

Meeting Minutes, **Upton Open Space Committee**, January 15th, 2009, 7.35 pm

Members present:

Rick Holmes
Mike Penko
Marcella Stasa

Mike presented the Open Space Annual Report for review.

Sweetwilliam Farm update: After the site-visit with the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Vanessa Johnson from the DCR called Gail Harrington to say that the most the state could add is \$200,000. With a self-help grant, CPA and other funding sources we could possibly match the amount Gail could get from a developer, though grant funding is uncertain.

Meeting adjourned at 8PM

Meeting Minutes, **Upton Open Space Committee**, February 19th, 2009, 7.40

Nipmuc was closed for vacation week, members met at Dunkin' Donuts in Upton (a note regarding the change in location was posted on main entrance of Nipmuc HS)

Members present:

Rick Holmes
Mike Penko
Marcella Stasa

Mike reported that there are several options available for SweetWilliam Farm (SWF).

The state may allow a land transfer for an easement but it would have to go through the Article 97 process. This could take 2 years and involves legislative approval. Katie Gellenbeck from Sudbury Valley Trust will check with the state about the land swap possibility

To consider the property for a self-help grant it will have to be appraised. Mike had started the application process on SWF some time ago and can pick up where he left off to get the process going again. OSC will approach the Community Preservation Committee for appraisal money. Self-help is a reimbursement program.

Partnering would involve state, developer, non-profit organization & town.

There may be a playing field possible.

Mike asked if Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds can be used to buy a conservation restriction for the Former Stefans Farm Parcel and reduce the debt load for the town. If so, it would free up about \$140,000 per year. Rick wondered if a non-profit organization could get CPA funds to purchase a conservation restriction from the town. Rick mentioned that the status of the CPA is iffy. The funds come from real estate taxes so less money is available.

We should contact Holy Angels/Catholics Working Together about preserving a portion of the land where the new church will be constructed as a scenic landscape. The bishop doesn't want to place any limitations on what can be done with the undeveloped portion of the property. Mike moved to send a letter to the archdiocese to suggest working with the town.

Dave Adams of the Recreation Commission should be contacted about West River Road where playing fields could be a possibility.

Mike **promises** to have the Open Space and Recreation Plan for the March 19th meeting.

Open space events:

Feb 24th – Comet (if it's clear)
March 1st - Peppercorn Hill
March/April – Big Night

Meeting Minutes, **Upton Open Space Committee**, March 19th, 2009, 7.35

Members present:

Mike Penko
Marcella Stasa

Attendees:

Ellen Arnold
Katie Gellenbeck
Gail Harrington
Rob Nichols

Discussion of Open Space article for The Town Crier - update and big night info.

Sweetwilliam Farm:

CPC approved \$4500 for appraisal of Sweetwilliam Farm. We need to define what is to be appraised.

Would it be appropriate to have the Town crier do a story to let the public know what's happening?

Mike has invited Recreation Commission to discuss playing field possibility.

An easement from the State Forest to Glen Echo is desired to provide access to hikers and horseback riders. One possibility is along boundary line and may require a wetland crossing. The septic system needs to be avoided. Easement along the south (store) side would seem best. When the trail reaches the west parcel it may all end up town owned but the trail should hug the border of the property.

KG: Ask Mr Mayo for an easement; value should be negligible for appraisal.

MP: We should contact Mr Mayo to get a feel for the easement idea. All in agreement that the the easement should go along the South border of the property.

KG: We should separate the house/ store/ barn from the parcel.

GH: I would appraise the whole thing and extract the house when needed. the goal is to preserve the whole thing. Ideally it would be a win-win for the town and the farm.

RN Open to talk about any possible option.

KG: Appraisal will be based on a conventional plan but some plots may not be buildable. Planning Board needs to approve conventional plan.

MP: We should present a reasonable purchase by the town which may not be the whole parcel.

KG: We need to negotiate what is the maximum value now. We can ask that the existing structures be separated out. Appraiser can give advice as to where the other structures fit in.

