

WEST NEWBURY OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

West Newbury, Massachusetts 01985

ANNUAL REPORT

2017

To the Honorable Board of Selectmen:

The Open Space Committee (OSC) met regularly during FY 2016. This report summarizes our key accomplishments from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017:

- **Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) Update:** The OSC continued the complex, state-mandated process of updating the 2009 OSRP since the Town is required to have a current plan on file with the state to qualify for certain state grants. Using results from the 2016 town-wide survey as well as the most current census information, new mapping tools, studies Conducted by other conservation organizations, and input from residents and town boards, the OSC revised a number of sections of the OSRP. The OSRP is intended to be a planning tool for town departments, boards, and committees.

- **Collaboration on Open Space Issues:** The OSC functioned as a resource for and consulted with various town boards, committees, and diverse other groups on a broad range of topics related to open space and trails. These groups included the Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Town Counsel, Community Preservation Committee, Department of Public Works, Water Department, state Department of Conservation and Recreation, Essex County Greenbelt Association, Essex County Trail Association, and the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission.

More specifically, the OSC collaborated with the Planning Board and Conservation Commission on new residential projects including Sullivans Court, Follinsbee Lane, and Drake's Landing by providing advice about optimum trail locations, design, development, and marking. The OSC also advised the Board of Selectmen on issues relating to Chapter 61 parcels and use of Open Space CPA funds to acquire a possible well field site with Merrimack River access on Dole Place. In addition, the OSC worked closely with Essex County Greenbelt, our local land trust, on numerous matters related to critical parcels of West Newbury land. A member of the OSC presented a program on trail mapping at the Greenbelt Land Conservation Workshop held in November, 2016.

- **Priority Parcel Management:** The OSC revised its criteria for designating land as a "priority parcel" for preservation. The newly revised Priority Parcel list is informed by Mass Audubon MAP PR2 and comprises a major part of the OSRP.

- **Trail System Improvements:** With the goal of creating a town-wide network of trails, the OSC continued its work developing, mapping, marking, and maintaining trails on town-owned properties. These efforts involved cooperation with various town boards and departments as well as with the Essex County Trail Association, an Eagle Scout candidate, and many volunteers, for which the OSC is very grateful.

- **Website Enhancements:** The OSC continued to upgrade its website which includes open space news and information along with links to open space and conservation resources plus maps of town trails.



Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Committee,
Patricia Reeser, Chairman

October 29, 2017

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