

*West Newbury Open Space Committee*

**Meeting Minutes – Final**

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Thursday, July 16, 2020  
GoTo Meeting Video Conference  
<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/888316181>  
Dial in-United States: +1 (669) 224-3412  
Access Code: 888-316-181

**Present:** John Dodge, Don Bourquard, Carol Decker, Wendy Reed, Jean Lambert, Marlene Switzer, Brad Buschur, Patricia Reeser, and Jessica Azenaro, scribe

**Guests:** Ellen Alden, Deb Hamilton

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

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**1. 32 Acre Development Off Archelaus Place - Group**

- a. Development totals 8 units with construction in front of the power lines. Disinterested in owning or developing back land. Potential trail easement - selling property back to town for a CR. Open to the trail going across the property, however, wetland in the back of the Deer Run property is problematic. Critical link to angle across the Austin property to Poor House Land and Town Forest.
- b. Deb Hamilton and Ellen Alden stated the importance of an accessible link with installation of gravel or bridge to ride through Pipestave without riding through Main Street.
- c. Monitor development specifics with the Planning Board once a formal proposal is made. Planning Board delay on high interest projects due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- d. Potential trails on edge of parcel 30F, straight line of the northern boundary of Sarkis ed unanimously.development/Austin property as well as Deer Run/Crowe parcel.
- e. OSC motion to support idea of a trail up to town forest across Austin and Crowe properties to meet up with existing trail easement in Town Hall by Don Bourquard. 2nd - Marlene Switzer. Motion approved unanimously.
- f. Committee discussed development ideas on the Austin property R14-30F and R14-30 along Poor House Lane. There is some uncertainty on what can be built on these two properties.
- g. The Austin properties contain an existing trail from Poor House Lane to the Town Hall. The through route goes from the Austin property and then through land owned by Crowe (R14-36, R14-54) and finally by Buckholder et. al. (R14-39). The portion of the trail on R14-30F and R14-54 is protected by a recorded ECTA trail easement. The remainder of the trail is not protected. The Austin property also joins with Annie's Way, another long used trail to Archelaus Place.

- h. The Crowe property above is being developed with the process being reviewed by the Planning Board with the development named Deer Run. Mr. Crowe may be amenable to a trail easement or other option to protect the trail route. The Deer Run development is mainly at the north portion of the land and the trail route is on the southern and western part of Crowe's land. There is also a minor stream crossing on the Crowe property also.
- i. The plans for the Austin property are not known at the time of the meeting.
- j. Deb Hamilton and Ellen Alden attended the meeting and stressed the importance of retaining this link, which has been used over the years without formal permissions. It is possible that revisions may be needed to accommodate the stream crossing and the development plans on the properties.
- k. The OS Committee voted to approve to support ECTA and others in working to retain this route. Motion by Don Bourquard. 2nd by Marlene Switzer. Motion passed unanimously.
- l. The OS Committee will monitor both these two properties (Deer Run and Austin) before the Planning Board and Conservation Committee.

**2. Update to ECTA Trail Management Plan - Wendy Reed**

- a. Supplemental document approved with ECTA with updated sections on trail management. Also includes a section on bog bridges. Up for 3 year renewal for town groups to work through the specifics and to include the *West Newbury Riding and Driving Club*.
- b. Contact the Mill Pond Committee for comments.
- c. Maps - consider using more current Open Space maps and update with more accurate maps in future.
- d. Board of Selectmen approval required.
- e. OSC motion to support the changes recommended to show support for a strengthened joint plan with the ECTA Trail Management Plan document by Don Bourquard. 2nd by John Dodge. Motion approved unanimously.

**3. Update on Trail Plan for River Road and River Access - John Dodge/Patricia Reeser**

- a. Trail Planning
  - i. Dave Rimmer contacted about the trail planning.
  - ii. All trail planning currently on hold due to COVID-19 restrictions.
  - iii. John Dodge to resend plans via email to the Open Space Committee.
  - iv. Plan explores the River Road area toward the stone wall.
- b. River Access
  - i. River Meadow - River access and a town-owned parcel that could potentially provide parking may be sold. Contact the Rob Phillips/River Access committee regarding urgency.
  - ii. Church Street - River Access committee working towards improved access on Church Street and to focus town efforts. Rob stated they would meet soon. OSC to recommend moving forward on River Meadow if they do not. Selectmen have discussed selling this parcel. Follow up with Leah to determine if the lot is buildable.
  - iii. Trail Build - River Meadow/Neve
    - 1. One bog bridge in the interior with a boardwalk over the stream.
    - 2. Contact the building inspector for a variance with the Architectural board to build with the money set aside for River Meadow.
- c. Additional Trail Discussions
  - i. Mill Pond

1. Contact Ryan Goodman on the Mill Pond Committee regarding an all-access trail around the pond.
2. Potential CPC fund usage to realize OSRP goals.

#### **4. 40B Letter - Group**

- a. OSC Letter Updates
  - i. The OSC comment letter previously submitted still applies, but will be updated by John to reflect the second site plan submitted which also reduces the number of units from 152 units down to 92. The updated letter will be circulated to the group for final comment before submission to the BOS.
  - ii. Loss of 73 acres of open space (entire Beaucher property) under the new plan. Verify the acreage.
  - iii. Check location/number of the leaching fields in the new plan.
  - iv. Community house was replaced by mailboxes and some parking.
  - v. Sidewalks require comment. No established connection to Mill Pond ("Point")
  - vi. Vernal Pool
    1. Vernal pool certification is ongoing for the pool shared with an abutter. There is a potential vernal pool on the property.
    2. Animals use the pools for a brief period. Eliminating the pools would destroy habitat for salamanders and wood frogs. Salamanders are specific to the vernal pool where they were born.

#### **5. New Business - All**

- a. Minutes
  - i. 17 June 2020 - motion to approve the minutes as amended - Unanimous.
- b. August Meeting - To Be Determined
- c. Mowing - Butterfly field
  - i. Cherry Hill
    1. A 30 foot swath mowed, but the understanding was that it was not going to be mowed this year due to the alternating years mowing schedule.
    2. Work with Wayne Amaral on schedule and stress benefit for pollinator species.
  - ii. Riverbend
    1. Tree fell in the field near Riverbend. Request/picture to Wayne Amaral.
    2. Request to leave half the field in Riverbend for pollinators.
    3. Continue mowing one pass around the field perimeter for walking.

The next meeting of the OSC will be determined for August 2020.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

#### **Addendum to Meeting Notice regarding Remote Participation**

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the West Newbury Open Space Committee will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible.

Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the Town of West Newbury website, at [www.wnewbury.org](http://www.wnewbury.org). For this meeting, members of the public who wish to listen to the meeting may do so in the following manner:

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No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the Town of West Newbury website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as practicable after the meeting.