

Town of Acton
Open Space Committee
Minutes
July 8, 2016
Acton Town Hall - Room 9
7:30 am

Committee Members: Andrew Magee, Dick Hatfield, Jeff Clymer, Barbara Epstein, Terry Maitland, Franny Osman

Town Staff: Tom Tidman

Guests: Barbara Morse, Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Joe Will, Frank Reis, Barbara Epstein, Jim Willis, Michaela Moran

Andy and Terry are unable to make an August 5th meeting date, so the next meeting will be moved to the following week, August 12th.

1. Minutes of April 8, 2016 and May 6, 2016:

Motion: Terry moved to accept the minutes, Jeff seconded and the vote was unanimous.

2. Discussion of Committee Charter Changes – Membership

Andy suggested that they add two associate members to the committee who would have voting rights if a meeting lacked quorum. Because of the number of properties being tracked and discussed each month, the Committee needs more people. The Chairman would assign which associate would vote is needed at a given meeting. This also serves to provide on-going engagement for the associate members.

Motion: Franny moved to add two associate members to the committee, Jeff seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

3. Election of Chair and Vice Chair: deferred

4. 176 Central Street – Update:

The closing for the property was earlier in the week. A preliminary walk with ACT and SVT will be held on Friday, July 22. ACT has voted to accept stewardship pending the walking of the boundaries of the property.

5. Piper Lane parcel - Update

Mikaela Moran was present at the meeting. She had met with Town Counsel and John Avery (appraiser) two weeks ago to discuss her offer to allow an easement through her property. A letter had been sent to Mickaela to permit the easement, but on advice of her attorney, she had not signed it. She will await a real and final offer before signing, mitigating any risk to Michaela. A discussion followed regarding the possibility of the town's right of access being restricted to

three houses. Should the town not build the three houses, the easement would revert back to the Morans. Time restrictions could also be included. Both Nancy Tavernier and Kelly Cronin have reportedly no interest in this property for affordable housing. Per Michaela, the discussions with the Town are still in process.

Franny pointed out that Mark Brooks is still very interested in this arrangement.

6. 64 School Street – Update

This is a 3.8 acre property near Piper Lane. The owners want to break it up into parcels and would consider selling or offering an easement to the town for to be included in the trail. The family would like to preserve the property. There isn't sufficient frontage to split the parcel into multiple lots without the creation of hammerhead lots. An appraisal is needed and John Avery will be used. This offer will provide access to an old trail that linked two parts of Great Hill.

Andy suggested that, as a committee, OSC should be looking at the big picture of Great Hill and the lands surrounding it. **He will bring in maps for the next meeting.**

7. Spring Hill Road – Discussion

This parcel, referred to as the "Angel" property, has a long history. Originally this was protected with a conservation restriction that expired after 30 years. The restriction was not renewed and the owners, Angel, tried to subdivide the property. An endangered anthropod caused the project to be rejected by the Conservation Commission. Subsequently, the species was delisted and the owners are again attempting to develop the parcel. Steve Marsh was approached to develop property, but he prefers not to do so. He asked if the town was interested in purchasing it for open space. However, the property doesn't abut any existing open space. There are wetland in both the front and rear of the property.

Franny asked if this would be a candidate for "transfer of development rights," as proposed Acton's 20/20 Master Plan. The discussion that ensued determined that the developer would have to have another property that would be desirable for open space that could then be traded to offset this one. In this instance, the 20/20 strategy would probably not apply.

Andy pointed out that this property may not meet any of the criteria for Open Space preservation and the OSC doesn't deem it worth pursuing. It is on the most valued list. More information will be presented at the next meeting, including the wetland filings. Franny will do more research. Andy will contact Steve and tell him OSC is likely not willing to pursue purchase at this time.

There is a current unrelated issue for the Spring Hill area. Another owner wants to subdivide, and this has been brought to Planning for permission.

Susan M-H gave a brief history and background of the Spring Hill area and Camp Acton.

8. 161 Newtown Road – Discussion

This is a 13 acres parcel across from the Anderson property and owned by a relative of the Anderson Family. The land abuts Grassy Pond. There are two undeveloped lots and one house lot. This is a key parcel. Susan has contacted the deceased owners son? John Hryniewich and

Scott Hays to attempt to set up a time to meet with them. She will be on vacation beginning July 19, but will contact them again and set up a meeting and walk. There are 8 family members involved in estate, but it's Scott Hayes who has encouraged this dialogue, not the family. Barbara will look up legal status of the property. Apparently, the heirs are looking to sell.

This piece represents a prime opportunity for a wildlife corridor running from Rt. 2 to R2A. Andy asked Tom to contact Scott.

Susan gave a brief update on the Anderson land. Scot indicated it was "in limbo." There is movement by the late owner's nephew to develop the land as a PCRC but due to a difficult working relationship, Scott has removed himself from the project.

Motion: Terry moved to consider this a priority parcel and to continue pursuing development; Dick seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

9. Quarry Road - Discussion

Tom and Andy met with Tony Norton and her husband. They live in a family compound just past NARA on Quarry Road. They are interested in connecting her parcel to Town open space.

Andy will put this on the agenda for next meeting.

10. Brief Reviews:

Morrison Farm: All agreed that, regardless of what will be done with the barn or house, putting a CR on the rear portion of the property could be undertaken now. Morrison Farm is general municipal property. There is a new template for CRs that has been made available. Dick was asked to look it over and assess its potential for use in developing the CR for Morrison. Fran will work with Dick.

Stonefield Farm: Ashley sent Andy 4 scenarios to discuss with the Simeones. Andy met with them. He noted that the Town wants to hold a CR on the property. The Simeones would like to sell the property but continue to farm it.

River Street: no discussion

12. Concord Water Department Proposal

Delayed by BoS to Sept. 12.

- Barbara left the meeting at 8:30

Motion: Jeff moved to adjourn the meeting, Dick seconded, all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:30.

Next Meeting – August 12, 2016, 7:30 AM (Acton Town Hall - Room 9)