

Six Ponds News

An Occasional Publication of the Six Ponds Improvement Association, Plymouth Mass. (www.sixponds.org) March, 2018

Growing Organically

Six Ponds and the Wildlands Trust are jointly sponsoring a seminar on ‘Growing Organically’ at the Trust Barn on Saturday, April 28th. You are invited to join us to learn more about caring for your property without the use of chemical fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides. We’ll also hear how healthy soils effectively sequester carbon and hold nutrients that would otherwise leach away. Growing without chemicals makes your yard healthier for you and your family and pets, and healthier for your gardens, wildlife and our ponds and our groundwater.

More details will be coming your way! Till then, Save the Date

Six Ponds Area Road Construction

Road construction in the neighborhood mandated as mitigation for the increased traffic expected due to the A. D. Makepeace Redbrook housing/commercial development has begun. The configuration of the Ship Pond Road/Long Pond Road intersection is partially complete – the roads themselves have been moved and widened and guardrails have been installed, but signage, traffic calming measures and landscaping have not yet been finalized. The result at present, unfortunately, is that through-traffic on Long Pond Road goes faster than before, making Herring Way and nearby driveways even more perilous. We are pressing Makepeace to complete the project.

Widening and traffic signals at the Long Pond Road/Clark Road intersection will be next. The Town has approved the new layout and design drawings labeled “Complete” have been belatedly circulated, but environmental improvements to the design promised to Six Ponds were not included. Three of the four quadrants of the intersection are owned by the Pinehills and/or protected by conservation restrictions, and the Pinehills is imposing their stringent design review process to the final agreements before shovels hit the ground. A new plan including a stormwater treatment structure and revised grading to eliminate a near-vertical stone revetment have been developed. We will continue to work to see that the new intersection will include these features. Construction may begin this year.

Save the Date for the Six Ponds Annual Meeting

Save Sunday, June 10th late afternoon and evening for the Six Ponds Pot Luck Supper and Annual Meeting! The Pinewoods Camp will again be our gathering place . . . more details will be provided later this Spring.

Winter Gathering

The first Six Ponds Winter gathering was a great success! About 60 neighbors came together at the Wildlands Trust Community Barn to share food, drink, camaraderie, and to hear what the Six Ponds Organization has been up to. A brief overview provided by president Love Albrecht Howard talked about what Six Ponds strives to do: “Stay informed and share information on items that affect our area of Plymouth, including town building, zoning, conservation, fire laws and permitting, health and safety of our ponds, roadway and traffic items, and other issues as they arise.”

Love went on to speak about some of the specific initiatives and concerns that Six Ponds has actively supported – or is fighting against – for the betterment of our neighborhood. Several at the gathering expressed that we are fortunate to live in an area that has a community organization as involved and proactive as Six Ponds.

People attending this event suggested we have another Gathering in the Fall . . . so please stay tuned for details. We’d love to know what you think of getting together a couple of times a year . . . so please email Aileen Briggs, asbriggs@comcast.net and let us know what you think! We look forward to hearing from you!

New Public Health Director:

Introducing the new director of Plymouth’s Department of Public Health - Nate Horwitz-Willis. Holding a doctorate in Public Health and master’s degrees in Environmental Health Sciences and Public Administration, Horwitz-Willis arrived in Plymouth last August from the San Francisco area where he was Public

Contributors to this issue:

Bill Abbott, Kirsten Atchison, Aileen Briggs, Sam Chapin, Henrietta Cosentino, Love Albrecht Howard, Doug Post, Aldis Russell, Dorie Stolley

Health Officer for Travis Air Force Base.

You may have read about him in the Old Colony Memorial newspaper already as he hit the ground running, confronted with the discovery of West Nile Virus in a mosquito trapped in Plymouth. Not only does Horwitz-Willis deal with mosquito-borne disease, he is responsible for the physical and mental health of all of Plymouth’s residents, charging himself with the responsibility of meeting the federal guidelines in the Healthy People initiative (www.healthypeople.gov).

Horwitz-Willis, like many of us, believes that healthy people require a healthy natural environment, and he is dedicated to working to achieve it. Among other things, he has started an Environmental Health Advisory Board to get community input and avail himself of local expertise and knowledge. Several Six Ponds residents are members of the group, which meets monthly at Wildlands Trust’s Davis-Douglas Farm. The group’s top issues are water quality and health risks associated with Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant. New board members are still being accepted. If interested, email: nhorwitz-willis@townhall.plymouth.ma.us.

