

Town of Shutesbury Community Preservation Committee

Application for Community Preservation Funding

Submit 8 copies to:
Community Preservation Committee
Shutesbury Town Hall
P.O. Box 276
Shutesbury, Massachusetts 01072
Submit: 1 electronic copy to: Email: cpc@shutesbury.org

***Instructions to Applicant:** Please complete all sections of the application. If a particular section is not applicable, please note that.*

Applicant Name: Chris Volonte

Applicant Organization: Kestrel Land Trust

Address: P.O. Box 1016, Amherst, MA 01004

Contact Person: Chris Volonte, Stewardship Director

Phone: 413-549-1097

E-Mail: chris@kestreltrust.org

CPA Category: *YOU MUST CIRCLE A MINIMUM OF ONE CATEGORY*, but may identify more than one, if applicable to your project.

- **Open Space**
- **Historic Preservation**
- **Community Housing**
- **Recreation**

Total Project Cost	CPA Funds Requested	Matching Contribution	Match Percent of total
\$31,900	\$22,000	\$9,900	31%

Attach a copy of the Assessor's Map(s) with the project parcel outlined (if appropriate for your project)

Assessor's Map Number	ZK	Assessor's Lot/Parcel Number	118
Deed Book Number	7802	Deed Page Number	219

Attach separate sheet if more than one lot/parcel/deed book/deed page number.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

- All of the following sections MUST be completed.
- Applications will be returned if all relevant requested information is not provided.
- Include supporting materials and exhibits as necessary.
- Please refer to Shutesbury’s Community Preservation Plan in completing this application.

1. Describe the project.

The Site

Located in northern Shutesbury directly between Quabbin Reservoir Watershed lands and Lake Wyola, Ames Pond was recently bequeathed to Kestrel Land Trust by Julian Janowitz, a private landowner who spent decades establishing trails, installing outdoor sculptures, and inviting the public to enjoy a distinctive, 143-acre landscape featuring views of the pond and its wetlands, including a spectacular bog.

Currently, public access to Ames Pond is compromised due to the deterioration of significant trail infrastructure. Kestrel Land Trust (KLT) proposes to maintain this existing recreational area by rehabilitating and restoring trails for recreational use, thus ensuring continued, safe public access to a community resource. Additionally, the need for infrastructure improvements creates the opportunity to make portions of the Ames Pond trail system accessible.

The Project

All these elements will be accessible to people with mobility limitations.

Parking Area Improvements

- Expand and resurface with pervious material the existing 900-square-foot parking area (size tbd)
- Remove a large thicket of mostly invasive plants between the parking area and entrance meadow
- Install a kiosk at the trailhead

Accessible Trail & Viewing Platform

- Re-define the opening section of the trail with a crushed stone walkway
- Construct a puncheon-style wooden walkway in a consistently wet section of meadow
- Install a wooden viewing platform at the meadow art installation near the pond edge

This work is envisioned as a **Phase 1 project (2022)**.

A separately funded **Phase 2 project (2023)** will replace the bog boardwalk, add a new wetland crossing, repair a puncheon-style wooden walkway, close trail sections to protect the pond edge, stabilize the stone steps, and add signage.

Please see the attached work plan for construction details and an overview of the full scope of the Ames Pond Public Access Expansion Project.

2. **Goals:**

a. What are the goals of the proposed project?

Together, the Phase 1 and Phase 2 trail repair and maintenance will protect wetland and soil resources, address degraded trail conditions, and ensure continued public access to a unique trail experience.

The Phase 1 project will:

- protect sensitive resources by creating a well-defined, raised entrance trail that minimizes user impact on the meadow.
- ensure and expand public access by:
 - creating a smooth parking surface and increasing the capacity of the parking area to accommodate 8-12 vehicles (tbd), allowing space for accessible parking and eliminating a large thicket of invasive plants
 - ensuring the entrance trail will be consistently high and dry, making it more welcoming for all users
 - constructing the entrance trail to accessible standards and adding an accessible viewing platform for scenic enjoyment of the pond

b. Who will benefit and why?

