

Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee Meeting MINUTES – January 11, 2022

Members Present: Tania Lillak (Chair), Sierra Muñoz, Brian Longin, Richard Smith (Historical Commission), Danielle Strauss (Recreation Director), Toni Bandrowicz , Verena Karsten (Ad Hoc Member, Tree Task Force)

Not Present: Michele Barden, Marzie Galazka, Angela Ippolitto (Planning Board)

Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm by Tania Lillak

Minute taker: Toni

- 1. Public comment:** No commenters
- 2. Approval of minutes from December 14, 2021 meeting:** Toni moved to approve minutes as presented, Richard seconded, unanimously approved
- 3. Action items from last meeting's minutes:**

Airtable item #12 (now #5) - playground maintenance is being implemented, will remove from agenda.

Airtable Item #19 (now #64) (Fosters Pond) – Tabled until next meeting as Michele and Marzie not present.

Will remove Airtable Item #65 (now #11) (Kings Beach designation) from agenda as town is working on seawall repairs and those repairs are a DCR requirement before it would consider taking responsibility for Swampscott side of the beach.

Item #21 (now #29) (Vernal Pools) - Swampscott Conservancy member Erica Oberlin has submitted request to certify pool on UU Church property to state and is still awaiting response.

Item #17 (train depot and Fish House) – As Angela not present, tabled this item until the next meeting for an update on sending an email to the Select Board re the train depot.

Item #69: (develop and publish literature on interaction with wildlife) - Still awaiting draft brochure from Dan Proulx (previous town animal control officer); once developed, Swamp't Conservancy plans to organize a Zoom presentation by him on this topic.

Item #1 (determine number and size of monuments on Monument Ave.) Brian and Richard met with Marzie, Gino and Jer Jurma (Historical) to flesh out recommendations for placement of future monuments and to outline a letter to send to the Select Board that will: (1) recommend a moratorium on memorials in the Historic District on Monument Ave; and (2) propose a task force to explore sites for placement of

memorials and the art donations that the town has received. Brian sent a draft of the letter to the Committee prior to the meeting, as well as photos of some of the donated art work. The Committee voted to send the letter with any edits Brian receives from Committee members and/or Marzie.

Action Item: Members to review and comment on letter; Tania to put on letterhead and sign.

Action Item: Brian will investigate whether a high school student could be part of the task force.

Airtable item #3 (design of roads, light posts etc. focus on Olmstead) – tabled as Michele not present.

4. Discussion of Tree Task Force (TTF) recommendation to send letter to Select Board limiting or prohibiting vehicles on Town Hall property and Linscott Park. Verena had provided a draft letter to the Committee prior to the meeting which outlines the damage that may be caused to tree roots by the soil compaction from heavy equipment/vehicle activity and the need to be protective of our limited open space and tree canopy.

Toni raised a concern that the statement in the letter that research shows trees are severely impacted by soil compaction from heavy equipment/vehicle activity did not appear to be supported by the reference documents that were cited in the letter; she also asked if any of the research done on this issue had addressed the situation of periodic traffic (as the town has weekly farmer's market in summer, car show once a year).

Danielle explained the importance of creating a sense of community in town, and that Town Hall property and Linscott park is the heart of our community; that the attempt at having the farmers market at High School parking was not successful.

Verena clarified that TTF was not saying shouldn't have community events, but town should look at ways of doing them differently so as to be protective of trees, such as having farmers market on the street.

Danielle offered a suggestion of not having farmers market vehicles coming in by the historic red beech, but having a new curb cut off Monument Ave.

Toni questioned whether could get professional input on the effect of the vehicle traffic that is done and some suggestions by others were to contact Arnold Arboretum or US Mass Botany Dept.

Other updates from the TTF: planning for a spring planting of 32 trees. Regarding the 37 bronze plaques that were recovered and are being inventoried, the TTF is planning to publicize the inventory as a fundraiser for potential replanting and for public to learn more about its history

5. **New business:** None.

