

Open Space Committee Meeting 9/27/21

Approved 10/25/21

Larry called the meeting to order at 7:01. Joel appointed secretary pro tem.

Member Present: Larry Flaccus, David Schochet, Joni Greenfield, Norm Beebe, Jim Perry, Garth LaPointe, Joel Dwight

Guests: Lara Radyish, Kimberly McPhee, Ellen Jenkins

Minutes from the August meeting were reviewed, a rewording of the description of Norm's contact with Adam Hines' office added. **Motion to accept August minutes as corrected** by Norm Beebe seconded by Jim Perry, **minutes accepted unanimously.**

Open Space and Recreation Plan update. Kimberly McPhee - Senior Land Use Planner with FRCOG joined us to share information. The State spells out requirements for updating in the Open Space Planner Workbook. The Workbook is currently being updated.

FRCOG has been working on OSR plans with other communities which include climate change and hazard mitigation sections. A plan costs about \$25,000. An important part of an update is a community survey, community outreach is the heart of the plan. Sections 3 and 4 of the Plan could be updated by us with a bit of help by FRCOG. David noted our last community outreach and input when we updated the current plan was quite effective.

FRCOG sets aside \$6-8,000 to begin an Open Space and Recreation Plan. The State has a small communities grant of up to 80% of the cost for a total up to \$25,000. A new grant round opens in 2022. Kimberly suggests we speak with a staff person from DCS about this grant. After the grant round begins they are not allowed to speak about it. There might also be a **planning assistance grant** that Kimberly could look into. FRCOG could help a lot with Section 5 which would include maps and tables to be redone.

Larry expressed the opinion that we have not changed that much in 7 years and it is burdensome for us to comply with the 7 year renewal requirement. Larry told Kimberly we would like to keep the process as simple as possible. Kimberly could speak with Melissa Cryan who approves these plans and see if a more streamlined approach could be accepted. Kimberly said Open Space and Recreation plans are dealt with in the order they come in and are reviewed by Melissa who is the person who reviews all the plans from across the state. **Norm made contact with Representative Hinds office.** They told him the Open Space and Recreation Plan requirement cannot be waived and the timeline is not negotiable. Joel reviewed his correspondence with Representative Natalie Blais. Jim questioned if it is State law that mandates a new plan every 7 years or an agency rule. Joel and Norm will follow up further with the State Representatives.

Joan spoke about invasive species education. She and Cynthia have been in contact with Ella Wootenden and there are 2 other teachers that are interested in forming a partnership with us and the Middle and High School concerning invasive species. Miss Wootenden is very enthusiastic and Joan thinks progress is going very well. Larry said the committee supports the work Joan and Cynthia have

been doing on this. David questioned if we could **send an invasives brochure to the townspeople**. Larry suggested we might be able to get it included in the envelope when the census goes out in January. We don't have a budget that supports a mailing to the roughly 850 households in Shelburne. Joan suggested the cover letter that would be included with a brochure should include a time for an interactive community activity that would bring people out walking the trails and identifying invasive species with a knowledgeable guide. **Joan and Cynthia will work on what might be done toward that end**. Larry reminded us we still have the Mohawk Trail grant and a portion of that might go towards these education efforts.

Riverside Trail Update - Larry wrote to Guntlow Associates and we are waiting to hear back from them concerning the survey and next steps to be taken. David spoke with Bob Spencer and Bob doesn't want to consider or sign anything concerning his abutting property at this time. David is going to send him some material and invite him to reach out when he is ready to consider it. Joel asked if the Bob Spencer land use might be a moot point once a survey is done. David said the status of Mill Road is unknown. Larry said Guntlow's work would better define where the trail would go regarding property lines.

Kimberly also suggested that a **state park agent** may also be available to help with the Shelburne Falls Riverside Walk. Lara remarked that not all residents are on board with the Riverside Walk. She feels it may also be affected by flooding caused by climate change

Wooded Loop Update - Jim was there 2 weeks ago checking on brochures and the grass was getting a bit tall. He doesn't know if it has been mowed yet but that it will need to be. Logging has been completed and the road seems to be smoothed out.

Community Preservation Act - Larry said a committee has been working on the CPA and he and David have been participating. The group is planning an outreach to the various committees to gather feedback. The CPA committee is working on education then it will be put on the town warrant and if passed at town meeting we would become a CPA community. If the town enrolls, the money can be rolled over and accumulate over years. As an example of benefits of CPA, the CPA funding could have been used to help pay for the Arms Library roof. **Larry asked if the committee would voice support for the town to join the CPA**. Norm Beebe made a motion to support moving forward with the CPA project, Joan Greenfield seconded. **Motion passed by unanimous vote**. Larry will craft a letter of support.

No Correspondence

Norm reported for the Recreation Committee. Cowell Gym is still closed, pickle ball is being played outside, tennis court painting may not happen until next Spring. The folks in attendance at the last Recreation Committee meeting were generally in favor of the CPA but there were not enough members in attendance to make a quorum and vote.

Next meeting Monday, October 25th by zoom.

Motion to adjourn made by Joan Greenfield. Seconded by Norm Beebe. Meeting adjourned at 8:40pm.

Respectfully submitted, Joel Dwight, Secretary Pro Tem