

TOWN OF ACTON
Open Space Committee
Minutes

Date: Friday, November 3, 2017

Time: 7:30 AM

Place: Acton Town Hall - Room 9

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Andy Magee, Matt Mostoller, Dick Hatfield,
Barbara Epstein, Emilie Ying

VISITORS: Dave Marshall, Will Hill, Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Bettina Abe, Jim Willis, Tom
Tidman, Katie Green

RECORDING SECRETARY: Fran Portante

MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

Issue #1: Approval of Minutes

Prior vote of approval for the Minutes of August 11, 2017 had to be rescinded since they had not been reviewed. They were then re-voted.

Decision: Dick moved to rescind approval for the Minutes of August 1, 2017, Barbara seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Vote of minutes of August 11, 2017, September 15, 2017, and October 6, 2017.

Decision: Dick moved to approve the Minutes so presented, Barbara seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Vote of Executive Session minutes of May 12, 2017, July 14, 2017 and September 7, 2017.

Decision: Dick moved to approve the Executive Session Minutes so presented, Barbara seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Issue #2: Newtown Road – Review and CPA Application

Purchase and Sale agreement has been signed for a purchase price of \$800K. The effort now underway is fundraising for the \$30K funding gap. Acton Conservation Trust, through Susan Mitchell-Hardt, has agreed to lead the fund raising campaign. She passed out flyers she created to hand out to possible donors. She will forward a copy of the flyer to the Committee after the meeting. There is a match for the first

\$15K.

Andy will be appearing before the Financial Committee on November 14. Talking points: this parcel has been discussed and approved many times over the years, so a swift approval was appropriate. This is also a prime open space resource and has been recorded as such in the Open Space and Recreation Plan for 2014-2021. The time driver is owners' desire to sell and the Town Meeting deadline in December. It could be argued that there is tax revenue loss, but this loss is offset by the lack of the additional cost to the schools. There has been unanimous support from the BoS, CPC, and Conservation Commission, who see the value of open space. Andy is confident the town will support the purchase.

Susan pointed out that funds for CR stewardship have not been considered, unlike past applications. She suggested that this cost be included as a standard in the future.

Discussion arose re: CPA set-aside fund. Can CR/stewardship expenses be paid from the fund? Should the fund be redefined? Andy will speak with Peter Ashton.

Issue #3: 2018 CPA Application

Decision: Dick moved that \$450K be requested from CPA for 2018, of which \$400K will be used for land purchase and \$50K will be used to fund appraisals. Emily seconded the motion and it was voted unanimously. Andy will submit the application.

Issue #4: Brief Review as necessary of the following:

- 53 River Street: Katie reported that a committee has been formed. They are working through some questions from abutters. The dam will be breached but it requires engineering services to execute. Tom reported that a proposal has been received from Tighe and Bond, and that they are familiar with such projects. This may be a project that is eligible for grant money.
- Quarry Road: per Tom, no new information to report.
- Piper Lane: no new information.
- Stonefield Farm: Andy reported that Ashley Davies of SVT has returned from maternity leave. There has been no communication from the owners.
- Liberty Tree Farm: A 20 acre horse farm adjacent to Stonefield farm is now on the market.

Issue #5: Grant Opportunities:

The OSC has never applied for any grants. Walter Foster has passed

information to the Committee regarding grant opportunities, and is looking for suggestions and input from members.

Andy suggested these should be explored. There is a lot of work involved with grant applications. The application for Stonefield, which Ashley Davies had submitted, didn't get approved.

New business: Tom has been approached by some folks regarding Community Supported Agriculture farming. This is a new interest, and some of the surrounding towns have CSA's, most notably Concord. Several parcels in Acton offer potential to be rented, and New Entry is one of the entities showing interest. This needs to be explored going forward.

Next Meeting – December 1, 2017, 7:30 AM (Acton Town Hall – Room 9)

Membership: Dave Marshall was asked to apply as an associate in which case he will have voting privileges in cases where there is a lack of quorum.

Will Hill has been approved for membership and is being sworn in directly after the meeting.

Barbara is moving late winter. The Committee needs a new member.

Meeting adjourned: 8:30 AM