



WEST NEWBURY OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

West Newbury, Massachusetts 01985

To the Honorable Board of Selectmen:

The Open Space Committee (OSC) met regularly during Fiscal year 2009. Our accomplishments include:

Our foremost accomplishment was completing and obtaining state approval of the 2009 Open Space and Recreation Plan. The Plan builds upon the previous plans completed in 1996 and 2003. The Plan was developed with input from a Town-wide Survey conducted in June 2008, deliberations of the Committee, public forums, and input from other Town boards. The major goals of the Open Space and Recreation Plan are:

1. Preserve the Town's rural character, charm, and sense of community by protecting the agricultural heritage of West Newbury, its scenic vistas, architectural gems, and housing diversity.
2. Protect and manage key natural resources, including water protection, and wildlife corridors.
3. Provide passive and active recreational activities for all townspeople, by developing and managing trail systems and other public amenities.

The Open Space Committee worked closely with the Planning Board to identify opportunities to preserve and expand trails throughout the Town wherever possible by creating or maintaining linkages. The Committee is committed to preserving, acquiring, and protecting a permanent Town-wide trail system.

The Open Space Committee hosted a "Speak of the Land" event to recall and record the historical place names of West Newbury including the orchards, truck and dairy farms.

The Open Space Committee with the help of talented members updated and enhanced the West Newbury Open Space Web site www.westnewburyopenspace.net. The site is professional looking and a resource of high quality, linked to the Town website and includes trail maps.

The Open Space Committee updated the Priority Parcel list.

The Open Space Committee continued to work with West Newbury Driving and Riding Club, the Department of Public Works, Merrimac Valley Planning Commission and the Essex County Trail Association in mapping, managing and maintaining trails.

The Open Space Committee, the Conservation Commission and the Board of Selectmen began to implement the Riverbend Conservation Area Management Plan completed in 2008.

The Open Space Committee with the Community Housing Committee advocated for a cooperative alliance between the Open Space Committee and affordable housing stakeholders to provide diverse housing in West Newbury with a commitment to developments that preserve open space and trails.

The Open Space Committee worked with the Essex County Trails Association and the Conservation Commission to develop a Model Trail Management Plan.

The Open Space Committee meets on the third Wednesday of the month at 7:30 PM in the 1910 Building. We welcome the participation of anyone who is interested in our open space activities.

Respectfully submitted for the Committee,
Barry J. LaCroix, Chair