

West Newbury Open Space Committee **MINUTES**

Wednesday, Aug. 16, 2017

Present: John Dodge, Dawne Fusco, Steve Greason, Jean Lambert, Patricia Reeser, Marlene Switzer

Guests: Frank Sisto and his daughter

The meeting began at 7:36 p.m.

1. Minutes: An inventory of not-yet-approved minutes was conducted. Outstanding minutes will be brought to the next official meeting for committee vote. Marlene Switzer agreed to be responsible for recording and distributing minutes of future meetings.
2. Dog Park: Frank Sisto and his young daughter brought her idea for a West Newbury dog park to the committee. Likely sites are somewhere near Mill Pond and space next to the Laurel Grange on Garden Street. Members determined such a project is outside the OSC purview, but John Dodge will provide Mr. Sisto with a Recreation Commission contact.
3. Committee Membership: Selectmen's Secretary Mary Winship has questions about paperwork for appointment/reappointment of two OSC members and one associate member -- Brad Buschur, Dawne Fusco and Marlene Switzer. Dawne and Marlene will talk to Mary. Brad to be notified of problem. Three people have expressed interest in filling the associate member position left vacant by Brad's move to full-member status.
4. Trails Update: Related to Whetstone Greenway, Steve Greason has been working with Tom Neve on Sullivans Court trail plans. Neve has told Planning Board that, in September, before the first house is completed, he will construct trail connection from property where he is building houses to connect with River Hill trail and, further, through wooded area to River Meadow.
Steve had questions:
 - Plans filed and approved by Planning Board, ConCom and Neve over past 2 years show 70' bridge, but Steve's site visits with Neve have considered a 30' bridge. A second bridge now required by ConCom through woods was not on plan. Should town pay for unanticipated costs?
 - Trail from Sullivans Court to River Meadow has been established by use and town water line. Site visits by Steve & Marlene Switzer reveal opportunity to relocate much of trail to skirt wetlands, abutting property boundaries and the water line. Steve will follow up to determine if Order of Conditions will cover the work.
 - Should a RDA be filed on the Merrimack Rim Trail? Public notice cost is \$130, but multiple sites can be included in NOI. Patricia said mailing to abutters could be covered by the town's bulk rate.
5. River Meadow Park: Steve suggested this space could be a potential CPA project. Located next to private dock (on town easement) in River Meadow, the waterside parcel could be

mowed to open it for public use. He said the area once was a popular place to enjoy the river before the subdivision was built.

- Dawne Fusco said about 1/3 of the parcel is mowed now, without ConCom permission, probably by someone from the subdivision. She said the mowers should be identified. Dawne is concerned about butterfly and bird nesting protection from mowing. Patricia and Steve will find out who is mowing.
- Need a plan for park. Steve will attend ConCom meeting to find out what it will take to create a park useful for car-top kayaks. Dawne suggested planting low-growing, deep-rooted bushes along the river banks with a pathway to the river for kayaks. More discussion will follow in future meetings. Steve asked if an RDA should be filed.

6. Fall Trail Hike Event: To be held Oct. 22. John will call Greenbelt for partnership possibility.
7. Chapter 61 Notices: Patricia informed Selectmen at their last meeting that the OSC wishes to be notified when land is being dropped from Chapter 61 protection.
8. Fall Town Meeting: Nothing for the OSC to contribute to warrant.
9. OSRP Plan Update: Jean handed out guidelines for the committee to discuss sections 6 & 7, which will facilitate completing sections 8 & 9. Patricia suggested informal meetings to work on these sections of the update. Members present agreed on a 60- to 90-minute meeting for that purpose on Sept. 11 at 2 p.m., 2nd floor of Town Hall.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marlene Switzer