

Board/Committee: Open Space and Recreation Committee

Day & Date: Wednesday, April 6, 2022

Time: 6:30 pm

Location: Virtual via Zoom

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Olga Hayes, Steve Gang, Helen Bethell, Sheila Linehan, Curtis Rising

Members Absent:

Staff Present: Sue Brown, Town Planner

Steve opened the meeting at 6:30 PM and introduced Patti Mitchell of the Stream Team who is considering serving on the OSRC.

I. Approval of February 28 Minutes

Olga moved, Sheila seconded to approve February 28, 2022 minutes as amended: Vote 5-0 to approve.

II. Update on Western Woods Preservation Initiative

Sue reported that there has been no movement on the Forest Stewardship Management Plan due to inactivity by the Consultant. Given the Consultant is in breach of the contract for not completing the work by the due date and not corresponding in a timely manner to address the issue, Sue will be cancelling the contract and finding another Certified Forester to contract with for the work.

Sue also reported that she is looking into the feasibility of the Town purchasing a 7 acre parcel abutting the Western Woods. It includes a pond, a vernal pool and a deeded right of way to another Town owned parcel in the Western Woods. It is currently for sale for \$599,000. The Town is looking to appraise the property since the Town cannot purchase land above its assessed price.

III. Update on OSRP

a. Approval of Vision Statement

Following a brief discussion of the goals, Committee members agreed on a few minor changes and approved of the revised Statement unanimously. (see statement below)

Sue noted that the letter of support from the PB has been approved and the BOS will vote on their letter of support on April 19th. With the approved Vision Statement and the letters of support, MAPC will forward the Plan for final approval.

b. Priority Projects

Olga suggested and the committee agreed to look at the new Plan's recommended actions that the Committee is responsible for and determine which to begin work on, since they are nearing completion of their existing projects.

Sue will send a list of the projects to the Committee for discussion and consideration at its next meeting.

IV. Brochure Update

The brochure is complete and ready for printing. Following a discussion regarding the

number of copies, how to distribute and funds available, the Committee agreed to print 3,000 copies of the town-wide trail map and 1000 copies of the Powder House Hill trail map. Distribution ideas include: with Annual Report; at Town Hall, Library and the Historical Museum; by the Boy Scouts property trail; in hiking kits that the Library is planning.

V. Update on Pine Street/Newport Park parking

Olga reported that she is not aware of any further progress on negotiating access with Manchester Housing Authority. She will continue to press for resolution.

VI. Update on Water Resource Protection Task Force

Steve reported that the tour of the Lincoln Street Well and the Water Treatment Facility was very informative and the facility very impressive.

A walk around Gravelly and Round Pond will be planned.

Next step is assessing the 1990 Water Protection Plan to identify what recommendations have and have not been implemented and determine what still should be done. Sue Croft, Scott Horsley, Ann Harrison and Steve are working on this.

The Committee discussed Chebacco Road and the possibility that it could be paved. Helen requested the Town advocate for not paving it, noting that in her opinion it would increase traffic which would be a detriment to Gravelly Pond. Steve noted that to pave it where it currently exists would require any number of state and federal permits given its proximity to the municipalities water supply.

VII. Other business, as may not have been reasonably anticipated

The Committee discussed briefly the Pine Street field project, noting that it was for a small multi-purpose field and associated parking. Curtis noted that the Town lacks a track facility and hopes it will continue to try to find a location for one. The LCD was suggested as a possible location if it would be compatible with other development there.

The Committee also discussed improving the signage at Powder House Hill and seeking CPC funding.

The Committee thanked Patti for attending and expressed their support for her joining.

VIII. Schedule next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for May 16th at 5:00 PM

The meeting was adjourned at 7:28 PM.

Meeting Minutes approved at 5/16/2022 OSRC meeting.

Open Space and Recreation Plan Vision Statement

The residents of Manchester have expressed a deep desire for their community to actively engage in environmental stewardship and to provide a wide array of recreational opportunities that meet the needs and interests of residents of all life stages and abilities. Manchester is envisioned as a beautiful seaside community blessed with a variety of landscapes and ecosystems that are preserved for their intrinsic ecological values and for social and recreational pursuits. Our harbor and beaches, woodlands and wetlands, along with our parks and open spaces are integral to

the health and vitality of our community and our strong sense of place.

The Town's overarching goals that were gleaned from the residents and other stakeholders throughout the planning process include:

- *Better understanding, protecting and managing the town's natural resources, for the purposes of clean drinking water, wildlife habitat, passive recreation and resiliency.*
- *Providing for active recreational opportunities for residents of all ages and ability levels, including additional playing fields and more access to water-related activities.*
- *Creating a more accessible, pedestrian and bicycle friendly community.*