

Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee Meeting

March 12, 2024, 7:00 pm

Remote (Teams)

Received by Town Clerk
May 1, 2024 3:36pm

Members Present: Tania Lillak (Chair), Toni Bandrowicz (Vice Chair), Steve Banks, Brian Longin, Sierra Muñoz, Lauryn Hart, and Shauna Vera

Members Absent: None

Town Representatives Present: Marzie Galazka (Community & Econ. Develop)

Town Representatives Absent: Danielle Strauss (Recreation Director), Katie Phelan (Select Board)

Meeting called to order and recording started at 7:08

1. **Minute taker assignment** Tania Lillak

2. **Public Comment** Maura Lau is a guest. She is here to listen only.

3. **Approval of minutes** Steve moved to approve minutes from February 13, 2023, which was seconded by Sierra, and unanimously approved.

4. **Updates on Action Items from last meeting's minutes**

Goal 69 (*Develop and publish information on human interaction with wildlife*) and **Goal 76** (*Investigate and protect wildlife corridors; add to Green Corridor map as needed.*)

Ongoing. No update in March.

Goals 69 and 76 Action Item: Sierra to continue to work on Goals 69 and 76 pertaining to wildlife.

Goal 71 (*Work with ENHC to create signage along Byway indicating points of interest*) + (*other signage Goals #3, 47, 48, 66, 71, 75*)

Marzie and Toni got a response from Luke at Accurate Sign Company. He will drop off the 40 Steps and Phillips Beach signs. He did not mention the Dog Park or Condo signs. He drafted a Green Corridor sign, but it was not great. Gino can install the signs when he is back after two weeks. We will also need signs for the easements.

Goals #3, 47, 48, 66, 71, 75 Action Items: Marzie and Toni to follow up on signage.

Goal 65 *Extend National Register status from the Lynn Line to Redington Street.*

Goal 11 *Have Swampscott's section incorporated into DCR's "Lynn Shore Reservation" (landscape, hardscape, railing, lighting, signage) and pursue effort to have DCR take over or share maintenance.*

No update in March. Marzie is still waiting on Sean as he would like to take the lead on this discussion.

Goals 11 and 65 Action Item: Marzie to continue trying to schedule the meeting with the DCR Commissioner with Sean.

Goal 53 *Find and install additional areas for kayak and small boat storage*

Steve reported that the rack by Whales beach has been approved by ConCom. The rack at Fishermans was not approved because ConCom does not want it on the beach due to storms. Gino could put kayaks on rings, but would lose beach space. Boats not allowed in parking lot so racks probably wouldn't either. Suggested we wait to see if new racks fit the need before sourcing more space. 20-25 people don't make it into the lottery each year. New kayak racks may be needed as the racks were designed for dinghys originally. A floating dock was suggested, but it may attract kids playing in them.

Goal 53 Action Item: Steve to provide updates on kayak racks.

Goal 2 *Determine whether to expand trash/recycling facilities at all locations or implement "carry in/carry out" program*

Marzie is looking for education to stress the importance of reducing trash and increasing recycling. Tania spoke to Emily Westhoven at the Solid Waste Advisory Committee and they would prefer recycling at the beach. Emily will be talking to Gino about this. Tania stressed the importance of getting the joint trash/recycling barrels now because if only new trash barrels are purchased, it's unlikely we will get recycling barrels in the future.

Goal 2 Action item: Marzie to speak to Gino and Emily about the need for recycling at the beach.

Goal 8 *Develop a partnership/committee that includes representatives from ConCom, Swampscott Conservancy, Tree Task Force, and DPW to cohesively work together on plans for improving and maintaining open space (Committee/Town Communication)*

Discussed options for an app to post on, but Marzie said Open Meeting Law cannot be violated with any discussion. Is there a way to post things that all groups can see? Maybe email notification when there is a post? Discussion was had on why communication between committees and the Town is important. Toni gave an example of the ConCom not knowing about a pool and the Building Inspector signed off on it. Tania gave the example of the Municipal Design Committee plans not being followed by the Town and the MD committee being dissolved because of it. Steve clarified that when a group is proposing to "take action", they should post. Tania went through the OSRP goals and many goals depend on the actions of the Town being communicated clearly before acting, e.g. where memorials are placed, where recycling should be, how roads and lights are designed, etc.

