

Minutes

Open Space Committee

Wednesday, June 10, 2020 10:00 AM

Remote Meeting via Zoom

In attendance:

Jeffrey Brochu, Amanda Gallerani, Russell Holden, Bob Contursi, Conservation Agent Holly Jones, CMRPC staff Dani Marini

Absent: Ryan Smith

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Open Space Committee was conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public was permitted, but every effort was made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order.

New Business

1. Update on MVP grant extensions

Ms. Jones reported that because of the COVID-19 State of Emergency, the due date for Open Space Plan deliverables had been moved forward three months to be completed by the end of August

2. Discussion and review of Open Space Survey

Mr. Holden suggested that the survey may be too long. Ms. Gallerani agreed that it may be too long but wasn't sure which questions might be more valued. The idea of a short form and a long form was agreed upon. It was agreed to include resiliency and low impact development goals in the survey as well.

3. Survey Outreach strategies

Ms. Marini discussed some ideas including a list serve and email blasts, the CMRPC put it on their page, putting forms, leaflets, and fliers in businesses. Ms. Marini and Mr. Holden both suggested the QR code. Ms. Jones mentioned potentially ordering lawn signs with the remains of the FY2020 Conservation Office budget along with an order of COVID related safety signs for Pout Pond. Mr. Holden mentioned a high school instagram group, and that 8th graders across the state are doing civics and could do the survey for civics although that won't start until September. Distributing it to recreational summer camps was also discussed. A resident suggested sending out a town email. Mr. Contursi suggested putting signs on both ends of the bike path on the kiosk. Mr. Holden suggested including a zip code in the survey.

4. General discussion of Open Space Plan

A resident from 180 Kristin Lane, a private lane that abuts the quarry, spoke. In order for people to reach the quarry they have to cross privately owned land of an abutter. There needs to be a plan to access it if it's going to be open space. There are no plans per say. Mr. Holden noted that there had been discussion that week about it. The resident noted that there was no parking. She owns 10 acres. The biggest town owned parcel is 16 acres but there are several other abutting town owned parcels as well.

Kristin Lane was never developed by the town. The builder went bankrupt. The across the street neighbors own 75% of the road and the resident speaking owned 25% of the road. She was also concerned about liability, and about people on her property getting hurt.

Another neighbor near the quarries, Sean Mathews spoke. People park on the street and walk through, leaving trash. Reiterated the lack of public access and that abutters want to make sure the area is safe if people enter.

Mr. Holden noted that we need some way of taking care of the handicap access portion of the Open Space Plan.

Mr. Mathews asked what the Open Space Plan is and Mr. Holden summarized that the plan prioritizes what Open Space is valued by the town. A member of the public asked if all Open Spaces needed to be handicapped accessible; Mr Holden and Ms Jones clarified that not all Open Spaces needed to be handicapped accessible however some Open Spaces should be accessible so that everybody has access to at least some Open Spaces in town.

Ms. Jones noted that the town was working with CMRCP to do a town-wide accessibility survey and they included the Town Common, Pout Pond, the ballfields near Pout Pond, Legg Farm, Taft Memorial Park, and the Adams St Parking Lot. Ms. Marini noted that the focus was just lands owned and managed by Conservation Commission and Board of Selectmen. She offered to send the forms that are needed for the evaluation.

Ms. Marini brought up a public forum to work out potential action ideas for even more feedback.

Mr. Holden suggested an on-line and physical workshop.

Then suggested three sessions. One was an "intro to open space planning" that could be pre-recorded. Then a second session where people join working groups as they see fit which could be on-going, followed by a plenary group of the small groups putting everything together.

Ms. Marini also mentioned that Uxbridge was planning on doing a climate resiliency regional workshop and incorporating that into the OSRP. There could be a discussion based solely on climate resiliency that could go into the plan as well.

Mr. Contursi asked if the workshop would be pre-recorded so that people could listen at their own pace. Ms. Marini summarized a three-part public forum that would be live but the recording could be on the website. Mr. Holden clarified that there could be documents or touchstones that people could review ahead of time. The first session could be pre-recorded.

5. Open Space Committee recommendation on Town Meeting Article 21 to sell a parcel of land that is currently owned by the Town of Uxbridge.

Ms. Jones explained what Town Meeting was planned to look like. Mr. Contursi explained the article. Mr. Holden noted that the town owned the land below the the parcel in question. Mr. Contursi noted that the current owner was willing to grant an easement for the bike path as well as on the two parcels north of the parcel in question that he already owns. Ms. Jones clarified that part of the proposal that was submitted included easements for the bike path on the two parcels further up.

Mr. Holden noted that the parcel behind the railroad track Mr. Sahagian had mentioned that he would be potentially willing to give a section of the property to the town and he noted the sewer easement on the property.

Mr. Contursi said the big plan was to ask for easements on top of the sewer easements to bring the bike path up the sewer easements.

Mr. Brochu moved to recommend affirmative action on town meeting article 21, Ms. Gallerani seconded it. A roll call vote ensued, Ms. Gallerani, aye, Mr. Holden, aye, Mr. Brochu, aye. Mr. Contursi was no longer on the call. The motion passed 3-0-0.

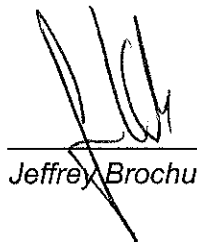
The next meeting was scheduled for the 24th of June at 10am.

Ms. Gallerani moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Brochu seconded, and the motion passed 3-0-0.

Signed:

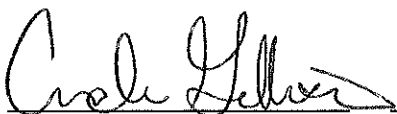


Russell Holden



Jeffrey Brochu

absent
Ryan Smith



Amanda Gallerani

Bob Contursi