

West Newbury Open Space Committee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 14, 2022

7:30 p.m.

Please Join Zoom or In-Person Meeting

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

Meeting ID: 896 075 2005

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

Absent: Marlene Switzer

Guests: Michelle Greene-WN Conservation Agent; Rachel Horgan, Assistant Director of Development at Essex County Greenbelt Association

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

West Newbury Outreach

Rachel Horgan said Essex County Greenbelt Association will be offering a number of membership events this fall in West Newbury to highlight the Open Space properties. They had done this in Ipswich and were very successful. She is looking at mid-September, early October 2023, and walks will be free and incorporate bird, tree and invasive plant i.d. Patricia R. said the OSC has an annual fall walk in October, the date determined in the summer. Rachel H. said Greenbelt would have their walks on Saturdays and it may be that there is a combined OSC and Greenbelt walk. She asked for help spreading the word on the hikes.

Trail Kiosks

Carol D. had sent a recent photo to OSC members showing the dilapidated condition of the kiosk on the RiverBend trail. It was stated that the RiverBend property is owned by the Conservation Commission and Michelle G. said she would bring it their attention. John D. said the posts are ok, but do we need such a large board to frame a small map? What else really needs to be posted? Kiosk is also at the beginning of trail further down the main trail and there is no trail welcome or information at the entrances. Don B. talked about trail signage and how it is all different on the Open Space properties. There was further discussion that a subgroup was needed to evaluate and make suggestions for trail information at RiverBend.

Vote for Austin Property

Graham B. recused himself from the vote on the Austin property. John D. made a motion that the Open Space Committee recommend the Select Board support \$350,000 from Community

Preservation Funds for the Town of West Newbury to buy the 32-acre Austin property on Poor House Lane. Patricia R. seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Trail Map

Marley S. was walking recently with Steve Greason, formerly chair of OSC, at Sullivan's Court. One of the features of the Whetstone Greenway was for the public to walk along the edge of a resident's driveway for a view of the Merrimack River. However, when they walked down to the property, the individual in the residence said the lot lines had been changed and there was no easement for public access. Currently there is no river view, though the trail map shows it. Patricia R. said the Planning Board wondered if the OSC still wanted a walkway to the river. She suggested that Marley S. talk to Sue Brown the Town Planner. She also noted that at a Trail Accessibility walk conducted by Sam Joslin a year or more ago the easement was still part of the Greenway. She said the easements were also part of the planning for that property. Michelle G. pulled up the property map on her computer and said the easement is still there and it has been recorded. Patricia R. suggested someone stake the boundaries of the easement. Marley said she would talk with Sue Brown.

Approve Minutes

Marley S made a motion to approve the November 16, 2022 minutes. Carol D. seconded. Motion carried.

Motion to Adjourn: Patricia R. made a motion to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Don B. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Decker, Scribe