Goal 8 Action Item: Steve to develop a document to clarify the need for Committee/Town communication.

Goal 8 Action Item: Marzie will follow up with Gino to see what ideas he has for Town communication with committees.

Goal 12: *Investigate and address any open space/conservation encouragement by neighbors.*

ConCom has posted FAQ's for the Encroachment Policy on their website.

Goal 12 Action Item: Tania to do an encroachment FB post.

Goal 13: *Remove dead trees and ornamental shrubs; trim remaining trees to improve overall health.*

Tania contacted Jim and he will put it on the next TC meeting agenda. Toni felt it would be a better plan to leave the trees on the ground. Tania said that Jim felt the same way, but that he would confer with the TC.

Goal 13 Action Item: Tania to follow up with the TC to find out their fallen trees recommendations for Howland Park.

Goal 14: *Repair seawall and stairway taking into consideration sea level rise and storm surges (per Beach Management Plan)*

Marzie provided an update from the HWAC meeting. There was vibrant discussion about having communication between HAWC, CAP, and the Town about moving forward and how to prioritize in terms of grant applications. Tania said someone from open Space should attend as well.

Goal 14 Action Item: Marzie to communicate the OSRPC wish to be involved in the HAWC discussions.

Goal 15: *Acquire conservation restriction to protect open space land in perpetuity (Jackson Woods)*

Marzie requested funds in budget for the land plan survey, but they would not be available until after May TM if approved. She will try for Free Cash in the meantime.

Goal 15 Action Item: Marzie to pursue funding for the land plan survey for Jackson Woods.

Goal 19: *Address light pollution at night in open spaces*

Toni said the SC may be getting intern help under \$4K grant it received from Essex Heritage (this is separate from youth grant SC is offering). The intern could do this if approved.

Goal 19 Action Item: Toni to follow up on a possible SC intern to work on addressing light pollution.

5. New Business

Earth Day and Hungry Heron project

Earth Day will be on April 27 10am-1pm, rain date May 4. Marzie outlined the activities that would be going on. There will be a sculpture on Town Lawn in the town of April to bring awareness to trash on the beaches. If the OSRPC wants a table, please let Marzie know. SC will be a part of this and Sierra will be there.

Garden Art Walk – last weekend in June 2024

Sierra spoke to Pat. Plans are still sprouting, but pitched the idea of having a note in the materials about the open spaces in town for artists to be inspired by.

Action Item: Sierra to follow up on Garden Art Walk and how the OSRPC can be involved.

Social Media

Lauryn is still working on the document. Toni said the SC website could be resource.

Action Item: Lauryn to provide social media document when complete.

Historical Commission

Brian to sit in on Historical Commission as the OSRPC liaison. No update in March.

6. OSRP Airtable Review

Goal 18: *Incorporate open space and recreation goals into land use planning and zoning*

Goal 23: *Develop map highlighting areas where zoning regulations should be created to limit negative impact of land use development*

Tania continues to attempt a meeting with Angela and Mike. Marzie to provide MBTA communities information to committee.

Goal 18 and 23 Action Item: Tania to review MBTA information and continue to set up a meeting with Mike and Angela to discuss open space land use and zoning.

Goals 26-30 were tabled until the April meeting.

7. Student involvement – Goals 67 and 68

Goal 67 (“Develop a program for a high school student to join the OSRPC each year”) and **Goal 68** (“Develop and execute a plan for education in schools about the importance of open space and Town resources”).

Toni reported that the SC grant information is on their website. It will fund a student environmental project up to \$500 in Swampscott or Lynn schools. She also spoke about the Capstone Innovation Pathways Program which would be a manufacturing project for next year. Senator Kreighton’s office is willing to help. Danielle Barry is a counselor for students getting ready for college, but was going to pass Toni’s suggestions off.