Who:

- Current users and new users who will discover the conservation area through KLT's ownership and promotion of it.
- People who are presently unable to traverse the entrance trail, or who would hesitate to attempt it: those with limited mobility and/or balance issues, people with disabling conditions using mobility devices, seniors, people who can walk only short distances, people with low vision, and families and caregivers with toddlers or young children in strollers.

Why:

The current parking area is informal, ungraded, and overgrown with vegetation (see photos). A large thicket of mostly invasive plants separates parking from the entrance meadow. The existing meadow trail is narrow and subject to saturation or flooding. Addressing these conditions will protect the meadow while creating comfortable access that will welcome a wide range of visitors.

The parking area will have a smooth, compressed gravel surface. It will provide space for people who use mobility devices to exit/enter their vehicles, and also for visitors using strollers to park and unload more comfortably. The entrance trail will provide a dry, smooth, level surface (3 ft. wide) suitable for mobility devices. The pond viewing platform will provide a scenic "destination" for visitors unable to proceed further into the conservation area. With a view of both the pond and one of the existing sculptures, they will experience two of the conservation area's most distinctive features. We also plan some interpretive signage at this location. We hope the platform will feel welcoming to all visitors and be an uplifting place for anyone to enjoy the sun, watch birds and amphibians, identify wildflowers, chat with a friend, read, play the flute, do some plein air painting, etc.

Lastly, the trails connecting the pond viewing platform to the other the accessible elements KLT plans for Ames Pond (bog boardwalk and new boardwalk crossing) predominantly have flat grades, creating the possibility of improving them to accessible standards in the future. For now, these relatively wide, smooth, and level connecting trails may be accessible to a number of people already, enabling visitors with certain disabilities and assistive devices to further explore the conservation area immediately following Phase 1 trail work, before any further improvements are made. The proposed parking and entrance trail accessible improvements will make this access possible.

c. How will success be measured?

- Visitor comments - KLT plans to retain the existing notebook (located in a mailbox along the bog boardwalk) where visitors record their reactions to the conservation area.
- Trail accessibility assessment – accessibility advocate Meg Bandarra has offered to coordinate a group of trail testers with varied needs to help KLT assess the trail system once the accessible components are added.
- As observed by KLT staff and reported by users:
 - Reduced roadside parking by visitors.
 - Reduced or absent flooding/saturation of the entrance trail.
 - Increased use of the conservation area with decreased impacts to sensitive resources
- Input from community leadership

3. Community Preservation Committee Criteria

a. How does the project fulfill the General and Specific Evaluation Criteria?

General Criteria

- *Require immediate attention* – Ames Pond trails and infrastructure are aging and currently in a degraded condition.
- *Serve a currently under-served population* – The proposed repair and improvements will make Ames Pond more accessible to people with disabilities.
- *Have other sources of funding* – KLT has committed \$110,000 to the Phase 1-2 trail maintenance projects, including a MassTrails grant request for \$50,000.
- *Have a means of support for maintenance and upkeep* – See Section 10, Maintenance.
- *Financially and administratively feasible* – KLT is managing and administering the project and providing the bulk of the funding.
- *Provide a positive impact to the community* – The project restores and improves access to a location that has been identified by Shutesbury residents as having value for its scenery and unique natural features (Town Open Space and Recreation Plan).
- *Have support from Shutesbury town board(s) or committee(s)* – The project has the support of the Conservation Commission, Open Space and Recreation Committee, and Recreation Committee.

Specific Criteria for Recreation Projects

- *Serve a significant number of residents of all ages, gender and ability* – The proposed repair and improvements will make Ames Pond more accessible to seniors, families with children, and people with disabilities.
- *Expand the range of passive recreational activities available to Shutesbury residents including trail connections* – The Ames Pond trail network connects to other existing trails and recreational anchors: Lake Wyola State Park and associated trails, the New England National Scenic Trail (formerly the M&M Trail), and Temenos Retreat Center trails. (See Ames Pond Trail Connections map, attached.)
- *Accessible by residents with mobility limitations* – See Section 2.b., Goals.