RN designated the area for farming and house. East fields could be hayed or turned into playing fields. He would like the option of building a house for himself.

EA: What would be needed for a driveway? Existing driveway could be used.

RN wants enough retained to keep farm status. There could be an agreement with the town to farm the land.

EA: Make sure that the Board of Health Regulations allow for the horses. Leasing the land for horse pasture is a possibility to keep the fields open.

KG: We can put the pasture in the Conservation Restriction agreement to preserve grassland. Pasture is prime farm land.

MP: Access to back of property if recreation fields go in, how do we get public access? North of the house?

We should be in a position to get as much of the land purchased by the town as possible. Recreation Commission missed the deadline opportunity with Pulte and is interested in Sweetwilliam Farm.

KG: Do we have to have the appraiser know for sure the road is legitimate? We should put all the issues on the table. If Rec Com says they aren't interested can we say we presented it?

MP: It's unlikely the Rec Com would not like to have fields. Road easement to fields could follow the conventional plan.

AE: If wetland crossing, make it through Glen Echo Open Space.

MP: That might violate the Open Space Bylaw and be a bad precedent. North edge of Property might be best with least impact to the house and to North Street..

MP will look to see what the Glen Echo possibility might hold.

AE: If at one time the Open Space area was considered for a soccer field then perhaps it may be considered for access to a soccer field.

MP: Is a month from now reasonable?

RN will talk to Mark Allen.

MP: By April we would have awarded the contract for the appraisal.

KG: This is complicated and unusual.

MP: Get appraisal and then we can apply for end of June. At some point should we talk to the state?

KG will talk with Christine Barry and let her know the road from Ridge road is off the table and that we are going for the appraisal.

MP: Maybe she could weigh in on contributing to the easement.

KG: The state is trying to figure out how to value things like easements. Can an appraiser tell us what a section would be worth?

MP: Appraiser should look at the CR.

EA clarified CPA funding. Could take historical angle.

MP: Could US Department of Agriculture want to be a partner in this?

GH: I can check with the farm bureau.

KG: Public access required for LAND grant.
Get more info on the historical preservation restriction. Does it only apply to the house?
The stone walls?

Talk with appraisers, ask about cutting out the house, CR value, value for trail easement & historic preservation restriction. Ask Historical Commission about the house. Ask Farm Bureau about USDA. Would it make a difference if we have partners, what money would USDA add?

Call a second appraiser and meet with Historic and Recreation Commissions

SVT will send a letter to the town after the appraisal.

Once info is public the town might get moving.
Showcase the property and play up the great things about it.

Meeting adjourned 9.45

Meeting Minutes, **Upton Open Space Committee**, April 16th , 2009, 7.30PM

Members present:

Tom Dodd

Scott Heim

Marcella Stasa

Brief discussion regarding Sweetwilliam Farm. Special Open Space meeting scheduled for 7PM on April 28th with Katie Gellenbeck to discuss further. All should try to attend- it is important to have a quorum for these talks.

Adjourned 8PM

Meeting Minutes, **Upton Open Space Committee**, April 28th, 2009, 7.05 PM

Members present:

Tom Dodd
Rick Holmes
Mike Penko
Marcella Stasa

Attendees:

Katie Gellenbeck
Joan Shanahan

Gail Harrington and Rob Nichols expected to attend but not present, tried to reach them without success, left message.

MS reported on Planning Board meeting of April 14th with Gail, Rob and Mark Allen. Gail not interested in putting money into a conventional plan. PB was given the preliminary conventional and Open Space plans with Mark acknowledging that all lots may not be buildable. PB was in support of preserving the property. Since there was no conventional plan for the PB to review, there is still no information on the number of buildable lots.

KG: Appraisers just don't work that way. We need to get engineering done.

RH: Does every lot need to perc?

MP: It could be done by soil test. One appraiser said that it's important to get water info.

Rick had the impression that the appraisal will go forward based on the plan we have.

MP: We also need to know if there is to be a Conservation Restriction (CR), what parcels are to be retained and if there is to be a town purchase.

