

Open Space Committee
Minutes 9-17-08 amended 9/22

Attending: Felicity Beech, Don Bourquard, Annie Madden, Jean Lambert, Jennifer Germain, Chair, Mike Mokrzycki.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30. Annie Madden agreed to take minutes.

The **minutes** of the August 27th meeting were approved. Minutes of July 27th are still outstanding.

Briefly, we reviewed that the **CPA** has brought a total of \$20,900 now allotted to Open Space use. The total funds for all categories of use is \$583,523.37 . Applications are accepted throughout the year, but must be received by the CPC at least 120 days before any town meeting. For the spring town meeting in late April, that would mean late December. We agreed to discuss this at an upcoming meeting. Our work on the new OS&R Plan will inform us as to possible worthy projects.

We spent the majority of the meeting going over **extensive data from the Open Space and Recreation Survey** compiled by Mike Mokrzycki. Of note is that he did all the tabulation and data entry, and compiled a very detailed spread sheet, and analysis of methods. Jean led this part of the discussion.

Briefly, the survey shows:

- That a large majority of residents still feel strongly about the value of West Newbury's rural character, small town feeling, and good schools. Residents continue to be concerned about the pace and patterns of new growth, about the tax burden, and about various threats to our school system.
- That the Mill Pond / Pipestave Hill area is the most utilized passive recreation resource (63%) , with town trails second at (45%)
- Action Cove was the most frequented active recreational facility (31%) with soccer fields second at 22%. .
- Many respondents requested more information about various recreation areas and trails, feeling unfamiliar with the town's existing resources.
- Preference for CPA funds spending ranked Open Space first (55% ranked it 1st), and affordable housing last (45% ranked it 4th). Historic Preservation and Recreation Facilities were closely ranked in the middle.
- Respondents felt that open space maintenance should be primarily by volunteers (51%) rather than by support from the town budget (37%).
- The land parcel that was cited most often for preservation was the Sullivan parcel, though it was listed by only 14 of 65 repondants that answered that question specifically.

A total of 333 surveys were returned for a 20% return. 88% of this group were surveys that had been mailed directly to homes. More analysis will be done to look at various cross-sections, by age groups and by respondents with children.

We discussed **dissemination of survey results**. Jean will analyze the open-ended questions. Jen and Jean will write an executive summary for hand out at fall town meeting, and for press release. Mike will fine tune the spread sheet, share it with the Park and Rec Department, and post it on our website.

Don shared that Steve Greason will be happy to take on the **job of webmaster** for our website, now that Mike is off the committee.

We discussed **trail developments** - ECTA and the Riding and Driving club have funded and accomplished improvements to the "Link Trail" behind the Page School, linking the west pasture to the existing trail down to Riverbend. The Ocean Meadow trail easement on Lot 1 has been recorded in Salem.

The next meeting is posted for October 15th, 2008 at 7:30 pm

The meeting adjourned at 9:30