

West Newbury Open Space Committee
Minutes of the meeting
Wednesday, September 17, 2014

Chairman Steve Greason called the Open Space Committee meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. in the second floor hearing room of the 1910 building with Patricia Reeser, Jean Lambert, Jennifer Germain, Alice O'Leary, and Elisa Grammer (associate) in attendance.

After hearing no public comment, the Committee addressed its agenda.

Beaucher Property

Jean Lambert reported on the Community Preservation Committee meeting that approved a possible future payment of \$1,750, to be the Town's 50% share (with Essex Greenbelt) for an appraisal of the Beaucher property. The Committee discussed the Beauchers' refusal to allow Greenbelt to view property. Upon consensus that the matter cannot be forced, Ms. Reeser suggested that perhaps OSC would be able to work with a new buyer once the property goes under contract. *It was informally agreed that Ms. Lambert will follow up with the Beauchers' realtor (who had informed Ms. Germain that no viewing could occur until Mr. Beaucher's return in August), on behalf of the OSC, which has not been outright rejected.*

Dunn Fields

After the Committee's July meeting, OSC Chairman Greason followed up with Board of Selectmen Chairman Glenn Kemper about farming on Town-owned Dunn Fields, and especially damage to the Town the trails on the former Dunn property. The Selectmen held a meeting at which this issue was discussed. It appears that they would send the Dunns a letter and the unauthorized farming would be addressed in advance of next summer.

Pikes Bridge Trail Gate at Garden St

Chairman Greason reported that Gordon Sims, an abutter to the Garden Street access point to the Pikes Bridge Trail, has been working with the Town to replace the current ugly rusty gate with a more attractive and functional one. Mr. Sims also cleaned out brush at the entrance. DPW will weld a new gate with materials from Greenbelt.

Ms. Germain added that the historic stone construction Pikes Bridge is badly in need of repair. *It was informally agreed that OSC needs to discuss this with Town Department of Public Works Director Gary Bill and perhaps Mr. Sims.*

Riverbend Trails & Town Trail Walk/Grand Opening

It was decided that Sunday, October 19 at 1 p.m. would be the day for the OSC's Town trail walk. Chairman Greason reported that Essex County Trails Association (ECTA) wants a grand trail opening ceremony for the new Riverbend Trail improvements. The Committee agreed that parking at the Page School is the most logical starting place. OSC will have a table at which Ms. Reeser will dispense water/cider & energy bars; Ms. Grammer will provide a sandwich board-type sign with balloons for the Main Street entry to Page School balloons; sawhorses with poster as sandwich board); Ms. Lambert will work on flyers and will be at the start of the trail (perhaps with Ms. O'Leary); Chairman Greason and perhaps Deb Hamilton will lead hikes.

Mass Trail Conference

Chairman Greason described a Massachusetts trail conference scheduled for November 8, which involves presentations and nominations for a state trail award. Mr. Greason's attendance last year led to the use of

AmeriCorps for the Riverbend bridge construction, and now he is contemplating a nomination of that for the state trail award. The Committee discussed options for securing a nomination. *It was informally agreed that the protocols for such nominations would be explored and perhaps ECTA might submit a nomination.*

Page School Riverbend Science Projects

Page School will be working in Riverbend forest area looking at tree cankers, including whether they are growing or shrinking; at tidal effects at the bridges and tributaries, and at tree identification and labeling, all of which can be done in the fall/winter seasons when school is in session.

OSC Library Exhibit

Ms. Lambert described her ongoing communications with the new Town librarian about how to continue the Open Space display. *It was decided that to relieve competition for use of the library easel, Ms. Lambert will purchase an OSC easel that could be used for the library displays and for meetings, trail hikes, and other OSC purposes.*

Accounts

The Committee signed off on expenses Chairman Greason presented.

Meeting Minutes

The Committee voted to approve the July 2014 minutes. 4-0-0

April 2014 minutes are still outstanding.

Mullen Property as Potential Additional Cemetery

Ms. Reeser reported that former Selectman Bert Knowles made an inquiry about using the Mullen Property as a Town cemetery.

Updating Master Plan Document

The current Master Plan Document is due to be updated. The Committee discussed the time it takes to do this and the need to begin planning to accomplish this.

The Committee adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elisa Grammer