Lauryn has an email ready to send to the high school guidance counselor tomorrow about the grant and building a partnership. Toni to send info to Lauryn.

Goals 67 and 68 Action Item: Lauryn to send email to high school guidance counselor.

8. Memorial/ Monuments policy – Goal 1

No update in March.

Goal 1 Action Item: Marzie to find out when the second reading of Memorials policy by the SB will be.

9. Property Acquisition – Goals 9 and 43

Goal 9 *Ensure provision of playground/green space of the same square footage or more on site if property is re-used.*

Goal 43 *Identify areas for potential acquisition & Develop policies for Town acquisition of private land, placing priority on resource protection and with options for right of first refusal.*

Hawthorne Property:

Design consultants, HDR, and staff were going to provide an executive summary of the process and findings at the 01/17/24 SB meeting, but it was been pushed to the 3/6/24 SB meeting, and now the 3/20/24 meeting.

Goals 9 and 43 Action Item: Marzie to provide an update from the 3/20/24 SB meeting and the next Hawthorne forum date.

Tedesco Property:

Toni provided an update. TM voted in a proposal exempting the country club from Massachusetts General Law 61B, which limits property taxes on qualifying land to no more than 25% of its fair cash value. The proposal also included the town's retainment of first refusal in any future transaction involving Tedesco. Tedesco golf club does not pay full taxes, but it cannot be used by the public for open space. It would be good for residents to use the forest and the trails. Toni provided a map of the forested area.

Hadley Property:

Marzie said there is no Hadley committee. She will make sure we know about the public meetings for both the Land Use Agreement and the Site Plan Review.

Toni and Marzie tried to take a walk to look at the playground equipment and where to move it, but weather did not permit.

Goals 9 and 43 Action Item: Marzie to inform the OSRPC on when the Land Use Agreement and the Site Plan Review public meetings are.

Goals 9 and 43 Action Item: Marzie and Toni to take a walk to discuss where to move the Hadley playground equipment.

Archer Street:

Marzie received some quotes on addressing the invasive species. She is waiting to hear if the LAND grant has been approved.

Goals 9 and 43 Action Item: Marzie to wait on LAND grant for the invasive species at Archer Street.

10. Green Corridor – Goals #72-78

Brian and Toni met this past month. Need to meet again before our April meeting.

Goals 72-78 Action Item: Brian and Toni to talk about next steps – #3 on draft plan to be completed by summer.

11. Task Force update – Rights of Ways, Paper Streets, Public Ways & Easements – Goal 48

Steve presented the ROW document and provided a recap. Discussed Claremont Terrace and Nirvana Drive which would require legal access to open. Toni said we should spend money to open the path down to Humphrey. Tania said we should just have their road be public access. Tania said that the Claremont Terrace gate needs to be emergency access for the residents of Kings Beach Terrace. The Nirvana Drive condo association has a key to open the gate, but KBT does not. Steve agreed and said he would help with this. Phillips Beach was discussed. The Hadley easement from Elmwood to Redington needs to stay open with the hotel. The White Court/Blytheswood easement was discussed. Steve outlined paper streets. There are decisions to be made for:

1. Claremont to Humphrey
2. Phillips Beach
3. Elmwood to Hadley
4. Melvin to Roy to be taken by the Town
5. Sargent Road

Goal 48 Action Item: Marzie will follow up on keeping the Hadley easement from Elmwood to Redington open.

Goal 48 Action Item: Steve will meet with the ROW committee to discuss decisions on opening ways.

12. Community Development Update

Pickleball:

The PARC grant proposal did not pass at TM for a second time. Pickleball courts on hold.

Foster Pond – Goals 45 and 64 :

No update in March. Marzie still working on glitch of tax title taking and it is not formally concluded yet. Still holding off on grant.

Goals 45 and 64 Action Item: Marzie to continue to work to get tax title of Windsor park land concluded.

Rail Trail – Goal 42:

Marzie said trail work is ongoing.

