

WEST NEWBURY OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE – November 19, 2015

Present-

- Jean Lambert (co-chair)
- Dawne Fusco
- John Dodge
- Steve Greason
- Don Bourquard

[Absent: O'Leary, Reeser, Germain, Buschur]

Meeting was called to order at 7:35pm

Greenbelt Forum on Chapter 61 Workshop.

The members were informed of a Greenbelt Workshop on how towns can preserve working farms and forests using Chapter 61. This will include a review of chapter 61, 61a and 61b, how and when town officials should act to use the right of first refusal in these situations, prioritizing properties and a local case study. Chair Patricia Reeser and others indicate they expect to attend and will RSVP.

The committee felt this would be a valuable workshop for our group and others associated with Chapter 61 issues. Jean Lambert was delegated to call this program to the attention of the Planning Board via Leah Zambernardi.

Withers Conservation Access.

As agreed in an earlier meeting, Town Counsel McCarron wrote to Jaclyn Bennett's lawyer Higgins to have her remove signage on the town's Withers property which restricts parking to IMCN visitors. Ms. Bennett is a principal in IMCN, the Insight Meditation Center of Newburyport.

The Committee received a response from attorney Thomas Lesser representing IMCN. The response in summary agreed to remove the signage. Lesser suggested that no motorized use or parking be permitted on the Withers' property except for vehicles passing into IMCN's property. Lesser also felt that parking within 400 feet of the reservoir would be environmentally damaging – some of the area may lie within 400 feet of the reservoir. Mr. Lesser also requested a meeting in which he and Ms. Bennet would suggest improvements for the area and the situation in general.

Member John Dodge noted that the parking restriction signs have been removed.

==Ms. Fusco moved with Mr. Greason seconding, to have co chair Reeser write Counsel McCarron several points to be communicated to Mr. Lesser and Ms. Bennett. These points are a) the area in dispute is owned by the Town and the current use of the Conservation Committee has approved these uses, b) parking is not prohibited within 400 feet of the reservoir, and c) as approved by the Conservation Committee auto use is as diagrammed but beyond that point on the town land no motorized use is allowed.

Goals and Objectives.

Drake's Landing - Committee member Buschur furnished an email update on this new project which involves parcels R10-42A and R10-33, south of the Legion building. The Planning Board furnished Open Space a copy of the plan. Bourquard and Buschur attended the initial November 18 Planning

Board review, which was a 'sketch plan' for the development. The presented plan is only a 'place holder' first draft, and the Board rejected the first draft, 0-5 on other conditions. Further plans will be forthcoming and be heard by the Planning Board, Conservation Committee and others. Mr. Bourquard requested that the Planning Board have our Committee be on the formal service list.

Open Space and Recreation Plan – The current plan must be reviewed and formally updated by Fall 2016. All members are directed to carefully review the current plan and a) suggest revisions in form or content and b) indicate what areas of the plan each member would like to work on. We will probably need to work with MVPC for mapping support.

==Mr. Bourquard moved and Mr. Greason seconded that our objective is to have an initial review with assignments be in place by the Jan. 15, 2016 meeting; unanimously approved.

Library Exhibit – Ms. Lambert requested we furnish any ideas for our Library exhibit. At the meeting it was suggested that one option might be the planning process as it relates to open space and trails.

Minutes.

The minutes for the January 2015 were approved unanimously.....

Adjournment

Unanimously at 8:55 PM.

Minutes reported by Don Bourquard

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