

West Newbury Open Space Committee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 17, 2021

7:00 p.m.

Please Join Zoom or In-Person Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/8960752005>

Meeting ID: 896 075 2005

Present: John Dodge, Patricia Reeser, Graham Bacheller, Jean Lambert, Don Bourquard and Carol Decker, scribe

Absent: Marlene Switzer, Jessica Azenaro, Kathy Feehery

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

1) Support Letter to Plant Native at Pentucket Regional School

- a) Carol D. discussed the letter from West Newbury Wild and Native that was recently mailed to Superintendent Bartholomew and CCed to Town Committees concerning the proposed plantings at the new Pentucket Regional Middle and High School. The letter stated various reasons why only native species should be considered for planting. John D. made a motion to support native plantings and Don B. seconded. The motion was unanimously passed. John D. will send a draft of the letter of support to committee members.

2) Mill Pond All Access Update

- a) Work continues on the all-access trail for Mill Pond. John will ask Brad B. for an update and send a document by landscape architect Trent Lloyd to the committee.

3) Trail Walk at Brake Hill Using ECTA Fulcrum App

- a) Patricia R. and John D. participated in the trail workshop with the Essex County Trail Association to learn how to use the new trail monitoring app called Fulcrum which will relay trail difficulties to ECTA. A refresher on the app is needed so a walk at Brake Hill will be scheduled.

4) Rogers Trail (by Artichoke Reservoir) and Parking

- a) Patricia R. noted that parking for the new trail could hold back trail access as wetland issues are involved. She suggested that a two-car parking area and upper lot on the Wither's property, which the new trail is close to could be used temporarily, instead of delaying trail construction. An update on trail parking and trail opening for River Road is also needed. John said he would talk with EC Greenbelt about both issues.

5) Field Management

- a) Patricia R. and Carol D. briefly explained the *ad hoc* committee organized by Selectperson Rick Parker to delve deeper into field management for the Town's fields. Following the meeting, C. Decker, P. Reeser and Nancy P. staked out areas *not* to mow for Wayne A. and the DPW at the Cherry Hill Reservoir field which has a high number of invasives. The plan is to heavily mow the invasive autumn olive shrub this fall, while leaving other productive areas filled with valuable pollinator plants untouched. A detailed map was sent to Wayne A. The Indian Hill fields are the most pristine with few non-natives and a more in-depth plan will be developed this winter for future management.

6) Drake's Landing

- a) Discussion ensued on whether the Drake's Landing trails are ADA compliant or need to be. There was a site walk with Sam Joslin, but ADA needs still remain unclear. It would be nice to have the trail connect with Action Cove, but two residents in the Drake's Landing Homeowners Association are against a trail connection, though it seems the Town owns the easement so their concerns would be overruled. More information is needed and John D. said he would talk further with Sam J.

7) Update on Clearing Ocean Meadow Trail to Lord's Gate

- a) Deb Hamilton is trying to resolve issues to open both the Kelly's and the Lord's land to horses and trails since the Town has an easement through the Lord's property. This is ongoing and more information will follow.

8) Meeting Adjourned

- a) Jean L. made a motion to adjourn. Don B. seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:53pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Decker