RH: If she sells to the town can't the town do whatever it wants to do with the land?

KG: Not if there's a CR, Gail can also refuse to sell.

MP described the maps on which he has carved out two different scenarios of retained area.

RH: Do we need to restrict what can be done with the retained area?

MP: It could be a limited CR.

RH: Like agricultural use.

KG: We would have to be careful in how the CR is crafted. The CR would have to be specific to each of the different areas. Appraisal must be for highest and best use. Separate from the house and define what would be the buildable area. Three appraisers were contacted, one said it's a complicated site due to steep slopes and wet areas. Two said they can appraise it broken up but it would cost more.

Gail needs to, at least, identify the area that gets carved out.

RH: What will people say- What will it cost to save the view?

MP: Nothing if it's an Open Space development.

RH: Access is still an issue.

MP: We should save the whole thing.

RH is open to a town contribution.

Things to consider: purchase of the east side, Water quality certification, limited project, MEPA filing.

MP: Will there be a spring round for the LAND grant?
Appraisals are coming in low, might Gail consider taking less?
If they get 30 lots at 50 or 60k?

KG: If Gail chooses development she may not get as much as she'd like.

RH: It's likely OK to go to CPC and re-request the \$ for the appraisal in the next fiscal year.

MP: We would lose the grant round.

KG: We can begin by talking with an appraiser.

RH: We can't have it appraised based on this plan.

KG: We can push the appraiser to do it or not.
There has only been a bank appraisal so far.

MP: We'll need a second appraisal, and it would have to be done quickly. If first appraisal is too low we needn't go forward with a second one. We have money for only one.

RH: We will need more info if CPC is to approve more money for a second appraisal.

TD: We should have an appraiser on line and ready to go.

MP: Will CPC be upset if the plan isn't fully vetted?

KG: An appraiser wouldn't appraise an uncreditable plan,

RH: What do we have to commit to with the grant?

public access

can purchase CR

agriculture can be done on the parcel

KG: It could be a complicated CR.

MP: Are we in agreement about proceeding?

MP reviewed the procedure.

Funds and partnership are a better bet with historical rather than agricultural.

DCR add 50k-100k?

CPA- historical

Bulk of the funding from CPA and LAND grant, MS will help MP with grant.

We need a capital score which Planning Board may have done.

Open Space plan needs to be updated.

Christa Collins can see if house/barn envelopes seem good for a CR.

Value of west side only, 2 values for fee purchase.

Determine fair market values, might need to know retained rights.

Possible Open Space events:

May - Migrating Birds at Auburn Sportsmen's Club

June - Moth Walk with Mark Mello?

July - Peppercorn Hill Butterfly walk with Tom

August- Mushroom walk with Margaret Carroll?

September - Moonlight paddle -check full moon (Sept 4th-Labor Day Weekend)

Meeting adjourned 9.45

Meeting Minutes, **Upton Open Space Committee**, May 5, 2009, 7.35 PM

Members present:

Tom Dodd

Mike Penko

Marcella Stasa

Reviewed trail map.

Discussed Sweetwilliam Farm and how to proceed with LAND grant.

Tom will follow up on Commonwealth Capital Checklist.

We need to complete Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Marcella will follow up on historical & contact Barbara Burke.

Pictures of the house, barn, store, animals and fields & woods in spring– Marcella

Invite Christine Berry from the DCR for a site visit; DCR might cover trail easement and buffer.

Meeting adjourned 9.30PM

Meeting Minutes, **Upton Open Space Committee**, June 2, 2009, 7:35 PM

Members present:

Mike Penko
Marcella Stasa
Tom Dodd

Discussed the appraisal for the Sweetwilliam Farm grant proposal. Quote for the second appraisal was \$3,500. It is for estate lots with the highest and best use. The conventional and open space plans are not realistic as presented by the property owner and her representatives. MS will get a letter from the Historical Commission attesting to Sweetwilliam Farm's historical significance. The appraisal will be based on estate lots because the houses are valued higher because of more land. We need to let the Board of Selectmen know that we are working on the Sweetwilliam Farm grant proposal.

