

Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee Meeting MINUTES September 13, 2022

Members Present: Tania Lillak (Chair), Toni Bandrowicz, Richard Smith (Historical Commission), Verena Karsten, Steve Banks, Angela Ippolito, Sierra Muñoz

Not Present: Danielle Strauss, Marzie Galazka

Meeting called to order and recording started at 7:07 pm by Tania Lillak

1. Minute taker assignment: Angela Ippolito

2. Public comment: None

3. Approval of minutes from August 9, 2022: Sierra moved to approve, Richard seconded, unanimously approved.

Toni suggests that we send gift card to Brian Longin on the birth of his child Olivia.

4. Action items from last meeting's minutes

-Toni: reviewed her conversation with Katy for definitions of paper streets

Owned by abutters to the midline—**See update under #6 below**

Windsor Ave: Walnut Sargent are both designated public so that's good

Claremont Terrace is there still an easement? If so one of the houses in encroaching on it. Cliffside Street is another paper street. Also looking at Harold King property and Jackson Woods. Paper streets not owned by town buy shared by abutting property owners.

Brian: History buffs met Monday with list of 15 paper streets

Ewing woods say Forest Ave is ½ owned by ConCom---still a question

Public path, paper streets, easements, right of way...determine correct name for each

Action item: This is ongoing. Discuss status of paper streets with Gino

Action item: Toni: will pass this info on to ConCom

Action item: Ewing woods try to get conservation restriction (we have the deed)

Monument Plan update: See Richard's notes under #14--attached

Action item: He and Brian will put together a cover letter.

Update: Student interns: Tania reported that Franci (Green Scholars) provided brochure on native plants and will get to group. Tania will try to get pdf for native plants brochure. Colleen has but it is not editable. **Action item:** Tania will try to get the file from Franci.

Unfortunately the Green Scholars have disbanded. Important to still reach out to students who express interest.

Action item: Toni, Tania, Verena to continue to encourage student volunteers to contribute to committee work.

c. Jackson Woods (Goal #15) –still need to work with Town Counsel to confirm deed research.

Action Item: Toni to check in with Marzie and KP Law on next steps. Update as of 9-12, still waiting for deed info

41. Take Climate Change action. Angela and Toni: Angela summarized actions taken since last plan, 2016 Coastal Climate Change Study with Kleinfelder (funded by CZM grant) identified potential adaptation strategies to address coastal flooding, vulnerability of municipal infrastructure and sea level rise. Accomplished to date: beach entry ways have been re-engineered to mitigate storm damage. Update Zoning Bylaw with “Coastal Flood Area Overlay District”. We have continued to advocate for Seawall repairs and improvements along Kings, Fisherman’s and Whales/Eiseman’s beaches. Toni recommends that we consider adopting a Local Wetlands Protection Bylaw.

5. New Business

Steve has been formally appointed to OSRP by Select Board and also to Hadley Reuse Committee.

6. “Right of Way” AKA Paper Streets, Public Path, etc.

Toni forwarded the following email exchange:

I found this article on paper streets: <https://westmifflinborough.com/community-development/paper-streets-what-are-paper-streets/>

It says that after 21 years, the town can no longer "accept" the paper street, there is a statute of limitations. So crucial to see if it was accepted. On the other hand, a street was actually built, it's not just paper. If it was maintained by the Town that could imply acceptance. I also seem to remember utilities along that road.

Maybe the abutters would be amenable to a dedicated footpath? In any case we should be able to explore further since the Town has property on the "street" and a right of access (while on Town business, we shouldn't need to give anyone notice, but we could). In any case only a small portion of this paper street is in Swampscott, the rest is in Salem. Any effort to build a path should be coordinated with Salem.

Richard Frenkel

On Wed, Sep 7, 2022 at 10:12 AM Tonia Bandrowicz <tbandrowicz@gmail.com> wrote: Marzie, Dick, and I met with Katie Klein from KP Law to talk about town property-related issues including the "rights of way" questions that had come up after the Open Space/Swampscott History Buffs site visits to several such sites a few weeks back (see my 8-24-22 email to KP Law). Below is a summary of what we talked about. Marzie and Dick, feel free to add to (or correct) my summary.

