

West Newbury Open Space Committee

MINUTES

Wednesday, Dec. 20, 2017

Present: Don Bourquard, Brad Buschur, Steve Greason, Jean Lambert, Wendy Reed, Patricia Reeser and Marley Switzer (your scribe)

Absent: Jessica Azenaro, John Dodge

Guest: Frank Vetere, Coffin Street

The meeting began at 7:05 p.m. in the Second Floor Meeting Room, West Newbury Town Hall.

1. **Town Communications and Open Meeting Law Changes:** Patricia shared information from a workshop & leadership meeting for town board and committee heads. Discussions, even committee members expressing opinions, online and by e-mail may constitute a violation of the Open Meeting Laws. All e-mail constituting a public record could be subject to documents request. Members could violate the Open Meeting Law when electronically discussing something within the OSC jurisdiction. Marlene will e-mail approved minutes monthly to: (1) Mike McCarron for Town Clerk's records, and (2) Steve to post on the Open Space website.
2. **Use of CPC Funds for Open Space Projects:** Brad highlighted need to remove heavy growth of invasive plants (e.g. burning bush, knotweed) from the understory along the road. He pointed out the importance of this work being done by someone who has an invasive species control license. He suggested designating spaces to open up in this way, such as along Route 133 for Mill Pond views. Patricia said this could be included in the OSRP as a stewardship plan to be implemented by the DPW.

For future OSC meeting, members should make a wish list for the DPW to maintain specified town-owned land. There was discussion of identifying other resources, such as the Mill Pond Committee that has enlisted the DPW to help maintain the Red Trail in the past.

3. **Coffin Street Solar Proposal:** Jean (attended Dec. 19 Planning Board meeting) said SWEB offered some 40 acres of the Beaucher site would go to a CR and no expansion of arrays beyond the original 14 acres. Patricia to seek planning & legal opinions on whether SWEB's promises could be enforced after rezoning to a solar overlay district. To understand the scale of the SWEB project, members considered the Page School array with 400 panels, versus the Beaucher property with about 13,000 panels.

Frank Vetere had concerns: Solar arrays are frequently on capped landfills with established drainage. SWEB plans tall grass to absorb runoff, but what about mowed grass and winter? Also, what is the potential effect on nearby house values with industrial use in a residential area? Is there danger of radiation emission?

4. **Update Priority Parcels:** Discussion of Hufnagel and Grew land being marketed as lots. Committee will continue to monitor. Don and Steve said they will update Chapter land lists for Section 5 of the OSRP. They will publish the MVPC 2016 map with a table of 2018 changes for the Plan.
5. **Update Drake's Landing:** Planning Board hearings have been continued for this OSPD project while the developer makes changes to specs for drainage, fill, etc.
6. **Mill Pond Committee:** Patricia will meet with new Mill Pond Committee chairman.
7. **OSRP Update Work:** Update work will resume after the Holidays.
8. **Minutes:** The assembled members unanimously approved the minutes of the Nov. 29, 2017 regular meeting after minor corrections.
9. **Goals and Objectives:** Time ran short before this could be discussed.
10. **Next Regular Meeting:** Wednesday, Jan. 17, 2018 at 7 p.m., Second Floor Meeting Room, West Newbury Town Hall (subject to confirmation by Patricia, who could have a schedule conflict)

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m. following Jean's motion, seconded simultaneously by Patricia and Don.

Respectfully submitted,
Marlene Switzer

Cc: Michael McCarron, Town Hall records
Steve Greason, Town Open Space website