

August 16, 2025

Joyce Greenleaf, Chair
Stewardship Committee
jgreenleaf@southboroughma.com

Re: Breakneck Hill Wildflower Garden

Dear Ms. Greenleaf:

I live on Davis Road, which abuts the Breakneck Hill Conservation Land. I can see it from my house and pass by this treasured community land daily.

The portion of the conservation land running along Breakneck Hill Road was a beautiful wildflower meadow with Queen Anne's lace, milkweed, bachelor buttons, golden rod, and other New England native wildflowers. At some point the town hired someone to mow that land. The repeated mowing promoted the grass and killed the wildflowers.

In 2022 that land was plowed, and a sign appeared in the conservation land parking lot proclaiming that this plowed area would be a wildflower meadow. The sign is dated 2022 and contains the Stewardship Committee name.

Here is what I have observed happening to this portion of the Breakneck Hill Conservation Land since that sign appeared in 2022:

- Plowed multiple times
- Mowed multiple times
- In 2025
 - In or about June, the plowed land was sprayed with herbicide, killing every plant on that ground.
 - Subsequently, grasses, milkweed, and Queen Anne's lace bravely tried to repopulate this ground.
 - In August this land was mowed again and appears to have been sprayed again with herbicide because all the plants are brown and dead.

Beyond the boundary of this plowed ground in the Breakneck Hill Conservation land, New England wildflowers bloom in abundance. But this scarred land is dead.

As an abutter and Southborough taxpayer, I have the following questions:

1. Chemicals
 - a. What chemicals did the town apply to this land to date?

- b. Who approved the use of those chemicals?
 - c. Does the town intend to apply additional chemicals on this land.
 - i. If yes, what are those chemicals and why will they be applied?
- 2. Plan for completion
 - a. What is the plan to restore this land to a wildflower meadow?
 - b. Who approved this plan?
 - c. Who is accountable for making the plan happen?
 - d. When is the projected date for this wildflower meadow to be completed?
- 3. Money:
 - a. How much money has the town spent to date on this project?
 - b. How much more money will the town need to spend to reach the promised goal of having a wildflower meadow on this land again?

Thank you for responding promptly to these questions.

Sincerely,

Mary M. Hamaker

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