

**April 29, 2013 MEETING MINUTES – OPEN SPACE & RECREATION PLAN COMMITTEE PRESENTATION TO TOWN BOARDS AND COMMITTEES**

**Time:** 7:00-8:30 pm

**Location:** Swampscott High School

**Members Present:** Toni Bandrowicz, Angela Ippolito, Marc Barden, and Sarah Pruett

**Members Absent:** Richard Smith, and Jim Olivetti

**Others:** Pete Kane (Town Planner) and Danielle Strauss (Town Recreation Director)

*See attached list* for Town Committees/Boards present at meeting.

Presentation was made by Angela Ippolito and Pete Kane. Angela opened the meeting giving background information on the purpose of the OS&RP Committee and the Town's need to revise the existing Open Space plan as well as what the Committee has accomplished to date. She noted that, after doing extensive research, the Committee had developed a list of Goals, out of which came specific Recommendations and a list of Town Committees/Boards affected by the recommendations. Angela used a power point presentation (*attached*) to go over specifics, including the timeline for completion of the revised plan.

Angela requested that the Town Committees and Boards review the entire plan, to see if corrections were needed or if anything else should be added. It was noted that the Committees and Boards have two weeks, until May 14<sup>th</sup>, in which to provide formal comments on the draft plan which should be forwarded by the Committee / Board Chairs.

Angela then went through the six main goals (*see attached power point*). She then opened the meeting to questions.

- One party asked about the status of the Rail-to-Trail in Swampscott to which Marc Barden provided a summary, noting issues relating to property rights claimed by National Grid. Marc explained that the Rail-to-Trail group is attempting to have the Board of Selectman take certain portions of the trail eminent domain, a legal procedure by which land owners are entitled to be compensated. Marc noted that the group would prefer National Grid providing a recreational easement.
- Another question related to Philips Beach being privately owned. Jill Sullivan, Board of Selectmen, explained that there is an article in the Town Warrant to purchase the land from these owners for \$140,000. The land value approximately 30 years ago when this same issue came up was \$100,000. Reasons for the town to purchase the land include: ensuring that a lifeguard can be present; that the DPW can maintain that portion of the beach; and that beach goes in fact can use it for recreational purposes.

- It was asked if there were other areas, in addition to Blythswood, in which conservation easements/restrictions could be sought. Possible areas include Tedesco and wooded portions of the quarry, Marian Court. Participants at the meeting were also invited to suggest property owners that could be approached by the town.
- Angela explained that, in addition to it being a requirement for the town to have plan, it will also open up the town to the possibility of grant opportunities (e.g., PARC grants). Ideally, the plan should be updated every 5 years with the remaining goals reviewed and possibly moved to the top of the “list”.
- In response to a question of whether the goals will be prioritized, it was explained that the plan will have a 5 year plan, broken down into what goals/actions can realistically be accomplished in that time period. It is anticipated that the Board of Selectmen will create an Open Space Committee to watch over the plan and work with the responsible parties.
- It was asked why the ocean waters was not included in the plan, only beaches. Noted that this was the type of feedback that the OS&RP Committee is looking for, and that the Harbor Plan that the Harbor Advisory Board is working on may overlap with the Open Space Plan and that there should be coordination of the two. One of the HWAC’s many items is having a machine to rake the beach, but there is the issue of where to dispose of the debris (mostly seaweed, with only about 1-2% is trash).

Again, the groups were invited to review and comment on the draft Open Space Plan and provide other recommendations which the Open Space Committee would consider.



# Swampscott Open Space & Recreation Plan

*Developing a 2013-2018 outlook*



# WHAT IS AN OPEN SPACE & RECREATION PLAN?

- ⇒ Open Space and Recreation Plans (OS&RPs) allow communities to look at its entire open space infrastructure and cohesively determine the proper maintenance and enhancements of these assets.
- ⇒ Open space is a significant element in the character and quality of life for a community.

