

WEST BOYLSTON OPEN SPACE IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE (OSIC)

May 14, 2012

OSIC Attendees: Dr. Robert Tashjian – Chair, Vin Vignaly – Vice Chair, Diana Engelbart, Barbara Wyatt, Stephen Woodcock - Clerk

Absent: Ray DeSanti

Members of the public in attendance: Christine Drapee, Tony Drapee, Dennis Minnich

Meeting called to order at 7:04 PM at the Animal Medical Center Conference Room at 29 Prospect Street.

Review and approval of minutes from December 8, 2011. Motion to approve - Diana, seconded - Barbara, unanimous approval.

76 Goodale Street - Vin stated that George Bernardin, West Boylston's representative on the Greater Worcester Land Trust [GWLT] had spoken to him and planned to approach Christine and Tony Drapee on the planned use of their property abutting Goodal Park. GWLT wanted to investigate the potential for sale/swap of a portion. However, Christine and Tony stated that this had not happened and they were not currently interested in giving up any land. They plan to contact George Bernarden to follow up on this matter.

Ebert property – Vin received an update from the GWLT. The GWLT stated that the owners of the property are currently working with an attorney on estate planning and plan to provide updates in the future.

264 Prospect Street – The GWLT had been in contact with the owners and discussions are still ongoing.

River Road – In the past, the Selectmen have discussed swapping the property to DCR for a portion of DCR held property on Prospect Street. Diana informed the committee that the road is still closed to traffic (access for emergency vehicles to the area is still in discussion) and the property is still owned by the town; therefore, the road can be adapted to a more recreational friendly purpose. The OSIC unanimously supports the idea that the River Road property be retained and developed more fully into part of a recreational area/trail.

The OSIC discussed the overall goal to extend the rail trail along Route 140, widening of Thomas Street and Beaman Street bridges and the re-purposing of River Road into a passive recreational area. Diana will follow up with Colleen Abrams (President of Wachusett Greenways) to discuss past bridge widening project experiences.

Information on the dollar amount of funds allocated to open space for West Boylston (2012) in the Community Preservation accounts was requested. Vin will follow up with Pat Crowley to determine this.

Dr. Tashjian discussed the OSIC Annual Report and expressed thanks to all those on the committee who had contributed to it. Dr Tashjian drew attention to the remarks (from the Chair) that were included in the annual report. The remarks discussed his concerns for the future of open space within the town of West Boylston. Dr Tashjian gave an overview of the history of the OSIC and previous examples of the impact open space committees have had on shaping the future of the town being:

- I-190 Construction – West Boylston, Sterling and Holden groups and public citizens banded together to protest against the construction and route of the I-190. The citizens were united in trying to save wet lands, open water and town aquifers from potential contamination during the construction process and general use. The route of the I-190 was modified due to their, and the town of Holden's actions.

Dr. Tashjian also discussed the decline of farming/agriculture in the area and the open space/economic implications this could have for the town of West Boylston.

Diana discussed the potential for a farmers market in West Boylston. There appears to be interest from the Economic Development Task Force and Diana plans to meet with the Agriculture Committee in the near future to discuss the opportunity. It was suggested that a citizen committee should be established to shape the vision for the farmers market. The OSIC fully supports the idea of a farmers market in West Boylston.

Members of the OSIC gave Diana feedback on the Open Space Section of the Master Plan. Minor edits were suggested but overall everyone was happy with the revisions. Diana will review the OSIC suggestions.

Old Business

Barbara updated the committee on the Lenkarski property off Route 12. She remembered that approximately one acre of open space had been discussed to be donated to the town. Vin said he did not remember any town-owned land in that area, but will check with the Assessors information he has available.

New Business

Dr. Tashjian reminded the OSIC members that the tenure on this committee was for one year and that re-appointments were now required. The next meeting will be in June with Leon Gaumond, Town Administrator to fulfill the re-appointment requirements.

AOB

Barbara motioned to adjourn at 8:57 PM, seconded by Vin, unanimous approval.