

**From:** Beth Melofchik <tankmadel@yahoo.com>  
**To:** Ashley Maher <amaher@town.arlington.ma.us>  
**Date:** 09/13/2021 10:18 AM  
**Subject:** Fw: Cookes Hollow

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Dear Ashley,

Please I would like this read in to the record for tonight's Select Board Meeting.

Thank you

Kind regards,  
Beth Melofchik  
Town Meeting Member Precinct 9  
20 Russell Street

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** Beth Melofchik <tankmadel@yahoo.com>  
**To:** Stephen DeCoursey <sdecoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>

**Cc:** Adam Chapdelaine <achapdelaine@town.arlington.ma.us>; David White <dwhite@gilbertwhite.com>; JO ANNE PRESTON <ja-preston@comcast.net>; Arlington Tree Committee <arltreecmte@gmail.com>; Alan Jones <jones@carr-jones.com>; Lolly <ab.bennett147@gmail.com>; Ellen Cohen <elscorn@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 8, 2021, 11:43:44 AM EDT  
**Subject:** Cookes Hollow

Stephen DeCoursey, Chair, Select Board, Arlington

Dear Steve,

I know it's a busy time but would like to know how to organize an effort to have Cookes Hollow prioritized for restoration. I believe based on my observation of recent projects that Cookes Hollow meets the criteria for CDBG and CPA funding.

At a recent Conservation Commission meeting I raised the subject, as I try to do at each Conservation Commission meeting which I attend. There was discussion of Meadowbrook Park. Ideally the two would be addressed together as the dynamics of water and the brook would I believe dictate such.

I understand other federal funds may be necessary. A member of the Select Board last year mentioned a FEMA application for \$400,000 to address invasive plants along Mill Brook by Garden Street.

I look at such a project from a big picture point of view: restoring Cookes Hollow, site of the original European settlement, in time for the 250th anniversary of the events of April 19, 1775 resonates for many reasons.



The decay of the embankment is accelerating with the increased intensity of rain and storms. Water finds its way, a portion of formerly terraced land should be considered for wetland as well as alternatives to a granite facing of each bank and replacement of the stairway up to the sports field: a wide path with switchbacks may solve the ADA challenge for this incline.

This would also be an opportunity to introduce native trees on the south embankment to counter erosion.

Japanese Knotweed is the primary invasive plant in Cookes Hollow. The knotweed has been controlled by a group of volunteers including: Garden club members, a land steward, and myself.

The presence of shore birds, to be encouraged, has been documented: Great Blue Herons and Black Crowned Night Herons along with nesting mallards each year. Cookes Hollow devotees are heartened by the return of Alewife each spring. This spawning fish is preceded in seasonal appearance by the White Suckers.

Cookes Hollow is a hidden gem appreciated by many in the community, the heart of original Menotomy, a valuable resource to neighboring Cusack Terrace, Winslow Tower, and Chestnut Manor, and a small but potent carbon sink.

During the heat waves this summer Cookes Hollow offered a cooler sanctuary with comfortable benches for families, neighbors and passersby. Cookes Hollow is a natural cooling destination and center.

I respectfully request guidance in an effort to prioritize this valuable community resource for restoration.

The community benefits are many and they serve a diverse populace.

Cookes Hollow serves as a beacon to the power of nature. The herons and Alewife illustrate that to us. It is time to recognize the historic role and place of Cookes Hollow in a forward thinking natural green resource restoration plan.

I await your response and look forward to a conversation with you at your earliest convenience.

Respectfully yours,  
Beth Melofchik  
Town Meeting Member, Precinct 9

CC: Adam Chapdelaine, Town Manager  
David White, Conservation Commission  
Jo Anne Preston, Arlington Housing Authority  
Mary Ellen Aronow, Arlington Tree Committee  
Alan Jones, Arlington Historical Society  
Alice Bennett, Arlington Garden Club  
Ellen Cohen, Schwamb Mill, Land Steward

Attachments: Sept 2 pic of water flow day after Tropical Storm Ida with Black Capped Night Heron in lower right; Sept 7 pic of Great Blue Heron in front of last remaining outflow falls along Mill Brook.







