

Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee Meeting – May 14, 2019 Minutes

Time: 7:06PM– 8:45 PM Location: Town Hall, First Floor Conference Room

Members Present: Tania Lillak, Chair; Toni Bandrowicz, Vice Chair; Richard Smith, Sara Hepburn; Sarah Koch; Sierra Munoz, Marzie Galazka, Director of Community and Economic Development; and Danielle Strauss, Recreation Director

Members Absent: Angela Ippolito, Planning Board Chair

1. Sierra Munoz was introduced as a new member of the OS&RP Committee. Welcome Sierra!
2. Meeting minutes: The minutes of the April 9, 2019 meeting were approved, with one correction, the word “Aggregate” needs to be capitalized.
3. Review of previous meeting’s action items:
 - Amherst Keystone Project – Sarah noted that this was not an OS&RP objective (not on the Airtable) and that the Tree Advisory Committee is not interested in pursuing.
 - Angela had contacted Double D Construction and they are holding off adding a bench at the site for the new pollinator garden.
 - Marzie will be checking with Gino on “Green Corridor” plan before the next meeting.
 - Tania reported that she spoke to Peter Spellios and that the BOS is still reviewing the information gathered from the December 2018 “Idea Exchange.”
4. Airtable Review - Items # 51 - 54 (and previous items with outstanding action items)

#51 - Develop maintenance and design guidelines for roads, paths, islands, and lighting (add special emphasis on developing design guidelines in Olmsted District).

Toni noted that, with respect to traffic islands, there is a new “Adopt-an-Island” program. The Swampscott Conservancy and Seaside Community Garden have advised the Town it needs to promote native plantings in this program. Regarding the development of general “maintenance and design guidelines,” it was acknowledged that this would be a time-consuming process.

Action Item: It was suggested that committee members think about the guidelines and process for developing them.

#52 Limit impact of (potential) school construction on conservation land.

Sara reported that the school committee is in process of hiring a consultant to do a feasibility study. General consensus was that the OS&RP Committee should send a letter earlier rather than later advising the committee / consultant that any plans for building new school should not impact open space. Sara offered to make a presentation at a school committee meeting on OS&RP Committee concerns. It was also agreed that OS&RP Committee should communicate with, and gather support from, other Town committees. Tania to forward a letter that OS&RP Committee had sent to the

school committee in 2014 regarding the potential impacts of the proposed district-wide elementary school on the Swampscott's open and recreational space (esp. Ewing Woods).

Action Item: Prepare a letter to send to the school committee and attend meeting.

#53 Repair seawall and stairway taking into consideration sea level rise and storm surges (per Beach Management Plan)

It was observed that there is budget line item in this year's warrant article for sea wall repair. As a related matter, Toni informed the Committee that Nahant had contacted the Town to see if Swampscott was interested in collaborating on climate resiliency and, to that end, attend a meeting it was scheduling with DCR.

Also related to this item is the follow-up action item to Airtable item #43 (relating to Kings Beach and extending the Nat'l Register status to that beach in Swampscott). Marzie is working with OS&RP Committee on seawall repair, negotiation with DCR, and applications for grants.

#54 Eliminate boat storage in parking lot to provide public parking year round

There were differing opinions on whether this was an issue worth pursuing but, because of the new draft Harbor Plan, it was decided to table this issue until further clarification of what, if anything, will happen under that plan to the parking lot area by the Fish House.

5. Review of Agenda Items & Other Action Items

Incorporate open space and recreation goals into land use planning and zoning (Airtable item #48) In her email sent prior to the meeting, Angela said that the new Senior Planner, Molly O'Connell, will assist OS&RP Committee in identifying open space requirements and possible modifications to Town Bylaws, but it was acknowledged this would be a process that will take some time.

Organic Lawn Management (Airtable item #78) It was reported that having Pure Solutions (which is currently doing an organic lawn care pilot project) take care of all the town properties would not be sustainable due to the cost (but questioned whether the cost might go down if it was doing all properties).

After a discussion of wear and tear on playing fields, it was suggested that it might be worthwhile to check with communities that prohibit pesticide use (like Portland, ME) to see how they manage their playing fields organically.

Gino was in favor of using a TURI grant for educating staff and buying equipment. Sarah, Sara, and Tania will coordinate at the end of the month as the TURI grant application is due June 21st.

It was noted that OS&RP Committee needs to get an update from Board of Health on organic pest management plan.

Swampscott Conservancy Update Toni reviewed the speakers and presentations done to date, as well as upcoming activities, like the plant sale at the Farmer's Market. The creation of a pollinator garden on Town Hall property is also progressing. As an aside, everyone agreed that having the Farmer's Market at Town Hall was much better location than at the High School and Danielle said that she had not seen it adversely affecting the grass.

Update on Rail Trail Toni reported that StanTec has prepared plans and that the Town will be coming to the Conservation Commission at some point requesting a permit. She also said that the Commission is planning to vote on hiring a third-party consultant to do a peer review of the StanTec plans.

Seaside Community Garden There will be a groundbreaking ceremony this coming Saturday, May 18th.

Encroachment at Ewing Woods, that was identified when a survey was done a couple of years ago, was brought up by Marzie. Toni said that Conservation Commission addressed all instances of encroachment, but the most egregious one, on Kensington Road, need to be checked again to see if the owner had, as advised by the Commission and Town Building Inspector, to let the area return to natural state or whether he was continuing to use the land.

The next OS&RC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 11, 2019.

Minutes taken by Toni Bandrowicz