

Shelburne Open Space Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2018

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 Pm by Chairman Schochet. Members of the committee in attendance were Jim Perry, Norm Beebe, Larry Flaccus, and Tom Johnson.

The following guests to the meeting were introduced: Ms. Melissa Patterson representing the Franklin Land Trust, Mr. Art Schwenger representing the Deerfield Watershed and the Mahican-Mohawk Trail organizations, and Ms. Whit Sanford, representing the Greater Shelburne Falls Area Business Association and the Greater Shelburne Falls Area Partnership.

Ms. Sanford described the roles of the Greater Shelburne Falls Area Business Association and the Greater Shelburne Falls Area Partnership, which basically promote cooperation and coordination of folks on both sides of the river.

Deerfield River Hiking Trail:

Chairman Schochet stated that FRCOG will subcontract the Franklin Land Trust (FLT) in the amount of \$4000 to undertake the feasibility and cost of constructing a hiking trail along the Deerfield River, downstream from the parking lot below Mole Hollow.

Ms. Patterson gave some history behind the river trail idea. Two years ago FLT and FRCOG considered development of a trail fund, tried for a grant, and failed. Last year they applied again, seeking funds to assess the feasibility of a trail extending from the potholes and ultimately to the Mahican-Mohawk Trail: FRCOG was awarded funding for a variety of recreation-related projects, including \$4000 for the trail feasibility to be done by FLT.

FLT is now in communication with Timber and Stone LLC, a company with much experience in the construction of hiking trails. A contract is anticipated, in which Timber and Stone LLC will assess issues of trail development, including feasibility, structures involved and the operations anticipated, including the roles of professional trail builders and volunteers. Based on the outcome of such a study, FRCOG and FLT will seek funding from the Mass. Department of Conservation and Recreation for partial funding of trail construction (DCR funding is capped at \$50k/yr).

The following steps were proposed for proceeding with the trail study:

1. Conference call with representatives of the Open Space Committee, FRCOG and FLT with Josh at Timber and Stone (T&S), tentatively scheduled for mid October. (Tentatively at 4 pm on October 15 or at 3 pm on October 17 at FLT).
2. T&S walks the proposed trail in late October after the leaves are down, to make their assessment.

3. Property owners that will be affected by the trail (i.e., the trail crosses their property lines) will be notified in advance of the T&S survey, and asked to allow the survey to take place on their property.
4. A discussion of trail easement funding for property owners ensued. DCR and FLT have some funding available for this.
5. Ms. Patterson will draft a letter to be sent to the land owners, and circulate among Open Space Committee members for editing before sending out.
6. She will also provide a map with the best estimate of trail location and an updated list of land ownership.
7. She will also check to see if T&S has appropriate insurance coverage should there be an accident during the survey and land owners not be held responsible.

Other business

Mr. Flaccus indicated that the commonwealth legislature approved the Mohawk Trail Woodland Partnership in this year's bond bill.

There was discussion regarding the need to fill many open positions on the Open Space Committee. At present only 4 of the 11 appointed positions are filled.

The Wooded Loop Trail in the Summit Road area was discussed briefly.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.