

*West Newbury Open Space Committee*

**Meeting Minutes DRAFT**

Wednesday, August 17, 2022

7:00 p.m.

Please Join Zoom or In-Person Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/8960752005>

Meeting ID: 896 075 2005

**Present:** Graham Bacheller, JohnDodge, Don Bourquard, Marlene Switzer, Kathy Feehery, Patricia Reeser, Jessica Azenaro, & Carol Decker, scribe

**Absent:** Jean Lambert

**Guests:** Wendy Reed, Jennifer Costain

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

**Updates to Whetstone Greenway Trail and Mill Pond All-Access Trail**

Select Board member Wendy Reed said Brad Buschur originally took on the Whetstone Greenway trail projects as an Open Space Committee member, but it was dropped after he left the OSC. Wendy supports the OSC shepherding this project to get it through the wetland permitting required by the Conservation Commission. The project would entail a 200' ADA-compliant boardwalk. The developer of houses on Sullivan's Court, Tom Neve, had placed \$10,000 in a gift account for the boardwalk and very little has been spent. Wendy R. estimated that permits and an As-Built Plan would cost \$2,500 and the permit would be good for three years.

Patricia Reeser expressed her concern about pursuing a grant for the Whetstone Greenway ADA boardwalk when the Mill Pond All-Access Trail is dependent on a sizable grant. Patricia now serves on a committee with Brad Buschur from Parks and Recreation, and Robin Pendergast, from the Mill Pond Committee, to finalize plans that consultant Trent Lloyd developed for the trail. There continue to be different concepts for the Mill Pond trail. Brad B and Robin P support expanding the original All-Access Trail plan to include parking behind the Mill Pond building. Wendy sees it as a 2-phase project: Phase 1 to build the trail and Phase 2 to add parking and road redesign. Patricia countered Wendy's understanding of a phased-in approach, saying Brad B supports combining both phases and seeking a larger grant. Wendy R said Town Manager Angus Jennings is opposed to a major project at this time.

Further discussion included: the septic system has not been addressed; the deteriorating culvert has not been addressed; the ANRAD has not been completed; and Trent Lloyd has not yet submitted a trail design. Kathy Feehery said horses shouldn't be prevented from crossing the culvert. There was

discussion on how this project with parking behind the building got so big. Wendy said she attended all the different sessions that Trent Lloyd held, and she heard again and again to "keep it rustic," which this new expanded parking plan ignores.

Jennifer Costain lives on Mill Pond and is a new member of the Mill Pond Committee. She said the roadway along the pond should not be eliminated, as emergency access is needed and kayakers put in there. Jennifer thinks some on the Mill Pond Committee are concerned that a new ADA trail will make it attractive to more people and thus more parking behind the building would be needed. Jessica Azenaro said the building is only used until October, when water is shut off and does not see increased building use.

The OSC does not favor a path in front of the building, additional parking, tree cutting, or proceeding with a broader plan than what was originally submitted. The OSC supports *only* improved ADA parking.

This led back to a further discussion on the Whetstone plan, which the OSC originally supported before the Planning Board allowed the developer to put aside only \$10,000 for an ADA boardwalk. It will be expensive to complete a 200' ADA-complaint boardwalk. It was agreed that the rough, unimproved trail is very well used, so Wendy R said she would represent the funding to improve it to the Select Board.

### **OSPD Bylaw Amendment**

Marlene S said the Open Space Preservation Bylaw has been on the books for 8-10 years. The OSC has a vested interest in developments built according to the OSPD because it requires the developer to create public trails in the open space. Under the bylaw, the development's road has to be public, not private, so the trail(s) can be accessed by the public.

Drakes Landing and River Hill were developed under this bylaw. The residents pay Town taxes for trash **and** recycling collection, snow removal and road repairs, but they **do not receive** those town services. Their Trust documents require they contract for trash **and** recycling, snow removal **and** road repairs. As an example, the annual cost for trash **and** recycling pickup in River Hill is \$12,000 split **among** 30 houses. *(How is the lack of town services point relevant to trails here? Link to trails not clear to me. Isn't it the road's being public that is relevant?)*

Marlene S is proposing a bylaw amendment *(What amendment exactly? To accomplish what?)*, but Patricia R said the HOA can petition the Town to accept the road. Wendy R said the developer, Chip Hall, set it up that way so he didn't have to do an As-Built. *(WHAT is an AS-BUILT? Need a few words of explanation in parentheses. The first two sentences of this paragraph also need to be clearer, I think and link better to the paragraph above.)* Marlene S said she would look into petitioning the Town to accept the road.

### **Items Not Reasonably Anticipated at the Time of Posting**

Graham B noted that this was Kathy Feehery's last meeting, as she and her husband are moving to New Hampshire. Kathy presented to the OSC the West Newbury trail signs she discovered while

packing to move. Everyone thanked Kathy for her work on the Conservation Commission and as an Associate Member of the OSC. All wished her the best.

Carol D mentioned the date for the annual OSC Fall Trail Hike and asked if it could be changed. That will be considered before the next meeting.

**Motion to Adjourn:** John Dodge made a motion to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Don Bourquard. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.