Open space — *noun*

conservation land, forested land, recreation land, agricultural land, corridor parks, small parks, green buffers along roadways

# BENEFITS OF AN OPEN SPACE & RECREATION PLAN

- ⇒ OS&RPs provide a means for the protection of the “green infrastructure” of a community.
- ⇒ Community is supplied with an outline of priorities to be considered for capital improvements.
- ⇒ Aside from quality of life impacts, open space protection and maintenance also provides economic benefits.
- ⇒ An OS&RP can also assist Swampscott in taking part in the Commonwealth’s Greenway Vision (interconnecting parks and green space throughout the state).
- ⇒ Swampscott will be eligible for a number of open space and park grants to aid in the maintenance and creation of these spaces (Self-Help, Urban Self-Help, Land and Water Conservation Funds, etc.).

# HISTORY OF OPEN SPACE PLANNING IN SWAMPSCOTT

1970s

1970

The “Swampscott Environment: Now or Never” plan approved.

Plan detailed the conservation needs and requirements for the Town.

1980s

1983

First official open space & recreation plan for Swampscott approved — “Swampscott Open Space and Recreation Master Plan”.

Plan followed Massachusetts guidelines at that time.

1990s

2000s

2000s

Attempts made to update the “Swampscott Open Space and Recreation Master Plan” to bring it up to date and in line with current state guidelines.

Update never completed or approved.

2010s

2012

The Planning Board performs a town-wide survey.

Results show significant support and concern regarding open space and recreation from residents.

# WHAT WE'VE COMPLETED

- ⇒ Review of 1983 Open Space and Recreation Master Plan
- ⇒ Identifying elements to update as well as significant new pieces required under current rules
- ⇒ Research
  - ⇒ Reviewing other studies in past 20+ years relating to open space and recreation areas in Town
  - ⇒ Interviews with community members and experts
  - ⇒ Community Survey
- ⇒ ROUGH DRAFT OF PLAN

*Committee members include: Angela Ippolito, Mary Webster, Toni Bandrowicz, Marc Barden, Jim Olivetti, Sarah Pruett, and Richard Smith; with Town employees Danielle Strauss & Pete Kane*



# FINAL STEPS TO COMPLETION



COMMUNITY  
FORUM

Public presentation  
followed by 2-week  
comment period

Board of Selectmen  
& Planning Board

Review & Approval

&

Metropolitan Area  
Planning Council

Review

Division of  
Conservation Services

Review & Approval

COMPLETE

Dependent on  
DCS timing

# WHAT WE NEED TONIGHT

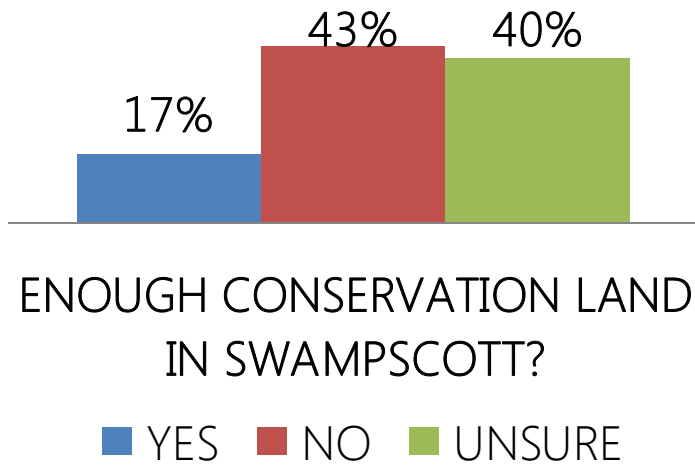
Opportunity for Town boards, committees and departments to weigh in on the new Open Space & Recreation Plan

- 1) Review the **entire** plan
- 2) Examine the Goals & Objectives and how they apply to your board, committee, or department
- 3) Evaluate whether there are any missing, incorrect or additional research elements of Goals/Objectives that should be included

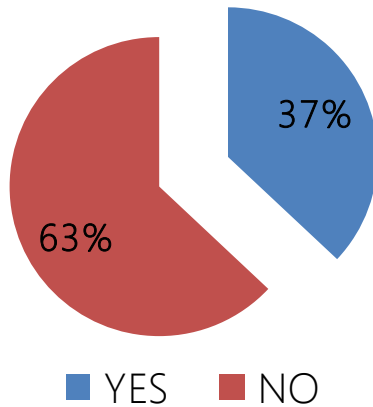
Provide your formal comments (from your board, committee, department) by Tuesday, May 14th

