

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Friday, October 2, 2020

7:30 AM

Virtual Meeting

Committee members present: Andy Magee, Terry Maitland, Matthew Mostoller, Will Hill, Dave Marshall, Tom Tidman (NR liaison)

Committee members absent: Dick Hatfield, Ray Yacouby

Zoom Meeting host: Dave Martin

Recording Secretary: Fran Portante

Terry Maitland read the virtual meeting instructions and disclaimer for panelists and attendees.

I. Regular Business

1. Review of meeting minutes of Friday, September 4, 2020. Terry moved to accept the Minutes, Matt seconded the motion and the roll call vote was unanimous.

II. New/Special Business

1. Update by Dog Park Committee: Karen Martin, from the Dog Park Committee, updated the committee on the current status of their efforts. The Select Board had asked the Committee to examine 4 properties as potential sites, Morrison Farm, 70 Quarry Road, the School Street fields, and the Kennedy property on Main Street. Karen summarized their findings: 1. Morrison Farm would require extensive disturbance to the existing site and is enormously unpopular with the Acton Community for such use. 2. 70 Quarry Road is the future site of a “Bump Track” for bikers which is incompatible with a dog park; 3. The School Street fields are leased from the State and therefore ineligible for consideration. The 4th option, the Main Street site, offers the only viable option. Its current unattractive condition would benefit from the design of the new park and contribute to the Community aesthetics, as well as adding to usable open space. Clare Siska was able to share her screen so all members could see the plan. The Committee is planning to bring their recommendations to the Select Board at the next meeting. Karen, on behalf of the Dog Park Committee, asked the OSC for support, which the Committee overwhelming provided. Andy agreed to write a letter of support to the Select Board on behalf of the OSC Committee.
2. Introduction to the new Acton Agricultural Commission: Pat Hearn, a member and Clerk of the new Agricultural Commission, introduced himself and provided information about the Commission. Currently it consists of 4 members, Heidi Nelson, Paul Simeone, Maureen Bodner and himself. They are currently seeking a fifth member. Their first task as a new commission is to develop a comprehensive agricultural plan for the Town of Acton. It had been recommended that they interface with the OSC whenever possible and to that end are looking for advice for developing such a relationship. They expect that the Agricultural Plan will take a year or more to develop; since they will not be able to meet during the farming season, May through September. Pat asked for advice and recommendations for the future from the OSC. In the ensuing discussion, it was pointed out that the value and desire for promoting and protecting our local farms was stated clearly in the 2002-2007 OSRP as a priority and was reaffirmed in the 2014-2021 Plan. Matt asked if Forestry was an accepted Farming type under their jurisdiction, and Pat said it was included. The reception from the

Committee was very positive, and they agreed to continue to find ways to interact, and would share future meeting dates.

3. Update on Stonefield Farm: Andy indicated this would be discussed in Executive Session

4. Triangle Farm: a site walk was conducted and there are on-going discussions with the owner and ACT.

5. Hebert Farm, 53 River St., Wetherbee St: no updates

III. Andy thanked Susan Mitchell-Hardt, president of Acton Conservation Trust, for a successful fundraising effort. They met the goal of raising \$60K towards the cost of purchasing the Piper Lane Conservation Restricted property.

IV. Executive Session: 8:00AM

There will be a need for an Executive Session to consider the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property at Martin, Liberty and Stow Streets, Acton under purpose 6, as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect of the negotiating position of the public body.

Terry moved that the Commission go into Executive Session, and include the following guests: Christa Collins from Sudbury Valley Trustees, Susan Mitchell-Hardt from Acton Conservation Trust, Dave Martin, Selectman representative and meeting host, and Fran Portante.

At 8:45 it was moved to return to the regular meeting.

V. Next Meeting: Andy announced that the next regularly scheduled meeting is November 5, but another meeting could be called within that time period should the need arise.

8:46: Terry moved to adjourn the meeting, Will seconded the motion, and the roll-call vote was unanimous.

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