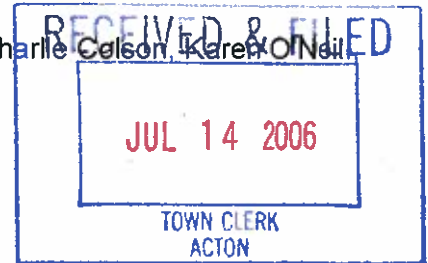


OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE MINUTES
April 28, 2006

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dick Hatfield, Andrew Magee, Jane Ceraso, Charlie Colson, Karen O'Neil, Peter Ashton,

CONSERVATION ADMINISTRATOR: Tom Tidman

Andy Magee opened the meeting at 7:32 AM



General Updates:

1. Andy and Peter provided an update on the status of protecting the state lands around the Concord Prison. There was a recent (4/27) article in the Globe, which was misleading. The proposal and process has slowed down quite a bit but we still hope that these lands can be protected. ACT has offered to make a significant financial contribution for this effort if and when it is needed.
2. Andy provided an update on the BF Rail Trail which continues to move forward.
3. Karen presented some general information about past grants under the EOEA Urban Self Help program. Jane noted that the Butter Brook is identified by EOEA as "highly stressed" and may be an opportunity for grants

Parcel Updates

4. Canoe landing on Martin St. - M. Cocco (from Maynard) owns this land. ACTION: Tom will follow up with research.
5. Groenoer - Peter did the research on these 17 acres and noted that 15 acres are already in Ch. 61. There are no back taxes due. Dick and Tom have walked the land and note there are some nice vernal pools. ACTION: Peter will talk to Susan Mitchell Hardt to decide what follow-up is needed with landowner.
6. Choate: Parcels are being surveyed and laid out (3?) and the land is still in chapter 61. It's unique property and we should consider offering funds for a CR. However, one member pointed out that it should be noted that we should be very cautious about providing public funding for a private use, particularly in the early years of our expenditures.
7. Prioritizing our action plan: We discussed need to get an action plan for our prioritized list of parcels and try to move some of them forward at a faster rate. It was suggested that Belle Choate be invited to the meeting to discuss this. ACTION: Karen will call Belle to invite her t June 2.
8. CR's outstanding. Andy is checking with Town Manager on the status of various outstanding CR (Marsh)
9. CR's on town conservation land: We discussed the strategies going forward – do a few at a time or all at once. We also discussed the importance of having a local land trust hold the CR. ACTION: Peter will ask town counsel if a town meeting is required for this action. Charlie noted that the CR's must be written specifically for each parcel. There are 16 named parcels and 26 un-named parcels.. ACTION: Dick will create a spreadsheet with columns marked "Uses" Structures" etc.
10. Next meeting Friday, June 2, Town Hall, 7:30 AM
11. Minutes from February and March meetings were approved. Meeting adjourned.

**OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE
MINUTES
March 17, 2006**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dick Hatfield, Andrew Magee, Jane Ceraso, Karen O'Neill, Peter Ashton, , Charlie Carlson, Ruth Martin

CONSERVATION ADMINISTRATOR: Tom Tidman

Meeting started at 7:31 AM

1. Andy opened the meeting with a review of past action items. Karen was reminded that she needed to draft a proposed CR. (note: sent to OSC for review on 3/22/06)
2. Andy – status on the BF Rail Trail: There will be a trail clearing on March 25th, Saturday. ACTION: Andy will talk to Town Manager about getting the RFP out.
3. Andy provided an update on the CPC work.. The committee will recommend to Town Meeting the OSC proposal to set aside 400K for open space. Charlie asked if the town can use the aggregate 900K to service a debt in order to purchase land for conservation. Action: Charlie will research this.

