

Approved 5/11/23

Minutes of Open Space Committee

April 13, 2023

Members Present: Paul Cohen, Brian Cook, Rich Maiore, Peter Dorward, Jim Lee

Jim to take minutes of current meeting.

Old Business:

Approve minutes from Dec 8, 2022 meeting. Motion to approve Jim, 2nd: Paul. All members vote to approve.

Approve minutes from Feb 9, 2023 meeting. Motion to approve Jim, 2nd: Paul, All members vote to approve.

Next meeting to be May 11, 2023, 8 am.

Old Business:

On the subject of **renominations and approvals**.

Peter reminded everyone who wants to be on OSC and needs approval from their affiliated boards that they should get approved and notify Julie at Town Hall by May.

Brian: stated that he will have to step back from his participation on OSC.

Jim: will continue on OSC as HCT rep unless someone from HCT wants to take his place

Dan: Not present, so no info as of now

Rich: will likely be SB rep and will get appointed in June

Letter to potential rec site owners: Peter suggested that OSC not continue the process of sending out letters of notification to Rec site owners. Dan had suggested that the town should just start the process of Request for Proposals (RFP).

Letter to potential Open Space owners: All agreed that letters to potential Open Space site owners likewise be halted.

MVP Grant update: Peter gave an overview of the application to Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) program for funding for Littleton County Road (LCR) property.

General process will be that HCT will purchase the property in its entirety, and then sell the Conservation Restriction (CR) to the town, which will ensure preservation in perpetuity. A funding request to Community Preservation Committee (CPC) has been approved by CPC and they are recommending to Annual Town Meeting(ATM).

Original process of including Boxborough parcel adjacent to this parcel has been shelved.

A local non-profit, Gaining Ground, from Concord is interested in being a partner in the project.

They will likely have a lease agreement with HCT to farm the agricultural part of the parcel.

Having GG involved makes the MVP grant much stronger as there are considerations for area wide priority populations and food programs.

Letters of support have been received from HCT, Loaves and Fishes, GG, ConCom and will be included in grant.

Delinquent Tax Parcels: Peter reviewed the parcels that are presently on tax delinquency list and the committee agreed to keep our request to SB to pursue these parcels, Westchester, Hemphill Drilling, Ericson, O'Donnell.

Paul makes motion to have SB move forward on this list. Jim 2nd.
All in favor.

No owner parcels: Peter updated the OSC with a list of parcels in town that are listed as “no owner” by the town. Peter talked with assessors at Town Hall and was told that if we come up with some background info such as previous owners, then assessors will attempt to add them to the tax rolls, and if they don't pay taxes those parcels will also go onto the delinquent tax parcels. Peter will pursue info on these parcels

New business:

OSC's charter and composition: Peter introduces discussion about OSC composition and processes to make it effective

Jim suggests that the total number of voting members be pared back to 5, to make a more efficient committee. Those members would represent: ConCom, HCT, Recreation, citizen at large, and SB/planning board member.

Rich suggests that OSC reviews its priorities and find out how to best serve those interests.

Brian suggests that there is substantial effort to make the OSC “even handed” in the area of Recreation and Open Space preservation.

Perhaps the present members go back to their prospective boards and get a better idea of how those boards expect the OSC to function. There seemed to be some disconnect from the Recreation groups in the OSC process.

Liz suggested that instead of citizen at-large, a rep from Agriculture be included.

Peter will get on agenda for SB and P&R to review potential Charter amendments.

Jim reminded the group of the upcoming ATM and to have representation at the meeting.

Peter and Jim will attend as will Don Richie from ConCom

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:35am.

Submitted by Jim Lee