First, Katie confirmed that "paper streets" are not typically owned by the town, but shared by abutting property owners. *To-do:* We need to look into having the town accept these streets (if it hasn't already) so that they are not owned by abutters.

1. Windsor Ave (starting from Nichols St. and running to Robinson Rd. in Salem. This is a paper street so the general rule above likely applies. The town only owns one lot abutting the paper street (it's the second "0" lot on the north side of the street in map below). While the town itself has the right to use the paper street to get to its property, it is not open to the public. *To-do:* We need to check with the town clerk and also DPW to see if the street was by chance laid out as "public." She noted that checking the deed isn't always accurate.

Marzie did find out that the no trespassing sign at the entrance to this paper street was put up by Cabot Lodge (an abutter) because people had been dumping. So apparently it wasn't put up because the neighbors were trying to make it private. (I am aware that someone, not sure who, had said this way had been abandoned by the town, but it's not clear why they believed so

2. Walnut and Sargent. Again, these are "paper streets." *To-do:* we can check with the town clerk and DPW on whether they were ever designated as public.

3. End of Claremont Terrace to Humphrey St. We explained that old maps show an easement but new GIS maps don't, but that DPW Director had 1990 approved as built plans for condos showing 20 ft. emergency access. We provided Katie with the map below that shows the thin pink colored easement from Claremont to Humphrey. *To-do:* Katie was going to investigate this further.

We also told her that if the town has an easement, that a neighbor has put up fence encroaching on it, and condos seem to be built in its path.

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4. Cliffside St. This is a paper street that runs down the middle of the Hawthorne property parking lot but as the town will be acquiring the entire property, and thus will be the abutter to the paper street, it will own the paper street.

Finally, we discussed what to call the various public access routes in town, and Katie suggested "Pedestrian Way" or "Public Footpath" and staying away from calling them "Ways" so as to designate they are for walking not driving.

7. OSRP Airtable review – Goals 46-50

Goal 46: Develop and Implement OSRPC Policy for Town Improvement projects, to incorporate the following priorities: ADA access, amenities for all ages, historically-appropriate landscaping, public art, sustainable design, and net-neutral energy consumption, natural resource protection

Many of these concerns are in letter that we sent to School Building Committee by Sierra and Toni. List in this section items that would create a checklist for every project
Committee on disabilities dissolved... Steve said that at recent SB meeting they were trying to appoint people on committee, trying to reconstitute

Action item: start with looking at the letter to SBC -**Attached**

Goal 47: Develop and implement public access/management plan, including installation of interpretive signage

Action item: Toni working on it, in progress. Letter from Jonathan Leaman as follows: (attachments not included)

Toni, Marzie,

I have received a number of recommendations from you as well as Kim and Nancy on the HC. Thank you!

I am attaching the following:

1. Revised Interpretive Sign
2. Revised QR code/webpage material
3. Swampscott's Indigenous Peoples' Day proclamation (reference only)

Changes include the following:

1. Elimination of all "red flag" words based on my understanding of the recommendation of Town Counsel. This involves elimination of the words "easement" and "conservation restriction." I have used alternative language in each instance.
2. Addition of a Land Acknowledgement Statement on the webpage (only) based on a request that Toni received. Please note that I have lifted the appropriate language from Swampscott's official proclamation. I made some minor changes for grammatical clarity.
3. Reordering of Webpage material based on Kim's recommendations.

Please let me know if you are OK with these revisions. We can discuss in the conference call that Marzie recommended for the 3 of us, and also discuss budget/funding.

Thank you,

Jon

Goal 48: Evaluate and promote opportunities to open public ways/access points and improve walkability on public sidewalks through infrastructure upgrades.

This is part of what we're working on re: ROWs... in progress, conversations with KP Law are ongoing. **Action item:** coordinate with Gino, SB

Goal 49: Expand and improve public sidewalks along popular walking routes, especially Humphrey Street.

Is ARPA money going towards this? Hawthorne property being developed, sidewalk safety at Humphrey St is paramount. North side of Humphrey has no trees, if/when sidewalks are widened (remove jersey barriers as outdoor seating will be permanent) include trees. Widen sidewalks in front of G, etc to improve walkability.

