

**TOWN OF JAFFREY
Jaffrey, New Hampshire**

**Ad hoc Open Space Committee
Meeting Minutes
May 5, 2010**

Present: Chairman Kresge, Member Garretson

Absent: Members Doane, Graf

WORKING SESSION

Chairman Kresge called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

Appropriate committee size and names of potential contacts for an expanded committee to develop the open space plan and recommendations to Select Board were discussed.

TRAIL USERS FOCUS GROUP 7:30 p.m.

Attendees included citizens with a variety of interests ranging from specific foot traffic uses to more generalized conservation interests.

Focus Group Discussion Topics:

1. What are the land values most important to your group?

Connectivity between areas of interest is an important feature – being able to traverse the land in a pleasant setting.

Open space corridors, based on natural resource inventory, make lots of sense.

“One of the things that is often neglected is open fields. Making sure that there are meadows, along with forests and trails is a good thing.”

2. What is the current availability/adequacy of resources for your activity?

“Open space is one the things that this area offers, that other areas in this part of the country don’t always offer. We would really be missing out if we didn’t preserve that. It’s just a huge draw for the town. People from other areas that have lost their open space come here to use it.”

3. Are there any particular areas of vulnerability for resources required for your activity?

Question was raised of where the funds would come from for implementing any policy recommendations. Annual appropriations and grants are two most common sources, but committee hasn’t explored that in detail.

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Question was raised whether committee would be looking at access issues in terms of having parking available to be able to get to the areas of interest. Particularly in winter, roadside parking is not always a good option. Provision of parking would also increase the utility of the Cheshire Pond Conservation Area.

Major erosion problems on Class VI roads where trucks pass through when ground is soft. Red Gate Rd., Woodbury Hill Rd.

4. Where are the lands in Jaffrey most suitable for your activity?

Question was raised about coordination with surrounding towns for protection strategies. Valuable natural resource areas are not necessarily constrained by municipal boundaries.

Word of mouth is important to let people know of areas like CPCA and Childrens Woods.

Extension of rail trail northward out of town would be good idea, although challenging due to missing bridges and lack of definition of the corridor in places.

“What I think is really nice is seeing people out walking around and out on the rail trail because it’s very easy walking. I’m interested in a democratic approach where everybody can enjoy the trail and you can potentially push a wheel chair. Particularly when the days are short in the winter, it would be nice to have more opportunities for places to go and not have to dodge the cars.”

The school district land on Carter Hill at the town line was suggested as a good opportunity to extend the available trails accessible from the rail trail. It’s a very pretty area that would be readily accessible to a lot of people.

Area out by Woodbury Hill Rd., Fiske Rd. looping back through Thorndike Pond Rd. Sanders Rd. area.

5. Does your activity lend itself to a multiple use scenario?

It was felt that the interests of trail users are not antithetical to those of working lands, hunters, etc., that really there is a good fit between most of these uses. Activities such as hunting and snowmobiling do not typically hurt the conservation value of a piece of land.

Possibility of multi-use trail corridors with parallel trails - separation of the motorized sports from foot traffic.

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6. *Are there other uses that are incompatible with your activity?*

ATV and other four-wheeler use was generally observed to be detrimental to all other uses due to erosion concerns, disruption of wildlife photography opportunities, impacts to habitat, etc.

7. *What is the general sense of future participation in your activity? Expanding? Contracting?*

It's really difficult to get people involved, both politically and physically getting out to enjoy the land. "Most of the people I talk to in town say 'oh we can see the mountain from here, that's all we need'. I still hike the mountain a lot of the time all by myself."

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m. Next meeting will be on May 19.

Submitted:

Mark W. Kresge
Chairman, Ad hoc Open Space Committee