Review of land parcels:

4. Whitcomb land has been purchased by the Acton Conservation Trust with their own funds.
5. Canoe landing site on Martin St. Peter Ashton had checked the site and decided not to pursue. However, it was agreed that the Land Stewards should be consulted. ACTION: Tom will ask the LS committee to consider this opportunity.
6. Groener parcel: Re-consider a potential offer to pay (with CPA funds) back taxes in exchange for conservation status. ACTION: Peter will explore this.
7. Anderson: ACTION: Karen will call her son.
8. 162 Powder Mill – What is the status of the CR here? ACTION: Andy will research.
9. Town meeting will be April 3rd. OSC supports the Haartz zoning amendment. Andy will speak on our behalf and will coordinate with Lauren and the Planning Board. In addition, we discussed if we needed to take a position on the River St. ½ acre gift to the town. It was determined that it was outside our mission to take a position.
10. ACTION: Andy, Peter, Charlie and Tom volunteered to go back to the parcel list and see if there are land locked, appropriate parcels to target for CPA funds.
11. NOTED and ADDED by Jane - There is an upcoming March 30 Landscape Heritage Inventory Program Meeting. ACTION: Tom Tidman and Jane will meet to discuss parcels to be brought up for consideration as historic open spaces under this program.

Next meeting – April 28, 2006, 7:30 AM, Town Hall

**OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE
MINUTES
Feb. 17, 2006**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dick Hatfield, Andrew Magee, Jane Ceraso, Karen O'Neill, Peter Ashton, , Charlie Carlson,

CONSERVATION ADMINISTRATOR: Tom Tidman(absent)

Meeting started at 7:35 AM

1. Motion to **approve minutes** from our meeting in Jan. was made, seconded and approved by all.
2. Andy provided an **update on the CPC work**. The first round of voting and discussions on projects was begun. All of CPC seems in favor of supporting the OSC proposal to set aside 400K for open space. There also seems to be strong interest in supporting the BF Rail trail
3. **BF Rail trail work** has run into some insurance issues associated with hazardous waste. However, the goal remains to begin work on the trail in 2008. The Rail Trail "clean up day" will be March 25, 2006 (rain date April 2, 2006).
4. Andy also provided us with an **update on the Peet property**. The OSC should continue to monitor developments here. She does have a right of way established and she may build her house and studio further back on the property.

5. **Haartz zoning amendment** was presented to the Selectmen and Planning Board this week. It will be presented at Town Meeting and needs a 2/3rds vote to pass. The amendment changes the zoning on the parcel Haartz recently purchased from the state. The change they are requesting is that the land be zoned industrial and no longer residential. Then they will put all but 2 acres into a conservation restriction (adding it on to the current CR).

Peter moved that the OSC should support this article. Seconded, all voted in favor.

6. Note: The committee currently has 8 members. We are chartered now for only 7. **ACTION:** Andy will ask the Cons Comm chair to vote to expand our membership.
7. Andy asked for a **volunteer to examine the Franklin case about ch. 61 lands**. He noted that when a town is told – in the right to first refusal process – that the developer is bidding \$2 million, and then later information reveals that the developer in fact, got the property for less than that. Issue is that a town is limited in their ability to respond to ch. 61 opportunities when they do not know the real financial offer a developer is making. Pam Resor has some legislation to try and fix this. **ACTION:** Peter volunteered to research this.
8. **Dick presented (from the OSRP) a report on the parcels of conservation land in Acton**. We discussed the issues associated with putting CR on some or most of these. Karen suggested we aim to put all/most of them on a single CR. **ACTION:** Karen will draft a CR,- and Charlie will review it – for discussion at next meeting.

Next meeting – March 17, 2006

**OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE
MINUTES
January 20, 2006**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dick Hatfield, Andrew Magee, Jane Ceraso, Karen O'Neill, Peter Ashton, Ruth Martin, Charlie Carlson, Cheryl Lowe

