the recently-acquired "Pine property" parcel
- We walked up the drive, inspected the historic cemetery, and followed the drive over the hill to a long, wide meadow at the base of the hill
- We observed poison ivy in the meadow, and discussed methods to eradicate it by mowing it low and planting fast-growing native species that can shade it out
- We walked into the woods to the north, observing an uncommon wild geraniums, a brook with a makeshift bridge, and a large bedrock formation
- Mr. Collins suggested that given the size of the meadow, the area could incorporate a nice dog park if the town were interested
- Mr. Collins requested a parcel map for the property in order to begin drafting trail system concepts
- We observed several refuse piles and test/monitoring wells on the parcel that should be removed