

West Newbury Open Space Committee
MINUTES

Wednesday, September 21, 2016

Present: Brad Buschur, Don Bourquard, Dawne Fusco, Jenifer Germain, Steve Greason, Patricia Reeser, and Jean Lambert, scribe.

Guests: Nick Cracknell, Land use consultant, Cottage Advisers; Bob Janes, Water Board and CPC member, resident; Marlene Switzer, resident.

The meeting began at approximately 7:30 P.M. (Note: the meeting began in the Executive Suite, a conference room across from our regular second-floor meeting room since that room was occupied by another group. After the space was available and within the hour, we moved to our customary meeting room.)

1. **Introduction - Marlene Switzer** - We each introduced ourselves to Marlene Switzer, a Follinsbee Lane resident interested in becoming a member of the OSC. Marlene spoke of her interest in open space and relevant experience, including that in her former town, Westford, MA.
2. **Minutes** - June minutes were unanimously approved. Jennifer made the motion and Patricia seconded it. July minutes were reviewed but not voted on since there was not a quorum of attendees of the July meeting present. Members of the Committee signed up to take minutes over the coming months.
3. **Brown Spring Farm** - There is no significant change in this situation. Patricia reported that Greenbelt had received an opinion of value which was a lower value for the property than Greenbelt had offered to the sellers and estimated that the property would yield three ANR lots and one reduced-frontage lot. The sellers are maintaining their original price of \$900,000. The group discussed possible strategies for Brown Spring and concluded there was not much to be done at present.
4. **Drake's Landing** - Nick Cracknell, land use consultant to Cottage Advisors, addressed the group concerning the proposed Drake's Landing development. After summarizing his background of projects in West Newbury and his entry into this one, he updated the group on where the development stood. He presented and advocated for an OSPD plan, soliciting the group's feedback on how to improve this site. The group discussed this with him, including the siting of trails. Steve supplied a map of Drake's Landing with trails mapped out and trail connections that would enhance the trails on this site. The group agreed to get back to Nick on further thoughts about what it would constitute a best fit with the site and Nick agreed to find out 1) more about the proposed OSPD, 2) its limit of work vs. the integrity of the site, and 3) cuts and fills in this plan that would impact this site.
5. **Trails at Sullivan Court** - Steve presented a map of the Sullivan Court trails and noted changes to the Whetstone Greenway. He reported on the status of the trails and asked for approval to buy materials to mark the trails. His request was tabled until OSC budget figures could be ascertained.
6. **Jarvis Property and Water Department** - Steve talked to the group about the Jarvis property at 31 Dole Place which sits atop a sizable amount of and easy-to-access water. The Water Department has been interested in this land for a long time,

although it is not currently for sale. In its discussion of the property's value and possible funding for its purchase, the group wondered whether grants or CPA funds could be used to acquire this property. Also, could the property pay for itself if a waterfront lot was sold out of it? Water Board member Bob Janes noted that it was an excellent well field site but expensive. He said it would cost \$5-7 million to develop for well field purposes and that this might be done through a bond. The Committee will continue to monitor this situation.

7. Goals and Objectives

- a. Patricia noted that the Parker property, a 10-acre priority parcel contiguous to Brake Hill, will be auctioned off on October 20. The group discussed this situation, including a suggestion that a piece in the back be carved off for Town purchase while the front was left for development. The group concluded that it remained interested in this parcel but would take no action at this point.

Don and Jean suggested that the Priority Parcels list be revised. Patricia emphasized that this should be a topic for our next meeting.

- b. Greenbelt Workshop - Patricia announced the upcoming Greenbelt workshop to the group. This will be held on Saturday, November 12 from 8:00 AM to 2:30 PM at Northern Essex Community College.
- c. Fall Trail Hike - Jean raised the question of whether or not to hold the annual fall trail hike given the pressing need to complete the Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) and the fact that the OSC had held a spring hike at Riverbend in conjunction with Greenbelt in late June. The group voted unanimously in favor of not holding the hike this autumn. Jean made the motion and Dawne seconded it.
- d. OSRP - Patricia indicated that the OSRP would be the focus of the October meeting. In the meanwhile, Brad would send survey results to the group in Excel format and group members would send their completed section drafts to one another. Also, the group would look for appropriate photos for the plan and consider the make-up of the Priority Parcels list.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Lambert