MP moved to decide that when we get the appraisal figure and if it's \$2,000,000 to \$3,000,000 then we decide not to move forward. CPC might be able to come with \$950,000. Sweetwilliam Farm is about 80 acres excluding the house and frontage. \$750,000 to \$800,000 is what it might cost to buy a Conservation Restriction. Seventeen lots might be worth about \$200,000/lot. The value of the house and store with frontage is \$1,600,000. The value for the entire property is about \$2,500,000. The bank has appraised at \$3,100,000.

MP read in the Board of Selectmen minutes that Orchard Street lots are being taken off the market.

Meeting adjourned 8:35 PM

Meeting Minutes, **Upton Open Space Committee**, June 18, 2009,

Members present:

No quorum

Meeting Minutes, **Upton Open Space Committee**, July 16, 2009, 7:30 PM

Members present:

Mike Penko
Marcella Stasa
Tom Dodd

Sweetwilliam Farm discussion is not over. We need to review what direction we are going. There has been no word from Gail Harrington. CPC paid \$4,500 towards the appraisal. \$400 came from Metacomet Land Trust's Upton Fund. MP would like to send Sudbury Valley Trust a letter of thanks for their work on Sweetwilliam Farm. There may be another round of grant funding.

In September, the Open Space Committee will need to discuss what to direction to go in for land protection projects. Possibilities include the Kent Property, Miscoe Hill, and Peppercorn Hill. Porier-South Street possible recreation site. Let's get a good brainstorming session going. MP will have Open Space Plan done by the end of July!!!! MP has prepared a draft of the 5-year Action Plan. This was reviewed and discussed at the meeting. We need to get updated Chapter 61 information from Tracey Tardy.

We should keep our eyes open for grants and other funding to treat waterways for phragmites.

Put in an offer to certify vernal pools on private property, a request for volunteers for work on town properties, and a wish list in the next Town Crier. Call MESA to ask about placement of shed and other projects in turtle habitat in the former Stefan's Farm parcel. At the next Con Com meeting ask about the Stormwater regulations and Peppercorn's culverts.

Metacomet Land Trust is looking for a new board member.

We need to look at Scenic Roads and Stormwater Bylaws. Check with Con Com.

The possibility of Community Preservation Act being withdrawn exists. This may reduce opportunities for open space purchases.

Tim Davidson will be asked to come into Peppercorn to clean out the culverts and to dig trenches for water bars. MP is putting together a team for the Greenways Challenge on Sept. 26th. He will forward info to be sent to the Open Space e-list.

Meeting adjourned 9:15 PM

Meeting Minutes, **Upton Open Space Committee**, August 20, 2009,

Members present:

No quorum

Meeting Minutes, **Upton Open Space Committee**, September 17, 2009,

Meeting cancelled

Meeting Minutes, **Upton Open Space Committee**, October 15, 2009,

Members present:

Tom Dodd
Mike Penko
Marcella Stasa

MP- OSRP will be brought to Rec Com, Selectmen, Planning Board and Con Com. Comments to be gathered and plan to be sent to the state.

TD- Does it need a public review?

MP- Needs a one month comment period and it should be publicized in the TC.

MP- Global warming is affecting cold water streams, West River could be at risk. State has a new water management policy baseline would be low flow years.

Question is why do we need another water supply, for current need, or for anticipated growth?

Ties in with global warming. We should start a long-term water temperature monitoring plan. Every five years check Warren Brook, Center Brook and West River. Monitoring device would cost about \$100.

Massachusetts environment is showing to get as warm as Maryland or even further south.

Town bylaw to call for a town vote for change of use for possible conservation land. Do land swaps for town land that has conservation value prevent the Selectmen from making land decisions without town participation?

Dodson Study is ecologically driven. Could we include a statement or goals for neighborhood lands or parks? Easily accessible open space for all.

Put emphasis on preserving agricultural land; use the town seal illustrate Upton's agricultural history.

Scenic Roads bylaw is in the 5 year plan.

