

Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee Meeting – February 27, 2017 Minutes

Time: 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM **Location:** Town Hall 2nd Floor Conference Room

Members Present: Mary Webster, Chair; Tania Lillak, Vice Chair; Jim Olivetti, Clerk; Toni Bandrowicz, Richard Smith, Sara Pruett; Pete Kane, Director of Community Development, ex officio; Angela Ippolito, Planning Board Chair.

Members Absent:; Danielle Strauss, Recreation Director, ex officio; Patrick Jones, Selectman Liaison.

The minutes of the January meeting were unanimously approved.

Prior to convening the meeting, several committee members spoke informally with town administrator Sean Fitzpatrick. He expressed enthusiasm for protecting and developing open space in the town and asked to be invited to an upcoming meeting.

Action: Mary will invite Sean to a future OS&RPC meeting.

Agenda Items

1. White Court.

Angela updated the committee on the status of White Court. A task force, including most members of the OS&RPC, will develop a business plan for White Court that will include analyzing funding options and fund raising opportunities, maintenance and preservation, and income potential for the property. The goal is to bring the resulting business plan to the Town Meeting in May for members to consider acquiring the property.

Toni asked if it would be beneficial to begin identifying potential large donors ASAP. Pete suggested it would be most productive to have the business plan completed to present to donors so that they can see what they would be supporting with their donations.

2. Fields Maintenance.

Danielle was not in attendance, no new information on field maintenance plan.

3. Land & Water Conservation Grant Program.

It was generally felt that we were not ready to apply for a grant this cycle. Pete stated that we should have the Open Space Plan direct our decisions as to what to apply for a grant for. Then turn to Danielle for development of the technical details and costs.

Action: Toni will email Danielle to recommend that planning for playground equipment upgrading start now with the intention of applying for a L&WC grant next year.

4. Blythswood

The Conservation Restriction for Blythswood requires that a Management Plan for the public easement be in place. Toni has drafted a Plan and has asked for Committee feedback.

Appropriate signage will need to be installed identifying the easement and alerting users to possible hazards.

Tania asked about bicycle access to the easement. Toni said she would add wording to the relevant section of the management plan.

Action: Committee members should review the draft plan and provide Toni with changes and additions.

Action: Jim will provide a photo of the warning signage Nahant has posted at Eastern Point.

5. Main Streets Program.

The committee briefly discussed the Main Streets Program. Pete informed the committee that this is not a governmentally directed program, it is funded by interested community businesses that want to do programming and otherwise enliven a business district.

Other Business

Land Use & Management Plan for Harold King Forest.

Pete will post and publicize the draft Management Plan for a public comment period.

Rail Trail Update

Pete is giving a presentation on March 1 to the Board of Selectmen on funding needs to move forward with the implementation of the Rail Trail.

Greenwood Ave. Update

Sarah asked if the Committee should support neighbors who wish to turn the property into park land. Pete responded that there is no real consensus even among the neighbors as to what should be done with the former high school property. He noted that the RFP does preserve the wooded slope behind the building and the existing path from Fuller Ave. to Greenwood Ave. that includes a view to the harbor. Pete also noted the very substantial estimated cost to demolish the building.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 14.