⇒ TWO WEEK COMMENT PERIOD

# COMMUNITY SURVEY — FALL 2012



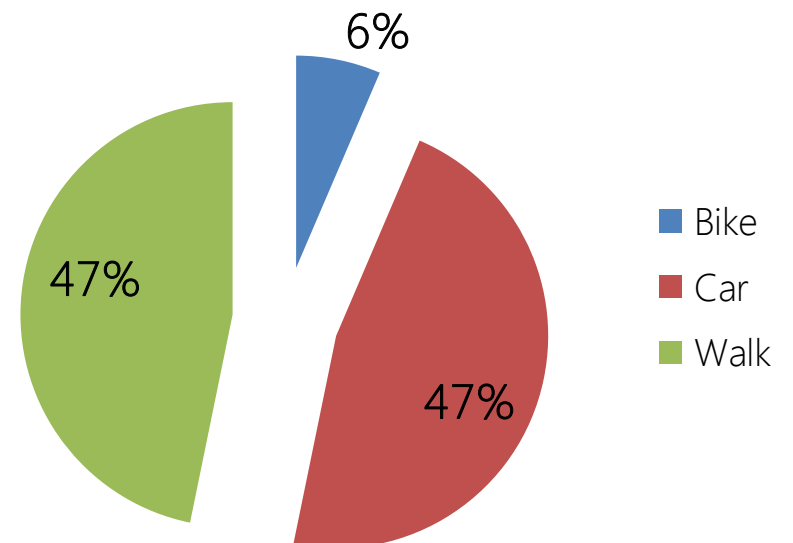
ENOUGH RECREATION AREAS IN SWAMPSCOTT?



## TOP FIVE VISITED PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

- 1) Town Hall Lawn
- 2) Fisherman's Beach
- 3) Phillips Beach
- 4) King's Beach
- 5) Linscott Park

## TRANSPORTATION METHODS USED TO GET TO OPEN SPACES



# CURRENT GOALS

- 1) Establish A Green Corridor Network
- 2) Maintain Open Spaces & Recreation Facilities
- 3) Improve Public Access & Awareness
- 4) Expand & Improve Open Spaces & Recreation Facilities To Meet Needs
- 5) Preserve The Scenic Character Of The Town
- 6) Strengthen Environmental Protection

*Each goal has a number of **actions** and **objectives** that have been compiled to help attain the goal.*

# GOAL #1

## Establish A Green Corridor Network

### OVERVIEW

*The various open space and recreation fields are best served when they are easily connected. This goal envisions a green network so that recreational walkers and bicyclists, both townspeople and tourists, can enjoy green connectors to open spaces, recreation facilities, beaches and rail transit. Such a network will also encourage wildlife passage through the region.*

### IDENTIFIED RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

- ⇒ Conservation Commission
- ⇒ Open Space Committee
- ⇒ Rail-Trail Implementation Committee

# GOAL #2

## Maintain Open Spaces & Recreation Facilities

### OVERVIEW

*Townpeople have expressed loud and clear a desire for cleaner, safer, better-maintained existing parks, playgrounds, sports fields and beaches. In supporting this goal, Swampscott mirrors residents in the northeast region as a whole, as revealed in the survey "Massachusetts Outdoors 2006: Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan", in which maintaining existing facilities scored highest of any funding priority. Establishing site specific plans for maintenance, safety and replacement is key to achieving this goal.*

### IDENTIFIED RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

- ⇒ Andrews Chapel Committee
- ⇒ Beautification Committee
- ⇒ Board of Health
- ⇒ Board of Selectmen
- ⇒ Conservation Commission
- ⇒ DPW
- ⇒ Harbor & Waterfront Advisory Committee
- ⇒ PTAs
- ⇒ School Committee
- ⇒ Veterans Affairs Committee