Action item: Follow up with Marzie

Goal 50: Explore feasibility of a splash pad and/or water feature for a new or existing park area. Include in future park upgrades as warranted.

Splash pad amenity might be appealing to some. Maybe at Hawthorne?

Action item: Public process for open space usage can gauge interest in this

8. Green Corridor update (Goal #43)

Toni: Wants to follow Pete Kane's plan. Develop a small sign that can be replicated on route. We did all survey the route at different times in the past. Think east coast greenway. Do we want to figure out which areas need to be fixed up along the corridor?

Action Item: Toni and Brian to work on signage research and development.ONGOING with Marzie on possible signage See under goal #47 Signage

9. Community Development update: via email update from Marzie:

1. Basketball at Clark/Abbott Park was resurfaced. Line coating will be done in September.
2. This past July I submitted a grant application to rehabilitate the swing section of Abbott Park. The request is for \$100,000 in grant funding to update the swings, install new play areas for smaller children, install an interactive music instruments section, and safety surfacing for the entire area. I also requesting funding from Capital Improvement Committee to retain the services of a landscape architect to redesign the fenced off grassy area that has the rock monument on it. I welcome input from the OSRPC for recommenders and ideas for this space –some ideas to start the conversation:
 - a. Keep the space as passive with better access and sitting areas
 - b. Add a water feature to this park – splash park
 - c. Add addition play structures
 - d. Landscape only

Additionally, the School Department also requested \$100,000 in town funding for this park, so if our grant is funded we will have \$200,000 toward improvements. I will reach out to the school and survey the parents for ideas.

3. As part of the annual CIC process I request \$50,000 in town funding toward wayfinding for signage for points of interest such as White Court, public paths and municipal buildings. I will update you once I have additional info.

10. Swampscott Conservancy update: Toni: some presentations coming up about climate change and pollution. Going to be cleanup at Jackson woods of invasive plants on Saturday 8:30-noon. Running hikes in September.

11. School Building/Sustainability Committee update:

- Demo contractor is currently doing abatement of hazardous building materials – windows are covered. They have set up a perimeter fence around the site. Video drone footage of the site is available on the SBC website.
- DEP has approved demolition plans and demo should be complete by early fall.
- Over 100 trees are tagged for removal—cutting is excessive

Verena is hopeful that we may be able to reduce this number somewhat, negotiate the trees that are removed.

Reviewed landscape plan with Suzanne Wright to replace ornamental invasives plants with native varieties. (See below--Tree Committee update)

12. Tree Committee:

Verena met with Suzanne Wright/SBC last week to review site plan/landscape plan for school. Max joined them. They are planning to remove 103 trees; Tree Committee believes that 30 trees should be saved & sent request to design team asking for reduce the number they plan to cut down.

Also has more to do with conservancy regarding invasives... the existing plan is ornamental so coordinating efforts with SBC is helpful. Toni said she talked to Max and Suzanne and Conservancy can take of installing and paying for plants in raingarden.

Getting ready for planting 11 trees on town property got grant from dcr part of vets arboretum, also at walker and banks intersection planting natives and trees
Sightline issues at walker and banks for trees.

Traffic on town hall property to save park and trees. What about putting fences around trees? Angela and Verena will pursue.

Another grant for tree maintenance and also aerate ground under roots. Fencing would go great with mulch.

13. Conservation Commission Update: Rail trail hasn't come back yet, hired peer reviewer, Town is submitting new NOI for permit which will address ConCom consultant concerns.

14. Committee/Department update – Historical: signage for easement. Communications and exhibits.

Richard put together preliminary plan for Monument placement---**please see attached documents**

15. Committee/Department update – Planning: Ongoing Permitting of Glover Site 140 units between Swampscott & Marblehead, major focus transportation/pedestrian traffic studies and stormwater study. State-mandated MBTA communities zoning (3A) preliminary work underway, applied for funding for technical assistance. Master Plan Update underway, Housing Production Plan update in process, in community engagement phase. Looking to bring potential zoning amendments to TM next year such as ADUs, Short term rentals, signage updates.

16. Committee/Department update – Recreation: No update.

17. Other items

18. Confirmation of next meeting date:

October 11, 2022

Motion to adjourn 8:38