

**West Newbury Open Space Committee**  
**Minutes of the meeting**  
**Wednesday, October 22, 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 Dawn Fusco, Jean Lambert, Jennifer Germain, Alice O'Leary, Don Bourquard, and Elisa Grammer (associate) in attendance.

**Trail Hike**

Chairman Greason reported that perhaps 60-70 people - the largest group to date - participated in the Trail Hike at Riverbend this year (featuring the new bridges). It appeared that the email blast to schools (and by ECTA) may have increased attendance. A key supporter is Brenda Dresser, the 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher who uses the trails in schoolwork. Also important was the newspaper coverage. Ms. Germain raised the problem of reaching younger people who do not read the paper. The Committee noted that people came from Amesbury, Newburyport, and Merrimac.

**Beaucher Property**

Following the OSC site walk, Vanessa Johnson of Greenbelt met with the realtor and learned that the owner authorized an appraisal. Ms. Fusco and others noted that there needs to be a compelling reason (not yet clearly identified) for the Town to acquire this property. Chairman Greason noted interest in exploring the property's potential for Town water supplies, particularly in view of the elevation of 113 feet.

*It was informally decided that the Committee will revisit Beaucher property after an appraisal is available.*

**Sullivan North Property**

This property is subject to a Town right of first refusal because the developer renegotiated the price, dropping it to \$950K and is now considering six instead of 12 homes. It was reported that the ConCom and the Planning Board did not see a need to pursue this property, which is really wet. Chairman Greason said that there is no way to have a dock on this property because it has a large 30' dropoff to the river. There is a stream, a ravine, and room for possible athletic fields. It was further noted that it may be difficult to have large public events on this property, inasmuch as Whetstone Street has a dangerous intersection and is quite constricted.

*It was informally agreed that the OSC would let the Selectmen know that a site visit is being scheduled and OSC remains interested pending that site walk.*

**Annual Town Report**

An annual Town Report from the Committee will be due in mid-November. Chairman Greason said that he will come up with a one-page draft. He also noted that the plan is not to present an OSC report at the Fall Town Meeting, which will be short and likely not well attended. Rather, an OSC report will be given in the Annual Town Meeting in spring.

**Minutes**

*The Committee voted to approve the September 17, 2014 draft minutes approved unanimously.*

**Pikes Bridge Restoration**

Although it was agreed that the bridge/concrete culvert that carries the Pikes Bridge trail is in need of repair of the stone walls, Chairman Greason said that this is not a historic structure. He pointed out that you need someone to put the stones back. While very helpful, abutting neighbor Gordon Sims cannot be

expected to accomplish this. Ms. Germain noted that the Town DPW should work on this, particularly since this is a major Town trail. Ms. O'Leary said that this should be taken to the Selectmen.

*It was informally agreed that Ms. Germaine will write letter to the Selectmen about this.*

### **Trail Markers**

Mr. Bourquard asked whether he should get another set trail markers (\$165) for Brake Hill and other areas as needed. Chairman Greason observed that aluminum markers are not so durable and not as attractive as the wooden ones, which cost less but require more labor.

A lively and lengthy discussion ensued concerning the need for and nature of trail markers, and standards for such.

*It was generally agreed that Mr. Bourquard would report back with more specific information about the quantity, colors and cost of replacing necessary markers.*

The Committee adjourned 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Elisa Grammer