

TOWN OF ACTON
Open Space Committee
Friday, August 11, 2017
7:30 AM
Acton Town Hall - Room 9

Committee Members Present: Andy Magee, Terry Maitland, Matt Mostoller, Christian Boisvert (Intern), Dick Hatfield, Barbara Epstein, Emily Ying, Katie Green (BoS Liaison) Tom Tidman (staff)

RECORDING SECRETARY: Fran Portante

VISITORS: Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Joe Will, Jim Willis

MEETING AGENDA ITEMS:

Andy reminded attendees of original charter of the committee to serve as an advisory board to the town in the area of open space preservation.

Membership: The new charter has been approved by the BoS. Andy will distribute to the members. Will Hill and Dave Marshall need to apply for membership, Will as a full member and Dave as an associate.

Issue #1: Minutes July 14, 2017

Terry moved to accept the minutes. Dick seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Outstanding Executive Session Minutes: Fran will send each member a copy of the minutes to review, and they will respond directly to her. Once reviewed, they can be voted at the next meeting.

Issue #2: Update - 19 Spring Hill Road

Emily reported that the Planning Board denied the application to extend the single access road beyond 500 feet, determining this was “not in line with public interest.” There were a number of citizens present at the meeting lending support for this decision. It is not known at this time if the applicant will appeal the decision.

Issue #3: Brief Review as necessary:

53 River Street: Katie reported that the Committee is still being formed.

Quarry Road: Tony Norton is in contact with Stamsky & McNary to have

a survey done.

Newtown Road (Hrynewich property). Tom and Terry met with the Real Estate agent. This property is a connector between the Anderson parcel and Grassy Pond. The price has been dropped and so talks have been resumed. The Agent didn't seem to understand anything about the structure of the CPA or the WPA Regs. The price has been reduced to \$475K and \$400. Avery is doing a follow up appraisal to see if \$325 has gone up. The Agent has been informed that town was interested in property. If both pieces are purchased, an easement would be required. Owners are open to an easement. Tom also had a meeting at Town Hall with Brian McMullen, Acton Assessor. He noted that there is an increase in value to a property when it is surrounded by Conservation Land. Abutting neighbors are not interested in getting involved financially. Susan shared maps with the committee. Andy demonstrated using his map why this is such a valuable property. This is a connector to Anderson/Nagog Hill and Grassy Pond.

Andy asked Susan if she has anything to add. Terry Tom, Susan and Andy had met to come up with way to get more funds. Susan proposed a public walk of the Grassy Pond area to generate public interest, perhaps in the fall? Susan asked how would the impact on the vegetation and wildlife be characterized? The interconnection is very important, and this property offers unique wildlife habitat. Grant opportunities are not an option right now.

Piper Lane: (Magoon-Hadley) The "for sale" sign is down. The prior agent is apparently no longer working with them. Andy noted surveyors seemed to be doing some work but wasn't sure. Town had considered a 40B on the 90 School Street lot to get access. Questions were: can they get a waiver for the lack of frontage, would the hold up such a proposal if it were denied? It seemed likely would be denied. Andy found old 1848 map that refers to a 10 foot easement along the old "lane." No further news was reported.

Stonefield Farm: An \$85K grant has been applied for through SVT. A draft CR has been circulated to New Entry and is now being examined by owners. It allows for the doubling of building. It tries to allow for all farm activity that would occur. (Ashley Davies of SVT had her baby and will be out until late October). Paul Simeone responded that there were too many restrictions. He would be more interested in an Agricultural restriction. CPA could not apply funds in such a case. Andy is meeting with Paul and the SVT stand-in for Ashley today. They are having a site walk at 10:30 with the grant agency. They will then sit down with Paul and discuss the CR again. Agricultural grant doesn't require an Agricultural commission. If Paul agrees, then Andy will approach CPA and BoS to get support and then prepare for Town Meeting.

Advice to New Entry was to continue looking for central location.

General Discussion: Joe Will asked if this committee has any involvement with Morrison Farm. How would the back portion become CR land? Currently it's municipal property. There was a verbal agreement at Town Meeting to use the back end as conservation land. The front fields were supposed to be used for ball fields. Susan commented that at the time the town had a different town manager. The town would need a Town Manager who is supportive of Open Space. Katie commented that no one was talking about that back property, that all the discussion was centered around the house. Tom commented that he had gotten one selectman to support Community Gardens, Andy Magee. There is a long process to get a CR placed on a property. They would have to go through the Morrison Farm Committee which is a long process,

Conclusion: no action at this time.

Next Meeting – September 8, 2017, 7:30 AM (Acton Town Hall – Room 9)

Meeting adjourned at 8: 25.

Reviewed by TM, AM, DH