



MANCHESTER-BY-THE-SEA

CONSERVATION COMMISSION • TOWN HALL
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Open Space and Recreation Committee

May 25, 2016

Town Hall, Room 7 ♦ 6:30 PM

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Mike Chapman, Helen Bethell, Francie Caudill, Steve Jaworski, Sara Levensohn

Others Present: Mary Reilly, Grants Administrator and Mike McDonagh

Mike Chapman, Chair, opened the meeting.

Sara Levensohn announced that she would be moving out of state so would no longer be able to sit on this committee. Sara reported that the Parks and Recreation Committee would be appointing a new representative to the OSRC in the near future.

Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes of 1/27/16 and 4/6/16 were approved by the committee:

- Motion to approve the minutes of 1/27/16 by Francie Caudill
- Seconded by Helen Bethell
- All voted in favor

- Motion to approve the minutes of 4/6/16 by Helen Bethell
- Seconded by Francie Caudill
- All voted in favor

Dexter Pond Status

Mike McDonagh, who is on the Board of Trustees of MECT and who led the planning effort for the Dexter Pond improvements, was in attendance. Mike handed out an update of the status – basically saying that “Phase 1” had been completed which included some tree work and brush clearing on the trails. Mike said that there were 16 volunteers who helped complete this work. Mike McDonagh reported that he wrote an article and sent it to the Cricket but that it hadn’t yet been published. Mike McDonagh will try re-sending it.

Phase 2 has not been started. Mike McDonagh described the work (also included in his hand-out) which includes repairing or replacing a footbridge over a section of the pond. It has to be decided whether to repair it or replace it. Helen noted that it would require ConCom approval. Mike McDonagh said that he was aware of the permitting requirements. Mike McDonagh suggested that we decide whether or not we’d like to proceed with the work and then decide how the work would get done.

Mike Chapman asked if the work should be done in the order of the steps listed in the work description. Mike McDonagh responded that they didn’t necessarily have to be in order. Could be that different people would be completing the work—for example portions could be done by DPW if they were able and willing.

Mary noted that some of it could be paid for by money in the Conservation Fund, with permission from the Conservation Commission. Mike McDonagh said that there are a number of options for getting the work

done, mostly involving volunteers. Mike McDonagh could do some of it but he'd have to charge for his work.

Mike McDonagh mentioned that some dangerous pines that should be taken down—would best be done by a professional. He also suggested that trail clearing/maintenance take place on an annual basis. Helen noted that for any work that we need to be aware of wildflowers in the area – so as not to inadvertently damage them.

Mike McDonagh also suggested enlisting Steve Winslow's help. (He is the head of "Mass in Motion" in Gloucester.) This organization is interested in promoting healthy lifestyles by getting people outdoors.

Sara noted that Fred Rossi (Eagle Scouts) might be of help with these projects. Mike McDonagh suggested that we send the project descriptions to him for potential projects that the Eagle Scouts could do. Probably any of this should be led by the town since it owns the property.

Regarding item #3 of Goal 4, Francie said that our goal was to hold one event in Year One to fulfil this commitment. Francie suggested that when the Manchester Stream Team holds its annual purple loosestrife removal effort around Dexter Pond (scheduled for Sat, July 30) that the OSRC join the effort and perhaps hold a walk at the Pond.

Francie said she could go ahead and work on it – and get others involved. Francie also said that there would be another article announcing the event that would go in the Cricket.

The committee thanked Mike McDonagh for his efforts.

Mike Chapman said that, as a committee, we should review the 2nd part of the Dexter Pond plan and recommend those things that we want to work on. Helen brought up the permitting requirements and asked who would do this.

Steve Jaworski said that we should probably do the whole project under one permit. Mary thought that an RDA might be appropriate as this is what was required in the past for another footbridge. Steve or Mary will speak with Chris as to what she thinks would be required in regard to permitting by the Conservation Commission.

Action Plans and Goals:

Helen said that she wanted to continue the discussion on watershed parcels. She noted that there was an effort underway by the town to identify ownership, etc. for parcels in the northwest area of Manchester (and in the Gravelly, Round Pond watershed). Helen started to put together a list of these parcels using the old parcel data.

Helen said that her research shows that, of the five parcels that she's identified, only three have good documentation. One has incorrect book and page information. Another 2.6 acre parcel which is listed as town-owned has no book or page reference. These five parcels could potentially (if shown to be owned by the town) could be voted on at town meeting to put under the Conservation.

Helen said that the Master Planning Committee may have goals of generating tax revenues from developing parcels in this area for industry or even for housing in order to lower the tax rate. It's her opinion that our committee has to decide as to whether the effort to get these parcels under conservation is worth it. Given that it's watershed land, all seemed to agree that it would be worth the effort.

Mary offered some good news in that Peter Gourdeau is interested in discussing the status of his land in the watershed (map 63, parcel 36). She said that she has an appointment to discuss the status but didn't know exactly what he was interested in doing with it. Helen said that if he wants to sell it that we could get money from the state.

Mike Chapman asked if the committee had any other discussion about bringing this in front of the town. Helen said she will keep working on this.

Other Business

Mike Chapman asked if there was any other business. Committee members brought up the subject of membership and the fact that we still need someone from the Planning Board and that Sara's spot will need to be filled.

Mary suggested that we also look at the slot designated for the Bicycle and Pedestrian committee and vote as to whether this should be designated for MECT or something else. We now have two at-large slots. Helen suggested adding another at-large slot which will help get others involved (not limiting it to other town committees whose members are often over-committed).

Helen made a motion to change the Bi-Ped committee designation to an at-large slot. Steve Jaworski seconded the motion.

All voted in favor.

Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, June 22.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Referenced Documents:

- Dexter Pond Trail and Work Project 2016 update 5-24-2016
- Bethell OSRP Watershed Report