

Town of Shelburne
Open Space Committee
2012 Annual Report

The Open Space Committee highly values the efforts of our many citizens who continue to support the goals of protecting and preserving open space in the Town of Shelburne.

Open space is defined as, "land that is undeveloped, generally without paved roads or permanent structures, which includes, but is not be limited to, land to protect existing and future well fields, aquifers and recharge areas, watershed land, agricultural land, grasslands, fields, forest land, fresh water marshes and other wetlands, river, stream, lake and pond frontage, lands to protect scenic vistas, land for wildlife or nature preserve and land for active or passive recreational use such as the use of land for community gardens, trails, and noncommercial youth and adult sports, and the use of land as a park, playground or athletic field."

Throughout the year the Committee continued to advocate for open space in Shelburne, and worked to carry out the directives of the Town and initiatives identified in the Shelburne Open Space and Recreation Plan approved by the Town. Activities included:

- Provided input to the Shelburne Community Development Strategy;
- Continued work on the Shelburne Trail system; posted additional signage and tree species information of the Wooded Loop Trail; distributed copies of trail map;
- Advised Planning Board and ZBA regarding open space issues relating to Mt. Massemet Wind Farm proposal and development of wind bylaws;
- Worked on issues and programs with groups such as the Boy Scouts to raise awareness and control invasive species such as Garlic Mustard;
- Continued to update the collection of over 30 maps relating to various Town attributes and open space to facilitate town officials and citizen access to the information and tools (maps are available on a rack in the Memorial Hall meeting room and on the Town Website);
- Used a grant from the Highland Communities Initiative to install resource shelves in the Arms Library and the Shelburne Center Library with information on land conservation and preservation, and developed a series of informational packages for landowners on topics about conservation and land management strategies; mailed a package of information to all landowners with 5 or more acres.
- Using a technical assistance grant from FRCOG, began the process to update the Shelburne Open Space and Recreation plan; hosted a town-wide forum to identify key priorities, mailed a survey to all households and posted survey online with a response of over 350 townspeople;
- Reviewed a right of first refusal request on the Smead Hill Road Farm, and advised Selectboard regarding parcel attributes;
- Served as a clearinghouse for landowners by distributing information and e-publications from a variety of land conservation organizations, including hosting an information table at Riverfest.

The Committee reviewed priorities for the coming year, and has the following goals:

- Continue work on updating the Open Space and Recreation Plan; analyze survey results and develop goals and action plans with interested citizens and town Boards;
- Continue to develop and sponsor educational forums on topics such as conservation programs, land transfer, control of invasive species and other topics of interest to landowners;
- Continue to identify landowners willing to open their land to the public, and identify, map and blaze such trails including posting signs at trail heads delineating trail names;
- Meet with and share information with the open space committees of other neighboring towns and work with the Agricultural Commission to advance and promote farming in Shelburne and the region;

- Promote the Open Space Donation Account as a means to fund open space acquisition with private dollars in the absence of Town funding.

Through the efforts of many citizens using techniques such as conservation restrictions, Agricultural Preservation Restrictions and tax incentives, (such as Chapter 61) residents of Shelburne have preserved over 8,700 acres of agricultural land, woodlands and open space in the Town with some level of protection from development. (59% of the Town's land area – see following table for details.)

Level of Protection	Acres	% of Total Land Area in Town (14,978 Acres)
PERMANENTLY PROTECTED OPEN SPACE		
Farmland (APR)	1,360	9%
Forestland (CR, State-owned, conservation organization)	1,151	8%
Cemeteries (public and private)	37	0.2%
Water and Fire District Land	297	2%
Total Permanently Protected Open Space	2,845	19%
TEMPORARILY PROTECTED OPEN SPACE		
Farmland (Ch. 61 A)	4,455	30%
Forestland (Ch. 61)	1,489	10%
Recreation Land (Ch. 61B)	23	0.2%
Total Temporarily Protected Open Space	5967	40%
OPEN SPACE UNDER LIMITED PROTECTION		
Town owned open space	33	0.2%
Total Open Space with Limited Protection	33	0.2%
TOTAL OPEN SPACE WITH SOME LEVEL OF PROTECTION		
	8,770	59%

It is the privilege of the Open Space Committee to work with landowners as stewards of open space, and we are grateful for the support of many townspeople committed to preserving open space, agriculture and the rural character of the Town, and to the many individuals who have contributed to the Open Space Contribution Account this year which totals over \$ 14,100.

At-large Members:

Cynthia Boettner
 Eugene Butler
 Paul Cohen
 Joel Dwight
 Larry Flaccus
 Linda Herrera
 Rita Jaros
 Daniel Lieberman
 David Schochet
 Josiah Simpson

Board Representatives:

Norman Beebe, Recreation Committee
 Thomas Miner, Conservation Commission
 John Herron, Agricultural Commission
 Douglas Finn, Planning Board