4. Community Need

a. How does the community benefit from this project?

Although approximately 90% of Shutesbury is covered in forests traversed by old cart roads and casual trails, much of this is private land that is not readily accessible to Town residents.

Until recently, Ames Pond was also private land. During his lifetime, Mr. Janowitz generously opened Ames Pond to the public, and it gained a significant following of primarily local visitors who treasure the art and poetry, the natural beauty and the multi-season recreational opportunities. The Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) cites Ames Pond as a favorite scenic spot for residents (its photo is featured prominently in the current draft of the OSRP). The OSRP also identifies Ames Pond as a unique natural feature in the Town.

Although much of the land around Ames Pond was protected in 2003 by a conservation restriction held by DCR, public access was not ensured beyond Mr. Janowitz's lifetime. Now, under KLT's management, the conservation area will be permanently available to the public.

Expanded parking and an accessible, welcoming entrance trail will enhance people's ability to visit, ensuring that the "door" to Ames Pond is always open and no one misses out on the unique and rewarding experiences to be had there.

b. If applicable, explain how this project addresses needs identified in existing Town plans? (Such as the Open Space and Recreation Plan, Community Plan, etc)

This project partially addresses Goal B of the OSRP Action Plan (Build and Enhance Community in Shutesbury) by improving the existing trail system at Ames Pond, ensuring useful trail connections (see Ames Pond Trail Connections Map), and improving public access to a popular scenic and recreational spot.

The project addresses Goal C (Enhance Recreation Opportunities in Shutesbury) by ensuring that Ames Pond is a recreation option for residents of all ages and abilities, and by creating a public trail with access for persons with disabilities.

5. Community Support

- a. What is the nature and level of support? Attach letters of support from any Town boards or community groups that have endorsed the project.

Please see attached letters of support from:

- Open Space Committee
- Recreation Committee
- Conservation Commission
- Temenos Council (represented by Mark Johnson)
- Friends of Julian’s Bower (represented by Karen Traub)
- Sally Judd (Mr. Janowitz’s partner)
- Meg Bandarra (accessibility advocate)

6. Budget

Budget Summary

Total Project Cost	CPA Funds Requested	Other Funds Total	Other Funds: % of Total
\$31,900	\$22,000	\$9,900	31%

Budget Details (Please provide as much detail as possible and leave any category blank if not applicable to your project)

	CPA FUNDS	OTHER FUNDS	TOTAL
PERMITTING – KLT MATCH			
Labor/Personnel		\$8,640	\$8,640
Materials/Supplies		\$1,260	\$1,260
PARKING AREA IMPROVEMENTS – CPA			
Labor/Personnel	\$2,450		\$2,450
Materials/Supplies	\$5,650		\$5,650
ACCESSIBLE TRAIL & VIEWING PLATFORM – CPA			
Labor/Personnel	\$6,650		\$6,650
Materials/Supplies	\$7,250		\$7,250
TOTAL	\$22,000	\$9,900	\$31,900

Equipment is generally defined as an item with a useful life expectancy of more than one year.

Supplies are defined as an item with a useful life of less than one year.

Construction means all types of work done on a particular property or building including erecting, altering or remodeling.

7. Other Funding

a. Identify the amount of other (non-CPA) funds for this project. Sources include private, federal, state or local government, or any other sources. Attach commitment letters from any organization providing a financial contribution.

Organization	Item	Amount	Type (cash, in-kind, etc.)
Kestrel Land Trust	Permitting - Labor/Personnel	\$8,640	Cash
Kestrel Land Trust	Permitting – Materials/Supplies	\$1,260	Cash
	TOTAL	\$9,900	

Please see attached Work Plan for Additional Funding KLT has committed to Ames Pond.

b. Are any Other Funds in-kind contributions? If yes, describe how the value of the in-kind contribution was derived. (“In-kind contributions” are a contribution of services or property, donated equipment, buildings or land, or donated supplies.)

