

Six Ponds News

August 2001

An Occasional Publication Of The Six Ponds Improvement Association

Summer Pot Luck Supper

Our summer potluck dinner will be on Saturday, August 25 at 6:30pm at Russell Hall. Everyone is welcome! Six Ponders with last names A through P should bring a main dish, and those from Q to Z please bring a salad or dessert. Drinks will be provided. Call 508-224-2007 or 508-224-7294 for directions or more information.

An interesting Agenda is planned, with the big focus to be on the Makepeace project/rezoning proposal. Mark Primack, Executive Director of the Wildlands Trust will talk of the ecological treasures found on the Makepeace land, and Loring Tripp, Chairman of the Plymouth Planning Board and the Tri-Town Makepeace Panel, will update us on the status of rezoning efforts.

205+ Acres Ceremony

Finally, we are happy to announce the Grand Ceremony welcoming and celebrating the hand-over to the Town of Plymouth of the 205+ acres south of Plymouth South High School complete with conservation restriction to keep this natural resource forever wild.

Please join us at the far end of the parking lot at Plymouth South at the walking trail entrance, on Saturday, August 25 at 4:30pm, just prior to the Potluck Dinner. This will be a grand occasion to celebrate an event that Six Ponders have worked for years to make happen.

Makepeace Project

This project is looming ever larger on our horizon as decisions appear to be imminent on which way it will go - either some 3000+ homes on 6,000 acres west of Miles Standish and continued uncertainty for the Makepeace lands at Halfway Pond and south down Wareham Road, **or** a purchase of all of these lands by a bigtime conservation consortium with State and federal help.

A Makepeace rezoning article is headed for Plymouth's October Town Meeting which will allow the increased housing density (about 3x the existing Plymouth housing density limit). We should all follow this closely as this is the single biggest project that could affect Six Ponds and Plymouth for decades to come.

Off Road Vehicles

There is enormous pressure on the State to open Miles Standish State Forest to ORVs, and ORVs also continue to be a problem on properties all up and down Long Pond Road. They have constructed trails on Wildlands Trust property at the Emery Preserve and off Morgan Road, and on the Town's 200 acres south of the High School. Those walking in the area are encouraged to bring cameras and record any activity they see -- and to talk with the riders if it seems safe to do so. Please let us know what you find. Call one of the officers or email us at orvwatch@sixponds.org

Fire Station

The new fire station for our area is well under construction at the edge of the Pine Hills development just across Route 3 (second left after the bridge). It will open early next year!

Also, more good news: the land at the SE corner of Clark and Long Pond Roads, previously reserved for the fire station, will now be added to the 209 acres and be kept forever in its natural state, as well the small parcel on the southwest corner of Clark and Long Pond Road. Thus the "entrance" to the Six Ponds will be forever green!

Former Bramhall Property

The official name for this 100+acre property (along Long Pond Road on both sides, south of Clark Road), now owned by Plymouth County Wildlands Trust, has been suggested to be "**Six Ponds East Preserve**", in recognition of the successful Six Ponds drive to save it led by Pompey Delafield.

Quality of our Ponds: 2001

By looking at the data sets for each of the Ponds from recent years' tests and comparing the results to the accepted qualitative criteria for "healthy" water, we can get a rough idea of where each Pond stands and look for trends. Generally, our Ponds are strong and healthy. We are lucky to be living amongst such beautiful waters! Turtles, frogs, fish, birds, and native plants still thrive in and around the waters of the Six Ponds. However, signs are beginning to appear that Nature is wavering in its battle against the many insults we hurl at these waters.

Little Long Pond is a good example of how the Ponds show early signs of injury. Little Long seems to be teetering on the edge in dealing with nutrient and acid inputs. At the outlet from Little Long where it joins Long Pond near the boat ramp, Purple Loosestrife, an exotic menace, has made an appearance. Purple Loosestrife is an invasive, introduced European plant that out-competes native wetland plants and thus alters habitat for native flora and fauna.

We should continue to monitor for additional signs of

stress in our area and, if possible, address the areas of concern as they arise.

