

Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee Meeting – September 12, 2017 Minutes

Time: 7:10 – 8:30 PM Location: Town Hall First Floor Conference Room

Members Present: Tania Lillak, Chair; Toni Bandrowicz, Vice Chair Jim Olivetti, Clerk; Sarah Pruett

Members Absent: Angela Ippolito, Planning Board Chair; Richard Smith, Pete Kane, Director of Community Development, Danielle Strauss, Recreation Director and Patrick Jones, Selectman Liaison.

The minutes of the August 8, 2017 meeting were approved as amended.

Review of previous meeting's deliberations and action items

- Monuments: Need to ask Richard how he sees a policy on placement of war memorials proceeding. Sentiment of the Committee was that it is not the appropriate body to draft a policy.
- Tree Advisory Task Force: Jim contacted Verena Karsten and Patti Jones by email. Both were very interested in working on town tree-related issues. Jim will talk with Gino on 9/15 to determine next steps for the new Task Force.
- Eagle Scout project: Danielle says the project in the Harold King town forest is expected to get underway in September.
- Invasive plants: Toni reported that there has still been no progress on assessing invasive species on conservation lands.
- Temporary ice rink: Danielle responded in an email message that she had a couple of communities she would be communicating with in September that she can ask about their experience with ice rinks. She noted that the warm winters may make a water-based rink infeasible. (Objective #31)
- Letter on landscaping at Machon School redevelopment: Toni reported that the letter had been submitted.
- Blythswood: Toni reported that the proposed Maintenance Plan received a couple of positive public comments, and no negative ones. A meeting of Committee members with Gino Cresta is scheduled for Friday, September 15th to discuss developing a public access path for the conservation easement.

Agenda Items

- Capital Improvement request form

The Committee reviewed the work from previous meetings on possible capital improvements. We felt somewhat at a disadvantage in that we did not have a staff member present at the meeting to provide guidance on requirements for submission of the request form. It was decided to include three capital improvement requests:

1. Path improvement package. To develop public access for the Blythswood conservation easement to include procuring suitable fencing/railing delineating the border of the easement and Blythswood residential property and creating appropriate signage.
2. Increase street tree population. Add significantly to street tree population, beyond replacement levels, guided by the results of tree inventory.
3. Acquire new open space for the town as opportunity arises.

Action Item: Tania will prepare the Capital Improvement Request and submit it.

- 133 Puritan Road

The Committee reviewed the draft letter prepared by Toni outlining its concerns with the application for site approval for a 40B development at 133 Puritan Road.

Action Item: Toni will update the draft letter to reflect Committee input and submit it to the Board of Selectmen.

- New committee member review

The Committee reviewed volunteer forms of those residents interested in serving on the OS&RPC. Tania will call two of these volunteers who seemed to the Committee to be the best candidates in the pool to fill the vacancy created by Mary Webster's resignation.

Action Item: Tania will forward a volunteer name to the Board of Selectmen, based on her conversations with the two candidates.

- Updating the Open Space Plan objectives spreadsheet

Discussed the need to have a less cumbersome and more systematic way to organize and update the objectives spread sheet. Sarah suggested dividing the sheet into high priority items and completed items. Toni noted that the numbering system was confusing. All agreed current spreadsheet was difficult to work with now that we have passed the half-way point in the Plan duration.

Action Item: Need for all Committee members to think about how to better organize objective spreadsheet and be prepared to discuss at next meeting.

- Committee liaisons

Generally felt that having liaisons to other town committees did not really bear fruit as hoped. Decision made to replace formal liaisons with ad hoc assignment of contact persons as need arises.

Action Item: Tania will remove the liaison designations from the monthly agendas.

- Other business

Sarah expressed concern that currently a developer can pay a fairly insignificant fee to avoid building affordable housing units as part of a 40B development. She felt that this opens the door for developers to remove potential open space from the town through the 40B program without much disincentive.

Action Item: Include a discussion of "in lieu of" fees on the next meeting agenda.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 10, 2017.