There is ample opportunity for Six Ponds Improvement Association to work with Horwitz-Willis, not only on the Environmental Health Advisory Board, but also on projects to protect our ponds and natural areas, and to support his initiatives by participating, making public comments, and writing letters to Town Hall and OCM. He stresses the importance of evidence-based policies and is a fan of citizen science and digital technology to collect some of that evidence. He is already recruiting residents to gather information on cyanobacteria blooms and other health hazards. You can submit an environmental health hazard “complaint” online by going to the NEW DPH website (www.plymouthpublichealth.com), selecting “Contact Us” from the top menu and clicking on “Submit a Complaint.”

Six Ponds Executive Committee 2017-2018

President:	Love Albrecht Howard
Vice President:	Sam Chapin
Treasurer:	Doug Post
Secretary:	Dorie Stolley
Kirsten Atchison, Aileen Briggs, Peter Briggs, Margi Delafield, Kate Harvey, Sanford Leslie, Jean Loewenberg, Susanne Lucas, Judy Savage	

Proposed Municipal Well

Over the last two years Plymouth's search for new Town well sites has focused on a Forges Field site and the "200 Acres" parcel south of PSHS. The 200 Acres site proposal heated up last December and this January when test-pumping results were discussed at Selectmen's meetings. Adverse impacts on the Six Ponds were shown to be significant with drawdowns and reduction of all our pond surface areas, particularly Little Long, Long, and Gallows Ponds. Six Ponders showed up in force and spoke at these meetings and stated our clear and unequivocal opposition. We pointed out that the 200 Acre parcel was encumbered with layers of legal protection against any development, including a strongly-worded conservation restriction held by the Wildlands Trust. Six Ponds' opposition brought the Town's officials out to the Wildlands Trust barn to meet with Six Ponds and Wildlands Trust on Feb. 26 where we again stated our strong opposition.

Currently the Town has backed off on the 200 Acre parcel and is proceeding with a new well on the Forges Field site. However, we have been told that sometime in the future the Town may move forward on the 200 Acre. We stand ready to pull out all stops to keep any well from being placed on that site.

PARTICIPATE !



You're never too young – or too old – to be heard! Ada, the five-year old granddaughter of Ed and Charlotte Russell, raising her voice, January 2018. Photo courtesy of Aldis Russell.

Many of your fellow Six Ponders are active in local politics. We have members who have served as Town Meeting Representatives, on the Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning Board, Conservation Commission and Open Space, work with The League of Women Voters, the Environmental Health Advisory Group and a host of other area organizations and committees. You can get involved, too! Volunteer on a town Committee . . . run for Town Meeting Representative . . . join the League of Women Voters . . . there is plenty to do! You'll be making a difference, and making more friends, too!

For more information, contact Lois Post, Plymouth LWV, lois@mayflowerweb.com, or Betsy Hall, Precinct 12 Town Meeting member, bh2746@yahoo.com.

EVERYONE . . . TIME TO RENEW!

We are doing our Spring Membership Drive! Six Ponds is an all-volunteer neighborhood association. To work optimally for our neighborhood, Six Ponds needs you to renew! The \$20 membership fee gives you regular updates on what is happening around here, tips on how to live around and protect our ponds, and items related to Conservation, Planning, Zoning and other Town Departments.

LOOK FOR YOUR RENEWAL LETTER coming soon! And THANK YOU for renewing!



Show Your Support of Plymouth's Ponds and Sole Source Aquifer on April 12

You are invited to the State House for a legislative breakfast, State of Our Waters, about regional water issues hosted by Watershed Action Alliance (WAA) and sponsored by State Senator Vinny deMacedo. It is on April 12 from 10 a.m. to noon in Senate Room 428.

Join state senators and representatives, WAA members, and other concerned citizens to learn about critical water issues, hear about future projects and plans. It is important to show that there is a strong and vocal constituency in favor of measures that keep our waters clean, plentiful, and free flowing. The breakfast is followed by visits to the offices of representatives who are unable to attend the event to deliver info packets and relate individual perspectives on the importance of clean, plentiful, and free-flowing water.

