

West Newbury Open Space Committee Meeting Minutes

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Wednesday, Sept. 12, 2018
First-floor Meeting Room, Town Office Building

Present: Jessica Azenaro, Brad Buschur, Dan Carlat, John Dodge, Jean Lambert, Wendy Reed, Patricia Reeser and Marley Switzer, scribe.

Absent: Don Bourquard

Guests: Bill Bachrach, John McNamara*

The OSC meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m.

Bill Bachrach, representing the Park & Recreation Commission (RecCom), spoke on the proposal to construct additional active recreation facilities at Dunn Field. When preparing the RecCom annual report to the Community Preservation Commission (CPC), data collected on use of athletic fields at Pipestave, Page & Pentucket schools and Bachelor revealed 100% use at peak times. The RecCom also looked at all areas in town to site an enclosed dog park after interest was expressed in a 2010 survey. For both the athletic fields and dog park, no town-owned recreation land was deemed suitable except Dunn Field.

OSC members raised concerns, to which Bill offered answers:

Chase Street is too narrow to support increased traffic. Vehicle access to Dunn is permitted from the Pipestave recycling area.

Why not improve Pipestave fields so all can be used? The Greenbelt CR prohibits AstroTurf.*An AstroTurf field at Dunn will bring demands for expensive, harsh lighting.* The RecCom proposal is not for lighting. AstroTurf is ineligible for CPC funding. Grants are being pursued for the dog park.

.....*Population under-18 in West Newbury is forecast to decline.* Based on 2010 Census data, RecCom finds the percent of under-18 in town is holding steady, although school enrollment is down some.

Shouldn't RecCom develop more outdoor programs for non-athletic youth, such as orienteering? Not addressed.

The RecCom could purchase a smaller parcel for an additional field. That would fulfill the goal of preserving open space for land that otherwise might be developed by ANR. The failed RecCom proposal in 2010 to purchase the Daley land for recreation was, in part, due to the cost of land in addition to the cost to construct the facilities.

There is a need for public forums and with school officials. The RecCom proposal has been drafted with Selectmen's oversight.

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Discussion followed regarding content and presentation details for the upcoming (Sept. 19) public forum on Open Space Community Goals. Brad is the organizer and main presenter. Jessica will take the minutes. Wendy offered to create large maps showing permanently protected open space in town and something for comparison. Forum has been publicized to all town boards & committees, and has been widely posted online.

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John updated his effort to post approved minutes to the OSC page on the new town website. Anything to be posted should be in pdf format. Meeting agendas now are linked to the town calendar. He is attempting to preserve the archived OSC minutes from the old site. By unanimous vote (John motion; Jessica second), John will disable the separate OSC website **WNOS.net**.

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The desirability of providing a means to receive public input on OSC matters was discussed. A generic e-mail address for town business that all OSC members can read could be created at an annual cost of \$96. By unanimous vote (Pat motion; Jean second), the e-mail address will be set up.

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It was decided to schedule a regular meeting immediately following the public forum on Sept. 19.

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By unanimous vote (Marley motion; John second), the date of the annual fall trail hike was changed from Saturday, Oct. 13 to Sunday, Oct. 21.

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Due to the late hour, approval of minutes of the Aug. 15, 2018 meeting was deferred until the next meeting.

On a motion by Brad, seconded by Jessica, the meeting was adjourned at 9:22 p.m. The next regular OSC meeting will be Wednesday, Sept. 19, immediately following the public forum.

** Longtime town resident, John McNamara, was in the audience and expressed a keen interest in the business of the OSC. He was invited to offer useful comments throughout the meeting.*

Respectfully submitted,
Marlene Switzer

cc: Town Clerk, file
John Dodge, website