

Board/Committee: Open Space and Recreation Committee

Day & Date: Monday, May 16, 2022

Time: 5:00 pm

Location: Virtual via Zoom

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Olga Hayes, Steve Gang, Helen Bethell, David Saunders

Members Absent: Sheila Linehan, Curtis Rising

Staff Present: Sue Brown, Town Planner

Steve opened the meeting at 5:14 PM noting the attendance of Patti Mitchell who is waiting to be sworn in by the Select Board and welcoming David Saunders as the new representative of the Bike and Pedestrian Committee.

I. Approval of April 6, 2022, Minutes

The minutes of April 6, 2022 were approved as amended with 3-0 vote, as Mr. Saunders was not in attendance and Ms. Linehan was absent.

II. Update on Western Woods Preservation Initiative

Sue reported that she cancelled the contract with Mr. Roberts for non-performance and secured the services of Woodsman Inc. Matthew Smith of Woodsman Inc. produced the Baseline Report for the Christian Hill property. Sue met with Matthew and his father Joe last week and agreed on an approach to the project.

It was discovered that the Town can only pay the consultant based on the land it currently owns and not the entire 500 acres that has a mix of ownership – primarily the Town and MECT. MECT has agreed to also contract with Woodsman Inc for the parcels they own to assure the report and recommendations for the Western Woods are comprehensive.

III. Update on OSRP

Sue reported that the revised Open Space and Recreation Plan was submitted to the State along with letters of support from the Planning Board and the Select Board. It will likely take several months to receive final approval and the Town is eligible to request funds for projects with conditional approval.

IV. Priority Projects

The Committee agreed to wait until the next meeting to discuss to allow David an opportunity to review the OSRP recommendations and consider priorities.

V. Brochure Update

The brochure is complete, has been printed and paid for. The Committee will continue to distribute at various venues including the June Town Meeting and at walks.

VI. Update on Pine Street/Newport Park parking

Olga reported that there is no further progress on negotiating access with Manchester Housing Authority and reported that she received a written notice from a tenant when she parked on the site recently. She will continue to press for resolution.

VII. Update on Water Resource Protection Task Force

Steve reported that the WRPTF is moving along well and making considerable progress with its work. He noted that the various teams provide updates at the meetings. Recent updates were presented on Water Usage and Demand and also on Quality & Contaminants. WRTF meeting minutes provide a great summary.

As the Task Force moves ahead, they are looking for opportunities for Protection. High on the list to date includes 1) acquisition and conservation restrictions and 2) regional cooperation to implement protection strategies.

Helen offered that encouraging development in the LCD may conflict with protecting water resources.

Steve reported that Town Meeting approved an \$80,000 Budget for the Task Force that in large part will pay for a study by Scott Horsley.

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

Olga reported that more markers were needed on Powder House Hill. She will get them from Steve and install where needed

MECT is hosting a hike on Powder House Hill on May, 22nd.

IX. Schedule next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for June 20th at 5:00 PM

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 PM.

Meeting Minutes approved at June 27, 2022 OSRC meeting.