

West Newbury Open Space Committee **Meeting Minutes**

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Wednesday, July 18, 2018
Second-Floor Meeting Room, Town Office Building

Present: Jessica Azenaro, Don Bourquard, Brad Buschur, Dan Carlat, Wendy Reed, Patricia Reeser, and Marley Switzer

Absent: John Dodge, Jean Lambert

Guests: Bob Janes, Historical Commission; Peter Haack

The OSC meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m.

Historical Commission Chairman Bob Janes told members an inventory of 100 historic houses is complete and the results are in the library. The estimated cost to inventory the whole town was \$66,000 but was reduced by two-thirds, so this inventory was limited to mostly houses on Main Street. With a CPC grant, more house inventories could be done. Bob also said he is researching Camp Sylvester, a troop training encampment on the Sylvester family farm for two summer months in 1861.

Bob opened a discussion about cemeteries in town by predicting West Newbury will need more burial space from five to 20 years from now. He gave a brief assessment of some of the cemeteries, none of which is associated with a religious institution in town. Merrimac Cemetery on Pleasant Street is mostly full. Trustees of the Walnut Hill Cemetery on Bachelor Street are planning to clear space for future burial sites. The rural cemetery on Chase Street has plenty of room. Each cemetery has a Board of Trustees, and Bob suggests they combine their efforts. If someone is hired to care for all cemeteries during the growing season, that person could work for the DPW in the winter.

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Main Street resident Peter Haack expressed concern about the septic, retaining walls and earth moving on a parcel across from his home. He said the developer is proposing three duplex buildings, each served by its own driveway off Main Street. Peter said the parcel is the only parcel on his side of Main to the parcel being developed. Calling the land a “vital resource area,” he said he was worried about the effect of changing the topography. He requested that the OSC express any concerns about the project, such as its proximity to two Greenbelt parcels (3+ acres landlocked) as a resource area, and precedent for the frontage arrangement.

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Patricia asked the committee to revisit a previous vote to include all Chapter 61 parcels in the Priority Parcels list. She also said special attention should be given to municipal parcels that are not specifically preserved from sale or development. By unanimous vote, not all Chapter 61 land will be included in the Priority Parcels list (Patricia motion; Don second).

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Wendy sent the new ConComm Trail Management Plan to the DCR (Natural Heritage) and it was approved.

Suggestion for Section 7 of the OSRP: include the Open Space Preservation Development requirement for trail maintenance by easement (town) or a homeowners' association.

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In discussing the OSRP 5-year Action Plan, Brad said the trails committee of the Mill Pond Committee is eager to join forces with the OSC for trail maintenance. Patricia suggested inviting the Mill Pond chairman, Ryan Goodwin, to the August OSC meeting. She also recommended asking the DPW for assistance. Don said ECTA has a trail group but money could be an issue. Brad will scope out the budget for trail work, and he suggested putting a funding request on the fall Town Meeting warrant.

Patricia mentioned that the Amesbury trails group is surveying trail use by running a contest on its web site. Brad spoke about a strava mobile app that can create a heat map to report foot traffic.

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Minutes of the June 20, 2018 meeting were unanimously approved (Don motion; Brad second).

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m. The next regular OSC meeting will be Wednesday, Aug. 15, at 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marlene Switzer

cc: Town Clerk, file
John Dodge, website