Stone wall bylaw with mapping and protection is needed.

Possible film series.

“End of Suburbia”

Mark Uhlman may be interested in selling Pratt Hill.

State and Town Partnership?

It's 40 acres. Can the stone mound be restored?

Doug Harris said that the spirit of the place has been lost but it may be worth historical preservation.

MP moved that the UOSC pursue the exploration of the purchase of Pratt Hill, TD seconded, unanimously accepted.

We should look into working with DCR on this.

Should we talk to the Kelly's about Peppercorn? CR? Selling?

We might contact Robert Thorson about notched rocks at Peppercorn.

Regarding Sweetwilliam Farm, MP spoke with Gail Harrington and she needs to clear her debt. Development likely.

Meeting adjourned 8.45 PM

Members present:

Tom Dodd
Scott Heim
Mike Penko
Marcella Stasa

Attendees:

Mark Allen
Gail Harrington
Joe Freeman
Bob Mayo
Rob Nicholson

Sweetwilliam Farm discussion, MP thanked group and asked for information.
Planning Board asked MA and Sweetwilliam Farm representatives to come to the UOSC to weigh in.
MA-it is a unique situation with the store and planned parking lot extension.
There is access to other OS parcels for a trails corridor.
There are features of value for OS.
There are wetlands, the store, the historic home, and an existing trail network to link into.
The hope is to get 20% additional bonus units by providing open space and low income housing.
Would like to keep 70% as open space and continue farming.
There is nothing yet in writing from the Mayos in regard to adding a portion of their property.
BM- There should be no change to the view from the road.
JF- There is a LEED certified architect working on the plans.
There is a desire to preserve the stone walls.
MA- PB is willing to work with developers
MP- will a CR be placed on the agricultural portion? Answer: yes
JF- There may be a home at the north corner so as to manage the farm more easily.
MP- Is there a willingness to keep the stable at its existing scale? Answer: yes
What about the trail link? The septic is on the trail side, can the trail be routed via the Mayos and kept along the wall? Answer: agreed
Can the planned detention basin be moved?
MA- It's being planned, plus moving the road to north of the house.
MP- Will stone walls and stone paddock be preserved?
GH- Yes. Paddocks on west parcel.
TD- Will the fields be built on?
JF- Will be built on but built green and that's what MA is working on.
As much stone wall as possible will be kept.
TD- Will stone walls moved be re-built?

MA -It will.

MP- Sorry to be losing the fields.

Will there be a common leach field and individual septic and wells for larger lots?

MA- The hope is to bring town water in via Pulte development.

TD- why the loop?

MA- Helps the pressure.

TD- What sort of lighting is planned?

GH-Want none.

MA- Amato farm just required a few lights

JF- Minimal lighting is desired.

Electric will all be underground.

MP- We'll likely have a trail through Pulte to the Upton State Forest.

BM- It's dry behind my home, a trail can go there.

TD- What about parking to access open space?

MA- There will be parking at the store.

JF- There is also a handicapped accessible bathroom.

MA- Can a letter be generated and sent to the Planning Board?

MP- Some recommendations:

- 1) That a conservation restriction be placed on the agricultural land with a small house lot carved out.
- 2) That there be a linkage trail on the Mayo property.
- 3) That parking for trail access be allowed at the store
- 4) SH- if possible, preservation of the parking should the situation with the store change
- 5) That the additional home be built with height restrictions.
- 6) That the new road by which to access the development be sited north of the existing home.
- 7) That there be a trail connecting to abutting open space parcels.
- 8) TD- That signage be placed at trailheads.

JF- We want to be discreet with signage

MS- Signage is being planned- not intrusive.

TD- Are there wetland crossings we need to consider?

Yes, Warren Brook

MP- Is the edge of the open space edge the edge of the field?

MA- Yes, the tree line.

SH- Bonus units?

MA- Maybe four bonus units worked into the cluster.

JF- We're hoping to create a community

We want to be as green as possible

MP- Would you consider creating a park so that each house doesn't have it's own play area.