CONSERVATION ADMINISTRATOR: Tom Tidman

- 1) Andy opened the meeting at 7:32 AM. A motion was made and all voted in favor of the Minutes of Dec. 16th - approved. (One clarification regarding the review of 40B guidelines was noted).
- 2) Karen gave an update on the Whitcomb parcel that is being considered for purchase by the Acton Conservation Trust. The ACT has done some title exams and has found out that there is some confusing language and we may need more work before we can get an insurable title. ACT will discuss options on a Board meeting on Tuesday. If we do want to bring it to the town, the CPC meets on Thursday.
- 3) Karen reported a conversation she had the week of January 16th with **Mary Donald**. Mary was trying to understand the question of timing for her tax deduction. Her accountant told her this was the final year and she had to get it filed by April. Karen noted that the CR was sent to the state at the end of 2000. Karen also asked Mary if she would like to make a counter offer to the OSC offer letter. Mary said she was not ready.
- 4) **Conservation land inventory** - Dick Hatfield reported the following.
 - a. Acton has 16 named conservation properties that include 103 parcel descriptions and a total of 1400 acres
 - b. 26 unnamed conservation properties that include 26 parcels descriptions and a total of 157 acres. These vary from .1 to 30 acres.
 - c. Acton water district owns 400 acres
 - d. The cemetery has 174 acres with 132 undeveloped
 - e. State has 202 acres.
- 5) **Action:** Dick and Charlie will assemble a list of each of the conservation properties (a&b). Tom will provide a map (showing surrounding areas). **Action:** Peter will determine if a town meeting vote is needed to put CR's on these properties. Group will discuss at future meeting.
- 6) **Article 97** - Karen distributed some education materials about Art. 97 recently presented at the annual Mass Land Trust Alliance meeting.
- 7) Andy distributed information from the **Wayland Neighborhood Initiative**. This successful program has the goal of bringing data about what is open and build able to individual neighborhoods. Then assembling neighborhood groups to look at options for protection (zoning, buy, right of first refusal, cr, etc.). Karen will share with ACT, as well. (Topic for a future meeting).

**OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE
MINUTES
December 16, 2005**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dick Hatfield, Andrew Magee, Jane Ceraso, Karen O'Neill, Peter Ashton, Ruth Martin

CONSERVATION ADMINISTRATOR: Tom Tidman

Andy Magee opened the meeting approximately 7:40 AM

1. Future membership on the committee was discussed – noting that currently we now have 2 Selectmen represented. It was suggested that Andy remain on the committee as the Selectman representative, Peter remain as a member at large, and a Cons Com member be recruited.

ACTION: Andy will talk to the ConsCom on Jan. 4th about a representative.

2. Karen reported Dr. Donald had mentioned to Susan Mitchell-Hardt that she needed a survey for tax purposes.

ACTION: Karen will call Mary and make sure she understands that what she needs for her previous donation is an appraisal. She will also talk to her about her remaining parcel and the offer we have made.

3. Karen reported that the Whitcomb land purchase by ACT has been delayed because of the ACT desire for title insurance and the resulting title search.
4. Andy reported that he is expected to make a presentation to the CPC about the Open Space Committee request for the "set aside funds".

ACTION: Andy will inform us when this meeting will take place.

5. Bob Guba has made a written request to the committee about a parcel on Martin Street that may be a potential town canoe landing.

ACTION: Peter will review the site and talk to Bob.

6. Peter Ashton reported the Landscape Heritage application has been approved.
7. Policy discussion: Andy raised the question: "Should the OSC weigh in on the various parcel transactions in town." There are often discussions with developers about conservation restrictions during the negotiations with Planning and Conscom. As advisors to the various town boards and a sub-committee of the ConsCom, we agreed there may be opportunities for the Open Space Committee to advise and assist. We can help prepare a CR, for example.

It was also agreed that we should manage an list of CR's and easements on parcels that are in process.

ACTION: Karen will draft a document and present at next meeting for review.

8. Dick proposed that the OSC start working on putting CR's on the town conservation land.
ACTION: He will assemble a list for discussion at a future meeting.
9. Tom reminded us that it won't be long until the Open Space and Recreation Plan will need to be undated. And Peter suggested (and we all agreed) that the process should start again with a survey.
10. Next meeting Friday, Jan. 20, 2006, Town Hall, 7:30 AM
11. Minutes from November and Sept meetings were approved. Meeting adjourned