

# Open Space Committee

Tuesday, November 23, 2021

## MINUTES

- I. Attendance and Approval of Minutes: Present were Carrie Rennie, Chair, Sue Simmons, Lucy Abisalih, Dawn Ackerman and Sandy Venner. Guests Michelle Green and Chris Gaudet. Motion made and seconded to approve minutes October 6, 2021 meeting.
- II. New Path at Cobbler's Brook Greenway and Role of Con Com – Michelle Greene, Conservation Agent – Sue summarized what has transpired to date. Michelle stressed that Merrimac Wetland Bylaws have the same requirements for a dirt path as for a building within a certain distance from a wetlands. One item to determine is if the proposed path crosses an intermittent stream or just an outflow from the road catch basin. Michelle will let OSC know when she will be walking the property. Michelle is not sure if the path needs to be ADA compliant as it is on Town owned land. Michelle will discuss the project with Con Com at their meeting tonight and with BOS at their meeting next Monday.
- III. Mass Trails Grant for Restoration of McLaren Trail – Chris Gaudet, Disabilities Commission – Discussion focused on what would be necessary to make the McLaren Trail more accessible. Chris has had great success in getting grants for improvements for disability access. Such grants usually ask a 10-50% match from the Town. If necessary, it may be possible to use the CDC's 501.c.3 status to accept a grant. The first step would be to do a feasibility study to determine what entrance and section of the trail can be made accessible. This could include a survey of Town owned access points and trail width. Unknown if 30B procurement would apply to hiring someone to do the study. To be ADA compliant, the trail needs a smooth, compacted surface of asphalt or crushed stone which would require wetland delineation and permitting for some sections of the trail. Lucy will check accessor's maps for more details about possible access points.
- IV. Coordination MVPC Mapping of Conservation Land and Public Trails with Greenbelt – Sue has compared the two sets of maps and found very little difference. Motion made and seconded by Dawn and Carrie, all approving, to get the maps from MVPC as previously discussed and not try to merge the two versions and incur any additional costs at this time.
- V. Review of Recommendations for OSC in OS Plan and Others Submitted – Lucy reported that she has received responses from some departments/boards and nothing yet indicates a necessity to host a meeting of all parties. In light of the late hour, OSC member are asked to submit to Lucy their comments of the recommendations which will be reviewed at the next meeting. Lucy will request the list of 61A parcels from the Accessors.

- VI. Sale of APR Land on Birchmeadow Rd. – This property is to be auctioned on Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup>. Sandy reported that Vanessa Johnson at Greenbelt said they do not get involved in the sale of APR land as it is already permanently preserved. She does not believe the Trustees would either. She will use their network to get out the word of the sale to area farmers.
- VII. FY '22 Budget ideas – There is \$540 left in the expense line item for FY'22. Lucy will check into the potential cost of tree removal on the trails if that needs to be included in the OS budget for FY'23.
- VIII. Next meeting will be Dec. 28<sup>th</sup> at 4pm.

Sandra Venner

December 16, 2021