TD- Sorry to see the fields go.

MP- There are other parcels of land which abut Gail's which aren't conservation land.

There's a bog on Dellamora land with black spruce.

TD- There could be some rare butterflies; bog elfin.

SH- Will Sweetwilliam come before the Conservation Commission?

MP will recuse himself.

Water crossing is about an acre.

TD- Is it buildable? Economically feasible?

MP- It could be determined by the DEP that it is not feasible.

Will the PB allow private protected land toward the 70%?

MS will write a letter to the PB stating that the OSC supports the plan and that Sweetwilliam is on the right track.

Discussion of Open Space and Recreation Plan

MP gave a copy to Dave Adams

UOSC reviewed the completion schedule

Con Com has to approve.

We need to schedule a hearing and give info that the town is updating the OSRP and it will be on the website for public comment.

OSRP will now be good for seven years.

MP will send figures via Picasa and would like to have the figures fixed. He's hoping to GIS on town computer.

We need to update Dodson maps. Shall we hire Hilary from Dodson to update?

MS- Bill might be able to help.

MP- Will work on mapping on town computer; other people can learn.

Metacomet Land Trust account may pay Hilary. Maybe \$60-\$70 / hour.

There are nine required maps and Mike has another 5 or 6.

MP- We need to update town website and put up OSRP in chapters. Also need to put Scenic Roads bylaw up and list events.

Winter events;

Jan - Full moon walk or bonfire-contact fire dept.

Feb - Peppercorn bog

MS looking into connecting with other OS related groups. Plans to meet with Grafton Land Trust in early 2010. Start a dialog, maybe via blog or website. MP suggested an informal coffee meeting.

MP suggested we form a trails committee.

We might consider changing meeting day to better accommodate Rick Holms' schedule.

Meeting adjourned 9.40 PM

Members present:

Tom Dodd
Rick Holmes
Mike Penko
Marcella Stasa

Attendees:

Ellen Arnold
Joan Shanahan
Cathy Taylor

EA and CT both want to come up to speed with the plans for Sweetwilliam Farm. An open space development is planned.

CT – Historical Commission(HC) should be involved.

Sweetwilliam representatives met with the Planning Board (PB) and were asked to come to the UOSC for comments on the open space development plan. 38 units are proposed, the conventional plan still needs approval and a buffer to USF was requested.

UOSC had the property appraised last spring and Sweetwilliam Farm may be willing to have an updated appraisal done when the final number of lots is determined. The UOSC appraisal came in at 950,000-1,000,000 for a conservation restriction on 80 acres, which leaves the house, store, and an additional house lot.

EA-UOSC is a sub-committee of the Conservation Commission. Do abutters need to be notified if there is a discussion concerning abutting property? Answer: Not for a discussion; yes for a public hearing.

EA- If the PB asks UOSC to make recommendations on a project shouldn't the public be allowed to comment before it goes back to the PB? Answer: It is not a legal requirement.

EA- It seems more logical to present to the public before it goes to the PB, the appearance is that it's an official document.

MP- Mark Allen asked for a preliminary opinion so as not to waste time.

EA noted that UOSC minutes and agenda are not on the town website and requested copies of minutes in which there is mention of Sweetwilliam Farm. MS will e-mail them to her.

MP asked EA if there was anything in the letter to the PB she would like to comment on and she expressed concern over the number of lots and linkage to Upton State Forest (USF) – access to USF should allow for all legal use.

The state has input as an abutter. John Pulczarski was not notified regarding Glen Echo. State Department of Conservation and Recreation staffing is minimal but they should be made aware.

JS- There was discussion regarding water. Glen Echo brought in town water and thus the possibility of further development.

MP- The plan is to extend the water line from Glen Echo with on-site septic or community septic.

EA expressed concern about stone wall protection

RH- Is there a landscape architect? Answer: Not yet

EA was approached regarding use of her property and asked if abutters feel comfortable approaching and communicating. When the development plan is available she will send notification to her list.

