

Town of Harvard Open Space Committee
February 11, 2021
8:30 am
Minutes

DRAFT

Members Present: Peter Dorward (Chair), Jim Lee, Paul Cohen, Linda Dwight, Gwen Leonard, Dan Daly, Tim Kilhart, Chris Ryan and Rich Maiore

Old Business

Approval of Minutes

By unanimous vote, Committee approved minutes from OSC 12/10 and 1/21 meetings. Linda Dwight abstained due to absence from those meetings.

Tax Delinquent Parcels

Revisited the list of parcels. Determined that of the parcels, 5 properties adjacent to conservation and ecological sensitive areas. None of the parcels is suitable for active recreation.

The Committee discussed the Codman Hill Road property on the list tax delinquent list. Peter shared it's in an ecological sensitive area. The new information that land near the Codman Hill land may become protected in the near future. With this new information, Peter asked if the property should be added to the list to share with the Select Board. Linda asked if the site had any recreational value. It was shared that it is sloped and not suitable for recreation.

The Committee discussed the negatives of adding this property and others to the list of properties the town should reclaim. There were few downsides except the potential revenue loss for the town. However, Paul Cohen pointed out the town is unlikely to reclaim the past taxes for the properties. There was full agreement from the Committee to move head in sharing the list of six properties with the Select Board and the recommendation that the Town move ahead with claiming the lands.

New Business

Peter shared that OSC had been asked by CPC to provide a point of view on the town land near the pond. Peter responded indicating the OSC had not yet discussed the parcel's suitability for active recreation, but offered to have the OSC review the parcel. CPC however met the previous night, and voted against providing funding for feasibility studies for turning the two parcels into athletic fields.

Peter then shared updated maps with new information from the assessments. The maps will be posted on OSC website. The Committee discussed changing the name of one of the maps to read Potential Open Space for Athletic Fields. Tim Kilhart also raised the criteria re: wellheads He thought it should be Zone1: keep out, Zone 2-IPA consideration. The committee also agreed that Zone 1 areas will be excluded from potential land for active recreation.

2021 Goals

Peter led discussion on OSC goals for the coming year. Paul Cohen expressed he felt the committee is making progress on its charge of proactively identifying parcels of land for potential use for the town. Jim Lee agreed that the scoring mechanism is important tool. Other members shared their thoughts that identifying funding sources as a critical goal for the OSC.

After further discussion the Committee agreed the goals would be:

OSC Goals for 2021

- Using the OS prioritization model, create a plan recommending land for acquisition for open space and recreational use based on current and anticipated future demand.
- Finalize the capital improvement plan for the protection and development of open space and recreation.
- Work with Town boards to identify private/non-profit, State and Federal funding sources.
- Act as Town liaison with individuals and land protection advocacy groups working to protect open space or develop recreational facilities with the authority to apply for, negotiate, and with appropriate approvals direct Town funding for OS acquisition.

The committee voted unanimously to adopt the 2021 goals.

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 am.

Submitted by:
Rich Maiore