

**December 18, 2012 MEETING MINUTES – OPEN SPACE & RECREATION
PLAN COMMITTEE**

Time: 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm

Location: Swampscott Town Hall, First Floor Conference Room

Members Present: Toni Bandrowicz, Angela Ippolito, Marc Barden and Richard Smith

Members Absent: Jim Olivetti, Sarah Pruett, Mary Webster,

Others: Peter Kane (Town Planner), Tania Lillak, John Picarello, Kevin Donaher, and John Callahan

1. Approval of November 20 and December 1, 2012 Meeting Minutes (Item 1. on the Agenda)

The December 18, 2012 meeting of the Open Space & Recreation Planning Committee was called to order at 6:37 pm. Toni moved to approve the minutes from the last two meetings (the December 1st meeting being a committee hike of the Harold King Forest property); the motion was seconded by Richard and unanimously approved.

2. Updates from Subcommittees Present (Item 2. on the Agenda)

Before proceeding with the updates, there was a brief discussion of the old Girl Scout house on the upper Jackson property. Confirmed that it was still there, but severely deteriorated.

Richard informed the committee that he had reviewed the Marblehead Open Space Plan that Jim has circulated and found it a helpful template. He is also continuing to work on items in the open space inventory, in particular the listed rights of way. He had the following comments on the rights of way he had recently visited: The Littles Point easement no longer has signage, the wooden board walk is wearing out, and there is a steep and stony slope to the beach. The Martin Way easement is basically an extension of Fisherman's Beach. The Puritan Way easement (the one behind the Bertram House, near Sculpin's Way) is not passable. The Palmer Street extension through the ponds at Philips Beach is flooded, may not be passable anymore. The Forty Steps easement is deteriorating, but is a wonderful resource with great views. Black Will's Cliff, by Anthony's Pier 4, is no longer a complete pathway. Noted that one of the nicest beach areas is now mostly paved parking lots owned by the Church and Anthony's.

There was a brief Rail Committee update, with Marc informing the committee that the eminent domain action is proceeding for section from the Middle School to Humphrey Street.

Toni noted that the Environmental Inventory & Analysis subcommittee is continuing to work on its section, and planned to have a subcommittee meeting prior to the January 15th full committee meeting, and would provide a draft for comment prior to the full meeting.

Tania had been asked to contact the Friends of Salem Woods to find out more information on that organization and how it works as it could be a model for forming a group to promote and maintain the Harold King Forest. It may also want to partner with Swampscott in providing access to both the Salem conservation properties and Harold King Forest as the two properties are almost abutting each other. She will continue gathering information from that organization.

Noted that the Friends of Salem Woods had also opposed the taking of conservation land for a golf course expansion and may be able to provide helpful information on how to go about opposing the taking of conservation land if, for instance, it was proposed that part of Ewing Woods should be taken for the school expansion. Toni also questioned as to whether, if a third means of egress was necessary for the school expansion, it would be possible to do so by connecting only with the paved part of Forest Avenue, and not take any of the unpaved part of the “paper road” which runs along Ewing Woods. Also noted that there may be a vernal pool at the edge of this conservation land. Pete observed that this is why it’s important to have an Open Space Plan, as it can provide recommendations against taking conservation land for specific expansions.

There was also mention that some of the abutters may have encroached on Ewing property and the Conservation Commission may have dealt with that issue. Can check to see if the abutters were required to do a survey.

3. Outreach and Communication

Members discussed the need to perform outreach to various Town boards and committees in order to educate them on the status of the plan. During these meetings, the boards and committees will also be able to provide feedback and information for any missing elements.

After a brief discussion, the group agreed that it would be best to have a draft of the report completed in order to develop an overview. The open space group would then put together a presentation based on the overview that could then be shown at the various board and committee meetings.

The rough schedule for this was:

- January – rough draft of report completed
- February – put together synopsis and overview
- March – meet with Town boards/committees

4. Public Comment

Meeting guests Kevin Donaher and John Piccarello were asked to join the conversation. Both are residents working on the open space/play area relating to Machon School and Lower Jackson Park. They discussed how to “make what we have worth more than what it is” by creating a walking path from the Machon area through an easement onto Jackson Park, to create a “connectedness” where lots of people could recreate. They asked the

committee what the plans were for kids and adults on that side of Essex St. Marc told them that we would be making recommendations, and that their input was critical to forming the best recommendations. They hoped that Machon grounds could remain as open space.

The conversation moved to Aggregate Quarry and whether it would be possible to place restrictions on property use or to secure a right-of-way for a dog park.. Angela thought this was unlikely in terms of safety, access and parking.

Conversation turned to beaches, public vs private, and access points. Questions were raised over who owned rocky outcroppings. Thought to be public, such as high-water mark section of beach.

Move to adjourn at 8:00 pm by Angela seconded by Marc, unanimously approved.