EA asked if Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds would be requested if an opportunity to purchase the property outright came about. Would it be pursued even if it is above the appraisal? Would cooperation with Sudbury Valley Trust(SVT), the state, CPA and grants make this possible?

RH- Paying out more than the appraised amount may not make too many people happy.

MP- Pell Farm appraisal was above what Grafton paid. Sweetwilliam can't accept a low appraisal. The UOSC and bank appraisals were not that far apart, though the state appraiser was more conservative. He got 22 lots with a large lot subdivision plan.

EA- Is there a plan with the access road to the north? Answer: No.

CT- There are a lot of stone walls but it seems like this is just in the beginning stage.

RH- Is inventory of historical features part of the application?

Project would be by special permit under the Open Space Development By-law which allows for smaller lots and more open space.

EA-Where does the land to the south come in?

MP- The Mayo land was needed to put in access for the conventional plan.

EA- The Mayo property would be included in the open space plan?

MP- It adds 7 acres. It's an important piece because the trail will run to the south of the stone wall.

EA suggested that signage should be put up by the developer indicating trails and regulations. It is not a good precedent to restrict user groups (such as hunters).

MP- To make changes we would have to have a hearing, it could open a can of worms.

RH- We don't want to restrict use for abutting open space.

Discussion: Upton demographics have changed and there are culture clashes; a lot could be resolved with courtesy and information. It's important that easements be marked. Realtors also need to be honest when selling property to people who would abut land where hunting is permitted.

TD- It would have been nice to have had buffer plantings at Glen Echo put in by Pulte.

Land Stewardship Committee can tap into Knowlton Beautification Fund and if the new CPA law goes through, funds may be used to create the buffer and encourage passive recreation. It could be a scout project.

EA- What committee would work on a stone wall by-law?

RH- That might fall under a scenic by-law.

MP-Is there a town that has a stone wall by-law?

RH- Southborough has a no-net-loss by-law.

MP- HC and UOSC can work together on scenic and stone wall by-law.

EA- In state law there is something about boundary lines.

MP- There is, but the fine is too low to have an effect.

EA stated that UOSC agenda should be on line, CT commented that it is hard to keep track of what's going on in town, though RH pointed out that we have the advantage of the Town Crier with which to make information available.

Partnership between FUSF and UOSC on hikes has been successful. We should explore some lesser known lands in Upton. Contacting Ken Young to explore Triphammer Road is a possibility.

RH-Railroad will be starting up soon, there will be whistles by day.

JS expressed concern over what might be stored in the rail yard.

RH- RR doesn't need to answer to Con Com, is anyone looking over their shoulders?

JS- So far, all work has been within their rights.

A discussion to know about what's going on would be good, there may be some new restrictions. CT mentioned a toxic waste site near the RR in Grafton. Dana Suttles transports liquid and solids.

Possible January OS program; campfire story telling with Duncan Sings-Alone met with approval. We will need to get a fire permit and talk to DPW about plowing the parking area at the former Stefans Farm. MS will do.

Other hike ideas: adventure hikes, stone paddocks on USF land, quaking bog.

RH- What is the status of the quaking bog at Henderson's. Answer: No deed transfer to town has taken place.

Thompsaon land on Westborough Road is being sold to someone in Upton. MP has spoken with the new owner and she's willing to consider an open space plan. Two or three homes are planned. We will want to talk with Metacomet Land Trust and SVT.

Draft of Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) now nearly done. Comment period to be extended to February 5th 2010 with a public meeting to be held on January 21st. It has essentially been re-written. MP had better tools from the state to gather info and create maps. The last OSRP was approved in 2000, hopefully no major updates will need to be made and changes can now be made more easily.

Since the last plan was approved Upton has, among other things, purchased Elm Park, adopted the CPA, Glen Echo has been developed with open space parcels, there is a Recreation Plan, Friends of Upton State Forest has formed, we have the West River soccer field, and the Open Space By-law was approved.

MP presented the action map from 2 years ago, changes and updates were made.

Submitted by Marcella Stasa

Meeting adjourned 9.40 PM