

WILBRAHAM OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN COMMITTEE

Mission Statement:

Preserve significant open space by investigating, educating, planning, and cooperating.

MINUTES: Tuesday, January 26, 2021

Attending: Joe Calabrese, Marianne Ingrid Moner, Steve Lawson, Brian Fitzgerald, Jay Taylor, Judi Theocles, Ed McCorkindale, Susan Burk, Bill Shepard, Edna Coleørø, Mike Pelletier, Tracey Plantier

Virtual Meeting Began: 7:00 pm | Minutes for Tuesday, December 8, 2020: Accepted

Motion: Judi | Second: Tracey | Vote: 11/11

Approval of Last Meeting's Minutes – Joe:

- The minutes were accepted with edits from Tracey Plantier about 186V Tinkham Rd.

Correspondence – Joe said that this would be addressed as the correspondences come up in the agenda items.

-Open Space and Recreation Plan – Sue and Joe

- **ADA forms:** ADA section – Joe thanked Sue for working hard on this! Thanks also to John Walsh, Brian Litz and Melissa Graves. The section is complete with updated ADA assessments of Brewer Pond, the Easy Trail, the Community Garden and the Middle School Soccer Fields. Sue pointed out that we are showing progress in ADA matters.
- **Status and Future:** Joe said that John Pearsall did the PDF of the entire document after Joe made the chapter text and graphic formats uniform in style.
- John will run off copies for the state, OSRPC and the Town. Judi will look into getting more copies run off. IT will put the document on our website, and we'll get publicity going so residents can access it (newspaper, Facebook, Instagram, webpage) and make comments. Also, in March or April, part of our agenda will be to explain it to the public.
- Then we will send the document link to the Conservation Commission, the Planning Committee, the Selectmen and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, meet with the Town committees, and get letters of review from all.
- Joe asked how we should handle the GoToMeeting presentations. Steve felt that the committees would have looked at the OSRP by then so we don't need an extensive review; he suggested that the goals section would be of most interest. Bill felt that only one person should present the information to prevent it from being too choppy. Joe thought it would be nice for everyone to be able to answer questions about specific sections. Steve suggested prioritizing who we meet with, perhaps Conservation first. Steve mentioned discussing solar farms with Planning. Tracey did mention solar farms in her section which has items specific to planning. Sue said solar is mentioned 9 times in the document. Joe said it's important that the purpose of the document/plan is understood at these meetings. Mike asked who should go to which meeting, and we decided to discuss that at the next meeting.

- We also need an article in the town paper encouraging residents to read the document. Steve asked if we're required to have a hearing - Joe said no but we should use both the survey and a hearing to contact the most people for the most input. Once we get feedback from all sources, we will edit the document a final time, John Pearsall will do the final PDF for us, and it will be sent to the state.
- Judi said the document and pictures are beautiful. Joe can't believe that, with so many people and sources contributing, that the language flows so well. Steve also loves the picture on the cover.

186V Tinkham Right of First Refusal Status - All:

- Joe praised Nick Breault for holding a meeting of committee and department heads to discuss this issue. He said that the OSRPC was the first group to meet on the topic so he was able to present our conclusions there. John Broderick said that the Selectmen were trying to get experts to check out whether or not a solar farm could even be put up. CPC pushed back the date for proposals in case a proposal is needed. Tracey looked into examples of where towns had bought land and sold lots, keeping the bulk of the land for OS purposes. Right now, lawyers have to figure out the rights of owners and the rights of Wilbraham, and whether or not the land can be purchased with CPC funds with a couple of private lots proposed on the land. Jay said that the Conservation Commission was opposed to the solar farms and felt that the Town should pay for an expert opinion. Joe said that the OSRPC may have a meeting in between meetings for a vote in the next few weeks if a CPC proposal comes up.

Twelve Mile Bridge – All:

- Jeff Smith and Andrew Ferrindino have equipment to get the old bridge out, and they are waiting for a decision on this. Jeff and Jay want to use parts of it for Alton's and Oakland.
- Nothing has been put in the paper yet about the bridge. Elise Linscott, the new editor at the paper will be contacted by Tracey. Steve also offered to be part of the discussion as did Joe.
- Jay said that feedback from people who have seen the bridge is split between it being a good improvement vs. having glaring metal rails. Jay mentioned possibly muting the metal. Several different ideas were brought up, but Sue said it's safe and that's what's important, and Judi agreed we should leave it alone. Bill said we should check the specs, but he felt it looked sturdy, which is what we wanted.

Trailwork Update – Jay:

- Jay said that there is not much to say - the trails are in good shape. A little bit of tree work is needed but it's very manageable.
- Up on Rice's the new trail looks well established. Some of the signs have been removed though. Jay would like to see additional signs about littering - masks, tissues, bottles have been tossed. Jay asked Tracey about the pink blazes, to see if more could be made. Tracey said the cold has slowed down finishing the markers as paint needs warmer weather to dry.

- Jay reminded the group that periodically we need to check our trails. Lots of winter hiking is going on. Tracey said there are people at Mt. Marcy every day. Jay has spoken to hikers about reporting clean up problems on town property. He feels that we should put a small article in the paper to alert the town. Bill suggested promoting the Hollow Rd parking lot to take pressure off of Highmoor. Tracey will follow up.
- Ed said that the Twelve Mile sign is broken. Joe wants to know what we have left of CPC money for more signs. Tracey explained that the money is for the street signs only per the grant application. Because Gleason and Hollow were not part of the list, they will have to wait. Joe mentioned that kiosk repair and additional kiosks were needed too, but if 186V Tinkham becomes a CPC item, we may have to wait until next round.

Back Burner – New Survey/Logos/Signs/Girl Scouts/Map/Kiosks – All:

- Logos - We sent Melissa sample logos - the abstract tree seems to be the favorite. Signs will be simple, dimensions - 2x3 feet. Tracey will verify.
- New survey – Joe said that we have to eventually evaluate our current survey and figure out where we want to go from here. Joe said that nothing will happen with Girl Scouts until after COVID. The other items were tabled.

New Business - All:

- Judi asked about the Gleason property. She feels we need to reference the fact that we bought it, and it should be mentioned in the OSRP. Joe believes it is in the document. Joe will check. We also want to stress that this area be primarily a nature preserve. Judi believes we discussed this, and it did not end up in the December minutes. Joe believes it was in the October minutes. He will check this too. Joe mentioned that he wants to put something up on our webpage about Gleason, but has postponed it for now due to questions about access points and parking. Steve thinks a small parking area near Inwood would work. Something would have to be built at Westwood. Joe will put information up on our webpage listing Inwood when he gets a chance.

Audience of Citizens:

- John Broderick had an inquiry from a Selectman about the Gleason property, and a possible Jones Street entrance, John suggested he speak with Melissa. 186V Tinkham – John said that the Selectmen are waiting for the lawyers to sort things out. The DPW is looking at the property, but no new information is out. The CPC deadline is February 19.

Next Meeting Date – February 23, 2021

Adjourn: 8:34 pm Motion: Judi Second: Tracey Vote: 11/11