13. Swampscott Conservancy update

Check the website for updates: <https://swampscottconservancy.org/>

This weekend, SC will have a table at town's health and fitness fair at SHS.

Action Item: Toni to provide a SC update next meeting.

14. Committee/Department update – Climate Action Plan (CAP)

Sierra shared the minutes. Minutes from most recent Climate Action Plan Committee (February): https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tS38kctc0Klv8pQX_hJE4zdvFzJRyyKkLFqcz7VyVYtE/edit?usp=sharing

Energy code passed at TM last night. There will be a meeting about coastal resiliency between committees soon.

Action Item: Sierra to provide a CAP update next meeting.

15. Committee/Department update – Tree Committee

Check the website for updates: <https://www.swampscottma.gov/tree-committee>

Action Item: Tania to provide a TC update next meeting.

16. Committee/Department update - Conservation Commission

Nothing big coming in; still waiting Rail Trail and Mission on Bay seawall.

Action Item: Toni to provide a ConCom update next meeting.

17. Community Preservation Act – Goal 57

Brian said there was a brief meeting this month and they are meeting again this week. They need to determine the tax percentage and get info on the TM warrant in May. CPA funds can't be used for maintenance. Wondered if we could use for acquiring open space, e.g. Tedesco.

Goal 57 Action Item: Brian to provide a CPA update next meeting.

18. Committee Update: Master Plan

Shauna has not interviewed with Sean yet.

Action Item: Marzie to follow up with Shauna re: Master Plan Committee.

19. Committee/Department update – Recreation Commission:

No update in March.

Action Item: Danielle to provide a Recreation Commission update next meeting.

20. Other business

None.

21. Confirmation of next meeting date

Next meeting is April 9, 2024, which is planned to be virtual, on Microsoft Teams.

Meeting adjourned at 9:03 pm

Parking Lot

Goal 3 *Develop maintenance and design guidelines for roads, paths, islands, and lighting (add special emphasis on developing design guidelines in Olmsted District)*
Committee decided to put on hold in the “parking lot” until signage issues are rectified.

Goal 66: (*“Install unified signage at primary facility entrances as well as along connecting paths/roads”*). This will be added to other signage goals as noted above.

Goal 49: (*“Expand and improve public sidewalks along popular walking routes, especially Humphrey Street”*) Are Jersey barriers a permanent feature of the landscape? Could there be standards developed for sidewalk improvements? Ms. Galaska stated the town is surveying to look at using the barriers to improve the dining experience. Also looking to see if they can keep a designated bike lane connected to existing infrastructure.

Action Item: Ms. Galaska will present design once created.

Goal 64: (*“Examine public access and programming potential” - at Foster Pond*)
There is a small piece of land that is off Windsor Ave. at the dam end of the pond that is owned by the Town. Ms. Galazka is looking for state grants to have a consultant do a design plan for the path from the road to the pond that is ADA accessible. Ms. Bandrowicz suggests that at some point should see if the resident that owns the property at lot #151 would put a conservation restriction on that piece of their property that abuts the pond and is next to the town owned land.

Action Item: Ms. Galaska to continue working on grant/CIC funding for design plans.

Goal #72: (*Explore options for additional trails HKF and on Aggregate property*)

6/13 Update: This will be put off until the Holcim Inc.(Aggregate) until the litigation with the town over the Earth Removal permit is resolved.

Goal #77: (*Investigate feasibility of adding water bottle refill stations along Green Corridor*) This would need to involve DPW as it would be a water main and maintenance issue. Are there existing water fountains that could be connected? Could also parallel with Rail Trail efforts. Tabling discussion until after Green Corridor is established via signage, painted indicators. Again this will be added to other signage goals.

Goal 7 (*Create site specific maintenance programs in collaboration with DPW and Recreation Depts (and include planning for protection of unique flora/fauna)*)

Action Item: Toni to work on Palmer Pond and all needs to be re-done. Not a priority right now.

Update: none.

Charter/Bylaw Recommendations: No word from David Grishman so will put this on hold for now (February 2024)