# GOAL #3

## Improve Public Access & Awareness

### OVERVIEW

*The open space and recreational facilities in Swampscott can meet their fullest potential if they are accessible and known about by residents. Through the public surveys, it was found that many residents are unaware of many of the features located within the community. During site visits, the Committee also found that many locations are unmarked or inaccessible.*

### IDENTIFIED RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

- ⇒ Beautification Committee
- ⇒ Board of Selectmen
- ⇒ Conservation Commission
- ⇒ Disability Commission
- ⇒ DPW
- ⇒ Harbor & Waterfront Advisory Committee
- ⇒ Historical Commission
- ⇒ Open Space Committee
- ⇒ School Committee

# GOAL #4

## Expand & Improve Open Spaces & Recreation Facilities To Meet Needs

### OVERVIEW

*While there are a number of excellent open space and recreation areas available, there can always be improvement. The research during this planning process found that amenities were lacking or inconsistent between various open space areas. Likewise, some areas are very small or limited in the type of activity that can be enjoyed.*

### IDENTIFIED RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

- ⇒ Athletic Field Committee
- ⇒ Beautification Committee
- ⇒ Board of Selectmen
- ⇒ Conservation Commission
- ⇒ Council on Aging
- ⇒ DPW
- ⇒ Harbor & Waterfront Advisory Committee
- ⇒ Open Space Committee
- ⇒ Planning Department
- ⇒ Recreation Commission
- ⇒ School Committee



# GOAL #5

## Preserve the Scenic Character of the Town

### OVERVIEW

*The majority of Swampscott residents value the small scale seaside town atmosphere in which they live, and want to preserve the quality of life this atmosphere affords. Overall appearance and visual character of the town will be improved through public shade tree planting and other greenscape improvements. To further support this goal, open space and recreation needs will be incorporated into land use planning and zoning, and protections for historically-significant sites will be put in place.*

### IDENTIFIED RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

⇒ Beautification Committee

⇒ Conservation Commission

⇒ DPW

⇒ Historical Commission

⇒ Historical Society

⇒ Open Space Committee

⇒ Planning Department

⇒ Recreation Department

# GOAL #6

## Strengthen Environmental Protection

### OVERVIEW

*As is true in most communities, Swampscott has experienced and continues to experience environmental problems both man-made and natural. The open space and recreational facilities need to take these elements into consideration and should provide for ways to minimize and eliminate these problems as best as possible.*