6. **OSRP Airtable review – Items ## 6-10**

Item #6 (limit impact of school construction on conservation land on conservation land and other open space) – not discussed.

Item #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 indicated that she has not gotten to this and that it will have to be a longer term item for her.

Item #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.)

Action Item: Toni had sent an email on this item and will send it again for discussion at next meeting.

Item #9: (ensure provision of playground/green space of the same square footage or more on site if property is re-used). Hadley Re-use Committee has concluded work/submitted recommendations to SB.

Action Item: Tania will check to see if any updates from the Select Board.

Item #10: (explore feasibility and grant opportunities for timber management and invasive species removal for Harold King Forest, as recommended by Forest Stewardship Plan) - no action items currently.

7. **Airtable #12 – 15**

Item #12 (addressing open space encroachment): Noted that would need to have survey done, but if Harold King, survey would be costly. Richard suggested trying to locate areas where encroachment likely and surveying those areas. Mentioned that since planning work at Windsor Park, should address likely encroachment by one of the neighbors beforehand.

Action Item: Toni will check in with Gino on surveying.

Item #13 (removing invasives and dead trees at Howland Park);

Action Item: Tania will check with Verena and TTF and Gino.

Item #14 (sea wall repairs at Eiseman's, Kings)

Action Item: Tania will get updates.

Item #15 (Jackson Woods): Molly had been trying to locate the deed to the property and Essex Greenbelt recommends getting a new survey done for the CR. Greenbelt Board visited the property last year with their Board and they are interested in moving forward.

Action Item: Toni will be taking to Gino about surveys and will ask about this. Need someone to follow-up with Greenbelt on next steps now that Molly has left.

8. Potential properties for town acquisition: It was noted that the Committee had sent letters to Select Board about acquiring certain properties, including Archer St., Spinale Rd, and Hawthorne restaurant. There was also a question of Blythswood going on the market, which the town has a right of first refusal on.

Action Item: Tania will follow up with Polly (Select Board) on taking steps to acquire such properties and also with FinCom on creation of an acquisition fund.

9. Eiseman's Seawall: It was reported that the town received grant funding for the design and Marzie and Molly had met with Greg Cohen, the engineer, who will be giving the town an estimate for design work and construction costs.

10. School Building Committee update: Sierra reported that recent activity has focused on internal parts of the school not natural outdoor spaces and the design team has been meeting with education groups. There are also meetings with the Sustainability Subcommittee. The Conservancy will be getting back in touch with SBC to discuss issues in its earlier comment letter.

11. Community Development update:

Windsor Park:

Action Item: Danielle will check but believes town got needed extra funding but work may not include baseball court.

White Court: Blythswood Easement is open and available to the public. Marzie is working with Gino to identify two parking spaces on Little's Point and signage.

Clark Playground – Starting to work on the redesign of the Clark School Playground at Abbot Park but, due to limited funding, considering planning the redesign in phases.

Walker Road work will be carried out in the spring as the Complete Streets grant needs to be expended by June 30. The road will probably stay two way for now, with improvements at intersections and repaving. Consideration of one way option on hold until the new school opens and its impacts on traffic patterns can be seen.

12. Swampscott Conservancy update: Some upcoming events include a Zoom presentation on creation of pollinator gardens/corridor (this Thursday), a panel discussion on water quality at Kings Beach and a native plant winter sowing workshop (later in the winter).

13. Committee/Department update – Conservation – No activities of interest to the Committee.

14. Committee/Department update on Rail Trail: Working to submit a grant application for Rail Trail (this will bring the design to 100%). Also bike repair stations have been ordered, funded by grant. Working with Gino and Friends of the Rail Trail on locations. Likely they will be located on Humphrey behind wall of One Salem (near entrance to Rail Trail) and behind the Middle School but open to other suggestions.

15. Committee/Department update – Historical: resolved signage locations just waiting for installation.

16. Committee/Department update – Recreation: Danielle tasked with finding places for parks.

17. Other business that may properly come before the committee: None.

18. Confirmation of next meeting date – Tuesday, February 8, 2022

Adjourned 8:36 PM.