

November 20, 2012 MEETING MINUTES – OPEN SPACE & RECREATION PLAN COMMITTEE

Time: 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Location: Swampscott Town Hall, First Floor Conference Room

Members Present: Toni Bandrowicz, Angela Ippolito, Jim Olivetti, Sarah Pruett, Mary Webster, Richard Smith, and Marc Barden

Others: Peter Kane (Town Planner), Danielle Strauss (Recreation Director), and Tania Lillak

1. Approval of October 16, 2012 Meeting Minutes (Item 1. on the Agenda)

The fourth meeting of the Open Space & Recreation Planning Committee was called to order at 6:35 pm.

In researching her section, Angela found helpful the 11 page summary of the Open Space Workbook (found on-line). She also reminded us that what is needed is just an update what is in the existing plan.

Marc also suggested we keep in mind the goals of the open space plan and not go into too much detail on things that may not relate directly to those goals.

Angela also mentioned that we should consider shoreline erosion and how it affects open space properties. For instance, while there is a “paper street” near Galloupes Point, because of erosion, there is actually no longer enough land for a road to be built.

Regarding the minutes from the last meeting, Danielle noted that in 5th paragraph of Section 2 it is not the “conservation group” but the neighborhood association (i.e., Friends of Phillips Beach) that maintain the boardwalk at Philips Beach. A correction will be made. Also Pete will be providing information on how much land is currently developed in Swampscott, a question which was raised and noted in last minutes (on the last page). The minutes were not approved.

2. Survey Update

Distributed for discussion was a handout entitled “Fall 2012 Open Space & Recreation Survey Results” which graphically displays a summary of the survey. 115 people had responded to the survey (85 at the town meeting and 30 on-line). Pete gave an explanation of what the graphs showed, noting also some of the specific comments that had been made regarding certain properties. Marc observed that it was interesting that, for Q. 7, 46% of the population “advocated/supported the Town not selling property that could be used for open space.”

A discussion of how best to share the survey information with the community followed. In addition to educating people about the work of this committee, it was mentioned that

distributing the information, in particular the information on all the different properties, would make people aware of open space that they might not have known about. Pete offered to shorten and distill the information further for publication and distribution to the Town committees and boards. Marc suggested using the Patch to distribute the information to the community. He also suggested that people who had not filled out the survey be allowed to do so, perhaps by going to the Town website. Pete remarked that that it would be too complicated to be continually updating the survey. The way to do it, he advised, was to inform the community that there would be future follow-up surveys that they could participate in.

3. Reports and updates from the subcommittees (Item 3. on the Agenda)

Richard said that he had been updating his section on Regional Context, Community History and Population Data. He also mentioned that he had visited the Harold King Park property. Marc mentioned that the Boy Scouts had made a trail map of the area and he will send it to the Committee, fyi. The trail in the park is marked but only in one direction; agreed it would be good if it was marked in both directions. The history of Harold King Park is in the 1983 plan. Discussed that the property, because of the terrain, would not be suitable for a dog park. It was also observed that it was difficult to both find and park near the property. Suggested that the Committee walk the property one weekend. Members will email possible weekend dates in upcoming weeks (before it becomes too icy).

Angela distributed a list of the properties but said that she still needs to research planning and zoning to update the list.

Mary had updated and distributed to the group the Infrastructure section. Toni will see what information on water supply she can obtain for this section in addition to what Mary has obtained already. Jim suggested that this section should note that the Essex County Scenic Byway runs through Town.

On the Environmental Section (Geology, Soils, etc.), Toni noted that this subcommittee has been doing research and, although the Water Resources and Fish & Wildlife subsections had been distributed to larger group before the meeting, the subcommittee still needs to internally coordinate before requesting comments from larger group. Jim, who is working on Vegetation subsection, mentioned that he had met with Susan Balleza who is on the Town's Beautification Committee. Marc questioned how detailed we need to get on certain things like Fish & Wildlife. It was observed that it may be good to point out where there is wildlife in conservation areas, like birds at Palmer Pond. It was also noted that the Committee needs to show that it has done its due diligence in finding that there are no endangered species in Town. Jim also pointed out that Swampscott is a resting place for migrating species, such as warblers in Ewing Woods, and Richard observed also the shorebird migration.

There was a discussion at that point about Ewing Woods and the possibility that, if the Stanley school is torn down and rebuilt, three means of egress will be required for the

new school. Therefore, it is possible, since there is a paper street that runs between the school and the Ewing Woods, that part of this conservation property would be affected. Agreed that this should be prevented from happening. Marc noted that there is a need to make people aware of this land. Also noted was that there is a wetland in the Ewing Woods.

Regarding the Inventory, while needing to do some more research, Angela believes that the list is as comprehensive as it can be. She indicated that she is considering rearranging it to be more in line with the Open Space Workbook summary. There would still be a public and private land division, but within those two categories, she would create more subsets of the type of properties listed under each. Jim questioned how this would affect the work of the committee members who volunteered to help summarize each of the properties on the list. Agreed that a template would be helpful so that each person has an idea on how to do the required narrative summary and so the group would not end up with three different approaches. Mentioned that the inventory is made up of a map, matrix and narrative. Marc suggested that on the matrix, the size of the property should be added.

A discussion of whether properties that may potentially be available for purchase should be included. Observed that such properties should not be on this inventory, which is only of existing open spaces, but in the recommendations section of the plan.

On Mapping, Pete and Marc created a handout showing which maps are required by the Open Space Workbook and which maps are only recommended. They intend to create the required maps and said that each subcommittee should let them know if it wanted them to create any of the recommended maps, or whether there are any other maps not listed that the subcommittee would want. They provided a form for requesting maps.

4. Public Participaton Plan (Item 4 on the Agenda)

Discussed sending a letter, like Marblehead had, to each of the town boards and committees. Mary offered to review the Marblehead letter and compose one that Swampscott could send to all town boards, committees and organizations (including sports related groups).

Agreed also that a face-to-face meeting with certain groups, such as Conservation Commission and Board of Selectman, is needed. Once Pete finishes summarizing the survey results for publication, the letter can be sent and groups contacted for meeting. Noted that this Committee has liaisons who can report back to their respective committees (i.e., Historical, Recreation, and Planning). In the proposed letter it can also be mentioned that the Open Space Committee is planning on a community meeting. Talked about whether it would be better to have such a public meeting in the Town Hall library or the High School (where there is better parking).

Finally, reviewed the Timeline provided in the Open Space Workbook (which was handed out). Discussed the different steps suggested in the Timeline and where the Committee was with respect to each of them.

The next meeting is scheduled for Dec. 18th. While some people will not be able to make that date, it was agreed that the meeting should happen, but with a short agenda. Anyone who cannot attend can send an email update beforehand.

Tentative dates for next four meetings after that are: Jan. 15th, Feb. 12th, March 12th, and April 16th.

Before closing, it was noted the Committee should think about CPA.

Move to adjourn at 8:45 pm by Toni, seconded by Marc, unanimously approved.