

To the Honorable Board of Selectmen,

In fiscal year 2004, the Open Space Committee completed work on the Open Space and Recreation Plan and presented the plan to the Board of Selectmen and the town in September. The plan was approved by the state's Executive Office of Environmental Affairs allowing us to participate in DCS grants through June of 2008. The plan includes updated land inventories and priority parcel list, extensive updated mapping, and updated goals and objectives for the next five years.

The Committee spent the remainder of the year beginning work on many of the projects outlined in the Plan. A major effort was ongoing work on an inventory of trails, and development of strategies to maintain trails in the face of development. We coordinated efforts with the Planning Board in order to be aware in advance of open space and trail features of parcels coming before the Planning Board. Along with members of the Planning Board and Conservation Commission, we drafted standard trail easement language as a starting place for future work with landowners who are willing to grant access to the public for passive recreation use of trails. We worked with the West Newbury Trails group and supported the inclusion of West Newbury in the Essex County Trails Association. Trail mapping with GPS technology is ongoing.

A Riverbend Cleanup Day was held in October. Several high school students combed the riverbank and trails, an effort organized by our newest Committee member, Jean Lambert.

Planning took place for the initial design of an Open Space Committee website: [westnewburyopenspace.org](http://westnewburyopenspace.org). The Open Space Plan is posted there along with links of interest to open space users and stewards.

We, along with several members of the Planning Board, met with representatives of the Westford Conservation Trust in June. They shared their successes in founding a Land Trust, passing the Community Preservation Act, and negotiating over 60 trail easements, among others.

The Open Space Committee meets on the first Wednesday of the month in the Town Office Building. We welcome anyone who is interested.

Respectfully submitted,

Annie Madden, Chair