

**Town of Harvard
Open Space Committee**

Minutes for May 13 2021 meeting

Attendees:

Peter Dorward
Paul Cohen
Jim Lee
Gwen Leonard
Dan Daly
Rich Maiore
Liz Allard

Old Business

Meeting called to order: 8:34 am

Unanimously approved minutes from March 10, 2021 meeting

Scheduled June meeting for Thursday June 10, 8:30 AM.

Peter shared the background on the Conflict-of-Interest issue and the Select Board's position. Should it arise, Peter will not participate in discussions on land that abuts his property. OSC discussed that should be the same for any member whose land may abut property under exploration by OSC.

New Business

Paul Cohen provided update on his meeting with Disability Commission. Paul explained the Commission would like for accessibility to be accounted for when evaluating land. The OSC agreed that was a smart idea.

Jim Lee shared overview of Forested Legacy Program. It's meant to support acquisition of forested land not currently in preservation restriction. To qualify the parcel must be 75% forested and more than 20 acres.

At a next step the town could identify 3 parcels interested in preserving. It would non-committal at this stage. State would be 75% of appraisal fee, town would need to fund 25%. The three sites are approx. 60 acres total. The goal of the program is 1,000 acres total or about 2 projects per town.

Peter discussed the prioritization of top 25 parcels identified by OSC. Put an arbitrary break at 25. He thinks the list could be whittled down to 10 with priority on anything about to come on to the market and/or abuts town land.

Paul shared his view the list gives the town/OSC the ability to “check-in” and conduct outreach to landowners that may be on the market in the next few years. OSC could determine acquisition costs and subsequent funding plan.

The Committee discussed next steps, which would be to conduct outreach. To start outreach we’ll need to determine which OSC members will reach out to particular parcels.

The final topic was Active Recreation update. Still in process of getting information from stakeholders on needs, timing. This information is primarily from the schools. The goal is to determine demonstrated need for land. Paul shared that we’ve come as far as we can go. Need data and information especially from the school.

Unanimous approval to adjourn. 9:34 am.

Submitted by Rich Maiore