N/A

8. Timeline

a. Provide a timeline for project implementation, including start and end dates for major tasks and project completion.

PERMITTING (KLT Funding)
FEB-JUL 2022

- KLT is currently working with DCR to approve the parking expansion per the Conservation Restriction.
- KLT has contracted with SWCA to assist with permitting for Phase 1-2 trail work.
- SWCA will conduct wetland delineation and detailed wildlife habitat evaluation around project work areas for Phases 1-2 as weather allows in late winter/spring
- When field assessments are complete, KLT will submit NOI to the Shutesbury Conservation Commission and a MESA checklist to NHESP.
- Project details will be adjusted as needed based on feedback. We hope permitting will be completed by July.

PHASE 1 TRAIL WORK (Proposed Shutesbury CPA Funding)
JUN-NOV 2022

July - If funds are approved by the town, KLT will contract with SWCA to install the parking area and meadow entrance improvements

Aug-Sep – Parking expansion and resurfacing, invasive plant removal

Oct – Installation of crushed stone walkway

Oct-Nov – Construction of puncheon-style wooden walkway and pond viewing platform

9. Project Management

- a. Project Manager Contact Information (if other than the applicant)

SAME AS APPLICANT

10. Maintenance (Please note IF NOT APPLICABLE TO YOUR PROJECT)

- a. If ongoing maintenance is required, who will be responsible for it?

We anticipate that significant infrastructure maintenance will not be needed for 10-20 years. The meadow crushed stone surface may require light regular maintenance to keep a level tread. All puncheons and boardwalks may require light decking maintenance within 10 years, but the puncheons and boardwalks themselves should remain stable and without any major alterations for approximately 20 years. The aluminum boardwalk footings should remain secure and stable without repairs for 20 or more years.

Ames Pond will become one of three conservation areas owned and managed by KLT for public trail access. Additionally, KLT cooperatively owns and manages a conservation area with Town of Pelham. Lastly, we assist Town of Pelham and Town of Belchertown with trail maintenance on two town-owned conservation areas.

KLT staff and volunteers inspect all these conservation areas several times per year for maintenance needs, which are then carried out by staff, AmeriCorps volunteers, and our long-established volunteer Land & Trail and Woodworking crews.

- b. How will it be funded?

KLT includes maintenance of its conservation areas in its annual budget, so funds are available for supplies, materials, and contractors if needed. For significant maintenance projects, KLT will actively fundraise as needed.

Maintenance Budget

<i>Year one</i>	<i>Year two</i>	<i>Year three</i>	<i>Year four</i>	<i>Year five</i>
<i>\$11,000</i>	<i>\$11,000</i>	<i>\$11,000</i>	<i>\$11,000</i>	<i>\$11,000</i>

Note: KLT annualizes its cost calculations for conservation areas (includes staff time/travel, supplies/materials, potential contractors, etc.)

11. **Site Documentation** (Submit 3 copies only)

Attach documentation that you have control over the site, such as a Purchase and Sale Agreement, option or deed. If documentation is not available, please explain.

Deed attached.

12. **Project Documentation** (Submit 3 copies only)

Attach any applicable engineering plans, architectural drawings, site plans, and any other relevant renderings.

Site maps attached.

13. **Other Information**

Attach any additional information that might benefit the CPC in consideration of this project.

Attached:

- Ames Pond Public Expansion Project Plan
- Photos
- Letters of Support
- Funding Commitment Letter (KLT)

One hard copy of this application to be submitted by mail for the Town's records.

TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, ALL DATA IN THIS APPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT. THE DOCUMENT HAS BEEN DULY AUTHORIZED BY THE INDIVIDUAL OR GOVERNING BODY OF THE APPLICANT.



02/10/2022

Signature of Authorized Representative

Date

Print name: Chris Volonte