The Six Ponds Executive Committee has and will be discussing appropriate remedial measures to tackle these and other problems in the future. Anyone interested in helping by volunteering time, expertise or sharing knowledge of particular problems you might be aware of, will help preserve and enhance the water quality of our ponds for the future. Please contact the Committee by phone or email us at wq@sixponds.org.

Lawn Care

If you are trying to maintain a lawn in the Six Ponds area and want to preserve our Ponds pristine quality, consider switching to a no or low phosphorus, slow release, organic fertilizer. Look for 0 or a low number in the fertilizer formula's middle number, for example, 28-0-8 or 16-2-8.

You might also consider testing the acidity of your soil. Adding some lime to balance the acidity can improve lawn growth and minimize the need for any fertilizer at all.

Plymouth Charter Review

The pro-mayor group has the controlling majority on the Charter Commission and appears to be headed toward proposing a city form of government with a “strong mayor” who will appoint all Town boards and be subject to few restraints on his or her power during a 4-year term.

Six Ponders should watch this process closely and be ready to become involved next spring when the proposed new Charter will be placed on the Plymouth town ballot where it will be voted up or down.

In the past few years, when our area was threatened first with a major airport and then with a huge shopping mall at Exit 3 (as well as such lesser issues as the widening and straightening of Long Pond Road, retail stores in our neighborhoods, etc.), we were able to make our case through our neighborhood representatives at Town Meeting.

How vulnerable we will become if such decisions in the future (e.g., Makepeace) are in the hands of an all powerful mayor.

Dark Skies

If you are interested in learning more about the International Dark-Sky Association we encourage you to visit their website at

www.darksky.org.

(Please note that this web address ends in ORG not COM - the latter site is somewhat confusing!)

There is also a great publication about “good neighbor outdoor lighting” that you can link to from the Dark-Sky website, or can go to directly at:

www.skypub.com/resources/lightpollution/gnol.html.

This publication helps you learn about good and bad fixtures for outdoor lighting at home.

Executive Board

Bill Abbott (President)	508-224-6629
Ed Russell (Vice-President)	508-224-2007
Peggy Briggs (Secretary)	781-740-9736
Walter Morrison (Treasurer)	508-224-8409
David Buckman	Terry Donoghue
Steve Fairchild	Jean Loewenberg
Doug Post	Janette Somerville
Lucie Wilson	

Sailors Wanted!

The Chetolah Yacht Club has been teaching people to sail and holding races on Long Pond for 78 years. Your residence in the Six Ponds area qualifies you for membership.

The annual dues are quite reasonable (\$6 for adults and \$2 for children), and there are often social functions during the summer that you can participate in, even if you don't sail.

For more information, call Doug Post at 508-224-7294, or email

CYC@mayflowerweb.com.

sixponds.org

Check out our website at www.sixponds.org.

Doug Post keeps it updated with **NewsFLASH** alerts, news of upcoming events, and valuable resource materials. Also, if you are not on our Internet mailing list, please send an email to:

membership@sixponds.org

and we will add you to our **email alert** system.

Of Historical Interest

Over the years Six Ponds has faced a number of proposals that mobilized its members. This column from time to time will relate these episodes from our archives.

In 1955, the State proposed a “turnout or rest area on the new express highway at a point opposite Bloody Pond in the south section of Plymouth.” Plymouth Selectmen, urged on by Six Ponds, wrote to the State: “It is anticipated

with considerable disappointment and disturbance of mind that to locate a rest area at that point would attract an influx of people that may leave their cars and go to the Pond and destroy the solitude that was formerly enjoyed...”

The Selectmen asked the State to “relocate the rest area either south or north of that point so as not to encourage a situation that may impose an unpleasant condition upon our people of the Bloody Pond dis-

trict.” The State dropped the plan.

In 1960 Bloody Pond was again on the griddle when a developer proposed a “tent campground of approximately 600 sites on the northerly side of Bloody Pond.” Seventy-five members of Six Ponds appeared at the Board of Appeals hearing to fight this proposal. The Board granted a permit for 200 tent sites, but 16 land owners at Bloody Pond took the matter to court, and the project was abandoned.

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