Six Ponds members will meet at the Kingston train station for the 8:37 a.m. train to South Station on April 12.

RSVP at www.watershedaction.org or email dorie.stolley@gmail.com. You will receive an email reminder about the event and updates.

Schedule

10:00 -10:10 a.m. Meet and mingle

10:10 -10:20 a.m. Introductions

10:20 -10:45 a.m. Presentations by WAA members

- Water quantity/water withdrawals
- Water quality/stormwater
- Water connectivity/river restoration

10:45 -11:10 a.m. Presentations on future work in support of water

- State Senator Marc Pacheco
- State Senator Patrick O'Connor
- State Senator Vinny deMacedo

11:20 -11:30 a.m. Pick up info packets and organize to visit representatives' offices in small groups

11:30 - noon Let your voice be heard at your state representatives' offices!

The Night Sky

Here in the Six Ponds area, we are fortunate to be able to see star constellations and planets in our night skies; on truly clear nights we can still see some of the brilliance of the Milky Way. Because we have the dark ocean to our East and equally dark Myles Standish State Forest directly West, we are one of the few areas in eastern Massachusetts who still have a view of the night sky that is not brown and murky. This is a rarity in the United States and, increasingly, the world. Our muddied night skies confuse and threaten wildlife, and there are studies that clearly show that a lack of dark nights is negatively affecting human health. We need to actively protect our night skies. Plymouth has a DarkSky Bylaw to which the municipality and commercial installations must adhere, but it has no bearing on residential properties. Light pollution comes in many forms, and some of this is residential. No one is saying 'Turn out all the lights,' but to be stewards of our night sky, we need to monitor our own lighting use.

For optimal night time lighting:

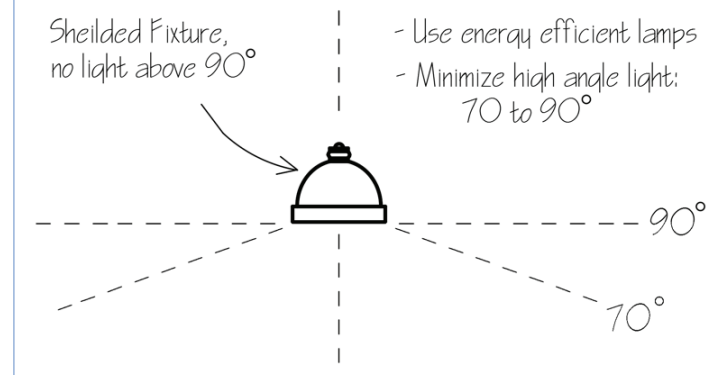
- Use the least amount of light to accomplish the job.
- Choose 'darksky approved' shielded lighting fixtures. No part of the bulb should be visible, and most of the light should shine down at 70 degrees or less. No light should show above 90 degrees.
- Use flood lights only with motion detectors or timers and aim away from neighboring

homes. Flood lights on our ponds confuse wildlife and interrupt natural cycles. Turn floods OFF.

- Use energy efficient light sources, including energy saving lamps and fixtures, and solar options. Avoid 'blue' toned lighting which is particularly bad for wildlife; choose warm or full-spectrum lamps.
- Use occupancy and motion sensors, time controls and dimmers wherever possible.
- Turn off lights! No home or property needs to be lit up all night.

Working together we can reduce wasted light, wasted energy and wasted dollars, and work to keep the views of our glorious night skies.

Exterior Dark Sky Lighting



Hometown Cleanup Day

Saturday, May 5 (Rain date May 6) @ 10 AM.

Meet at the corner of Long Pond and Clark Roads

We will supply purple bags, you supply your own gloves and tools etc.

Six Ponds started this cleanup initiative decades ago and recently two Six Ponds residents got the town's DPW staff to spread the idea throughout town. Each year now, more teams and neighborhoods plus hundreds of individuals participate town wide



Gallows Pond Road in the 1900's.

This photo, from Henrietta Cosentino, is from an album kept by her great aunt, Lucia Briggs, daughter of LeBaron Russell Briggs, who had a victorian cottage on Halfway Pond and a driveway off of Gallows Pond Road. Here the Roadster is flanked by a huge embankment of our native Clethra . . . the summer fragrance must have been incredible!

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