

Open Space Committee
Town of Eastham
Minutes
January 8, 2014

Members Present: Bob Gurney (chair), Peter Wade, Bob Cook, Bob Jacovino, Steve Smith

Staff Present: Dick Hilmer, Others Present: Karen Baker

Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM

1. Minutes of the meeting December 11, 2013 were reviewed, accepted without amendments and unanimously approved.
2. The committee reviewed and discussed the status of lands classified by tax assessor as developable that currently are not developed. Dick Hilmer reported that assessor records show there are 323 residential tracts classified as developable lands that have no development on them and there are 16 large residential tracts that currently are temporarily protected for conservation under "chapter protection" via MA tax incentive programs. There are also 19 industrial parcels. Dick Hilmer is working with the town assessor to identify parcels as potential candidates for acquisition as open space.
3. As part of its updating of the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan the committee reviewed the list of Town accomplishments for the past five years.
4. Dick Hilmer reported that a new cycle for state grants will begin soon . The committee should think of ways to use CPA (Community Preservation Act) funds for open space acquisition.
5. In response to a recent request for placement of a memorial bench at Wiley Park, the committee discussed this topic in general and in regards to the specific request. There are currently 56 memorial benches in town, no town-level policy regarding placement, but the Board of Selectmen are working on one. Committee members agree that benches are useful and appropriate in open space lands, but also feel that number and placement of benches must be managed to avoid a sense of overdevelopment and excess habitat impacts and disturbance in natural areas. Discussion of potential guidelines and criteria for bench placement in natural areas ensued. In regards to the specific request at Wiley Park, committee members who had visited the site felt were inclined to approve the request, but a decision was deferred to allow other committee members a chance to conduct a site visit.
6. Dick Hilmer reported that he would be working on a management plan for Wiley Park. This lead to a discussion of the large numbers of dogs being run off-leash and not under any meaningful control by their owner. Some committee members report being charged aggressively by off-leash dogs and having out of control dogs interfere with their use of the park.

Next meeting: January 29, 2014

Meeting adjourned 9:23 PM

Respectfully submitted, Robert P. Cook