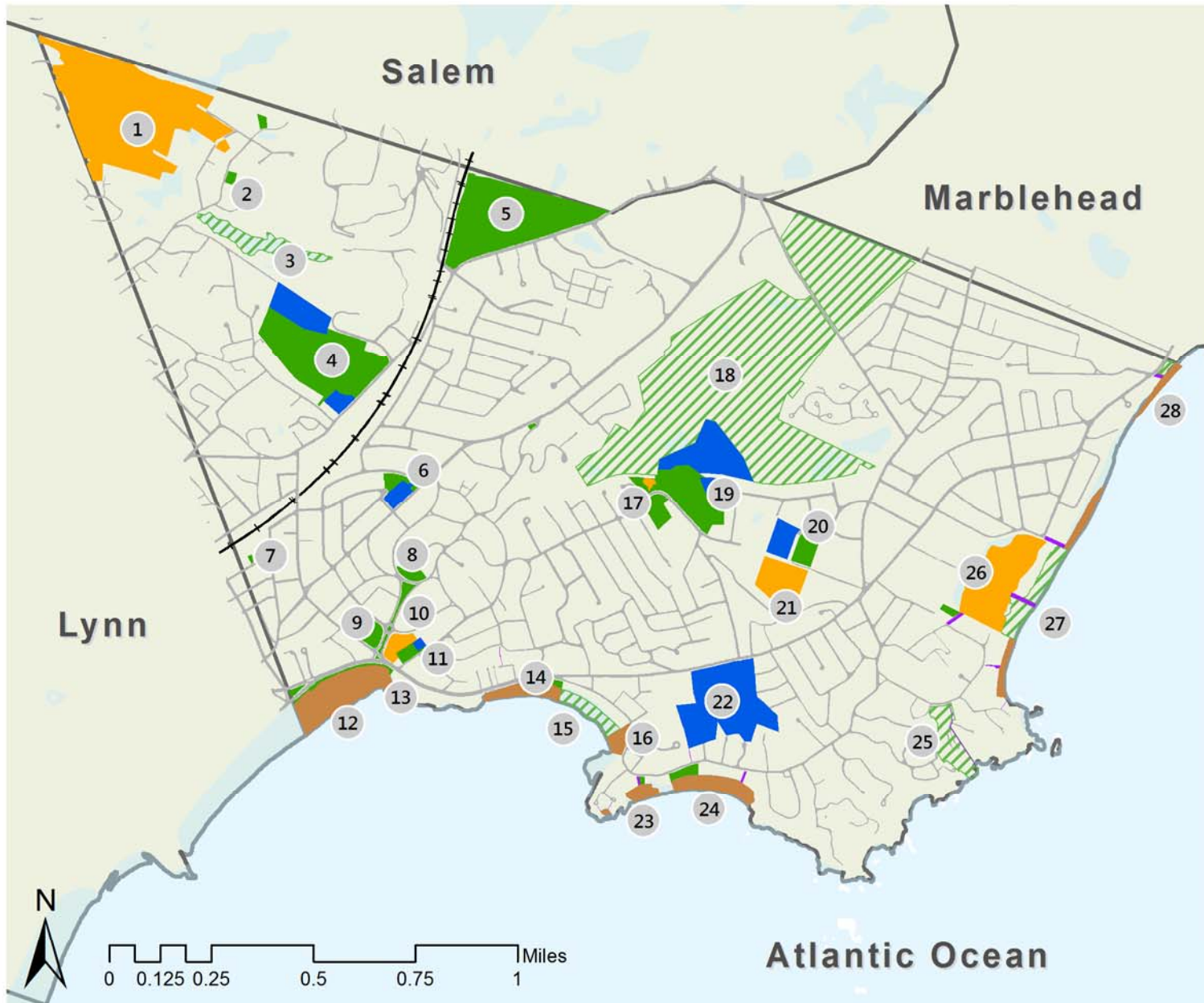
### IDENTIFIED RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

- ⇒ Athletic Field Committee
- ⇒ Board of Health
- ⇒ Board of Selectmen
- ⇒ Building Department
- ⇒ Conservation Commission
- ⇒ DPW
- ⇒ Finance Committee
- ⇒ Harbor & Waterfront Advisory Committee
- ⇒ Open Space Committee
- ⇒ Planning Department



# Swampscott Open Space & Recreation Plan 2013

## MAP 11 - OPEN SPACE INVENTORY



### LEGEND

#### Open Space - Public

- Beach
- Conservation Area
- Park, Playground, Other
- Recreation Area
- Right-of-Way

#### Open Space - Private

- Areas
- 1 - Harold A. King Forest
- 2 - Windsor Park
- 3 - Foster Pond
- 4 - Jackson Park
- 5 - Swampscott Cemetery
- 6 - Abbott Park
- 7 - Superior Street Playground
- 8 - Howland Park
- 9 - Town Hall Lawn
- 10 - Monument Square & Mall
- 11 - Linscott Park & Hadley School Recreation
- 12 - King's Beach
- 13 - Driscoll Park
- 14 - Chaisson Park
- 15 - Fisherman's Beach
- 16 - Sandy Beach
- 17 - Muskrat Pond
- 18 - Tedesco Country Club
- 19 - Middle School Recreation
- 20 - Stanley School Recreation
- 21 - Charles M. Ewing Woods
- 22 - Phillips Park
- 23 - Polisson Park & Whale's Beach
- 24 - Johnson Park & Eiseman's Beach
- 25 - Blythswood
- 26 - Palmer Pond
- 27 - Phillips Beach
- 28 - Beach Bluff Park & Preston Beach

DATA SOURCE  
Swampscott GIS & MassGIS



# Swampscott Open Space & Recreation Plan 2013

## MAP 12 - ACTION PLAN

