



OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE MINUTES Friday, March 6, 2020

7:30 AM

Room 9, Town Hall, 472 Main Street, Acton, MA 01720

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Andy Magee, Dick Hatfield, Terry Maitland, Matt Mostoller, Dave Marshall

LIAISON: Tom Tidman (Conservation), David Martin (BoS)

RECORDING SECRETARY: Fran Portante

VISITORS: Joe Will, Louise Gerhart, Clare Siska, Chester Li, Alissa Nicol, Susan Mitchel-Hardt (ACT), Christa Collins (SVT)

I. Regular Business

1. Minutes from Friday, December 6, 2019: Terry moved to accept the minutes, Matt second the motion and the vote was unanimous.

The Minutes of the Open Space Meeting of Friday December 6, 2019, were reviewed and approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

2. Review of on-going issues:

Hebert Farm: Susan reported that the house had been split from the rest of the property and the family was awaiting an appraisal.

Piper Lane: The Conservation Commission is awaiting a peer review, as is Planning. Lead/arsenic testing is underway. DBA will have a hearing next week. Alissa Nicol urged the attendees and committee to attend to support their position. She also noted that a new traffic survey has been done.

Andy pointed out that the OSC committee is limited by the CPA funds available to them. Most recent appraisal: 4 Piper Lane: \$550K; 90 School Street \$230K; entire property: \$740K (less than sum). He pointed out that the OSC is limited by the CPA funds available. It may be preferable for the Town to purchase the land, with the potential to sell off house at 4 Piper Lane and buildable lot at 90 School St., retaining the land abutting conservation land in perpetuity with a CR.

Wetherbee Street: Susan met with owners. They told her they would be closing on the sale of the house and property at 2 Wetherbee Street. That would then free them up to pursue getting the remainder of the property

appraised and then offering it to the town. Ideally the land will be preserved in perpetuity with a CR. The one stipulation they requested, which would be included in the conditions of the CR, would be to allow the oxen to continue to enter the property for the purposes of logging.

3. Brief Review of following:

- **183 Newtown Road:** no new information
- **Brucewood Lots, and Nonset Path:** Tom and Andy to discuss both properties.
- **53 River Street:** CPA funding has been approved. Two NOI's are in process, the first to remove a cement block building on the property; the second to remove the dam.
- **Triangle Farm:** no discussion
- **180 Newtown Road:** no discussion

4. **Acton Dog Park:** Clare Siska gave an update to the Committee. She specifically asked for their presence and support at the BoS when it's time for them to come before the Board to present. The DPW site has been taken off the table since it would create unforeseen costs and is opposed by the Miracle Field committee. The preferred site is the 348 & 352 Main Street site. The land is already disturbed and Tom T. has designed a layout for the site that would keep the area for dog area away from abutters. Clare said the Committee is hoping to be on the BoS agenda with a final proposal by summer. Joan Gardner has been the liaison up to now, and the Selectboard has been mostly supportive. However, there is still some preference for the Quarry Road site. Joe Will noted a request from a biking organization to use the 70 Quarry Road property for a "pump track" for bikers. Clare stated that her Committee would continue to reach out to various constituencies to educate and dispel misconceptions.

5. 2020 Community Preservation Act Proposal

The original request for funding was \$400 K, which was first reduced to \$300K, but after final consideration of the abundance of CPA funding requests, was pared down to a final allocation of \$280K. There was some push back from CPA members since the OSC amasses funds in preparation for purchasing opportunities that are not predicable. Andy expressed understanding of the difficulty in allocating limited funds to the overabundance of requestors.

II. New/Special Business

10 Post Office Square Parking Expansion: Louise Gerhart, an abutter, updated the committee on the prospective project. Her request was to consider the suitability of the back portion (the southern-most portion) of 10 Post Office Square for a conservation restriction.

A second abutter, Chester Li, was also present. Louise provided background to the OSC before posing her request:

Town had granted abatement to Associated Environmental Systems, a manufacturing company, in 2015. This property has a partial deed restriction with the abutter, Louise Gerhart. In 2019, an NOI was filed with the Conservation Commission for the purpose of adding 93 parking spaces for 10 Post Office Square and 175 spaces to 8 Post Office Square. The initial filing failed to account for the deed restriction. The land in question is heavily wooded upland, and is close to a Water District parcel, and stretches back to Grasshopper Lane. At present, the NOI filing has been continued a number of times, as the engineering company awaits the final decision of the owner so they can update the plans and submit the modifications to the Conservation Commission. Currently the hearing has been continued to the April 15 Conservation Commission meeting. Ms. Gerhardt has met with the owner who said he was “weighing his options”. The parking expansion plan has been rejected by the Design Review Board as “not in keeping with the goals of the 2020 Master Plan.” Matt noted that the Water Department also has high interest in this property. Andy pointed out that this property is not part of the priority listings for OSC. If a CR interest developed, the OSC could step in with some funding. The Committee, when asked to give opinions, agreed that support was not high for the property.

III. Consent Items

None

IV. Executive Session: Terry made a motion that the Committee move to Executive Session for the purpose of considering the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property at Liberty Street, Martin Street and Stow Street, since an open meeting might have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body. Susan Mitchell-Hardt and Christa Collins, representing Acton Conservation Trust and Sudbury Valley Trust, were named participants in the Executive Session. Matt seconded the motion and, in a roll call vote, all members voted in favor of the motion, and the Committee moved into Executive Session.

8:30, Andy asked for a motion to leave Executive Session. Terry moved to end Executive Session and return to Regular Session. Dick seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows: Terry, aye; Dave, aye; Dick, aye; Andy: aye.
Motion Passed.

8:30 AM: Return to Regular Session: Meeting Adjourned.

Next Meeting: Friday, April 3, 2020, 7:30 AM

Room 9, Town Hall, 472 Main Street, Acton, MA 01720

Additional materials can be found here: None

The listed agenda items are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair. Not all items may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law. Reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities are available upon request. Include a description of the accommodation you will need, including as much detail as you can and include a way we can contact you if we need more information. Please allow advance notice. Send an e-mail to manager@actonma.gov or call Town Manager's Office (978)929-6611

For more information about the Open Space Committee contact Tom Tidman at ttidman@acton-ma.gov or (978) 929-6634.