

Open Space Committee

Minutes of October 13, 2015, meeting

Hamilton-Wenham Library

Committee Members Present: Anne Gero, Gretel Clark, Nancy Baker, George Tarr, Emer McCourt, Zachary Peters, Jackie Hodge (~7:30 P.M.)

Guest: Ms. Sue Brown, LA of Brown Walker Planners of Newburyport, MA 978-462-0404; sue@brownwalkerplanners.com

The meeting of the Town of Hamilton's Open Space Committee ("OSC" or the "Committee") was called to order by Ms. Baker at 6:35 p.m.

A discussion was held regarding the minutes of the October 6, 2015, as prepared by Ms. Clark. Corrections were made to: add in Jackie Hodge as a late attendee and typographical errors. The October 6, 2015 minutes were approved unanimously by the Committee.

It was discussed that in general, draft meeting minutes will be provided to the Coordinator, Ms. Anne Gero, who after approval by the Committee, will provide the approved minutes to the Conservation Commission Coordinator, Jim Hankin for posting on the Town website. It was noted that Mr. Hankin stated that currently the minutes will be posted on the same page as the Conservation Commission's minutes. Mr. Peters noted that it should be requested that the webpage title also contain the committee's minutes.

Ms. Baker discussed the required Conflict of Interest training for Committee members. This must be done by all Committee members on line. Ms. Baker and Ms. Gero have already completed the course.

Ms. Gero shared information concerning the Sagamore Hill property including:

- A list of items and dates for public outreach to be done by the Essex County Greenbelt Association ("ECGB") including a public forum at the Ham-Wenham Library on October 22 that the OSC has been asked to attend as audience members.
- Ms. Clark and Ms. Gero attended the Community Preservation Commission hearing where the CPC voted to support the transaction.
- A joint Selectmen and Finance Committee meeting is being held on October 19, 2015. At this point the Board of Selectmen (BoS) have voted to sign the grant but have not yet decided if they will support the funding for the parcel.

- The benefits statement developed by the OSC has not made it to all BoS or to all town boards. The OSC requested that Ms. Gero facilitate the disbursement of the fact sheet.
- ECGB is doing a sign campaign that people can sign up to get a lawn sign online.
- The OSC agreed that a shorter more succinct benefits fact sheet should be developed to hand out at town events. Ms. Hodge will make a first draft for the OSC to finalize. The goal would be to have this fact sheet completed by November 1, 2015.

Ms. Sue Brown, LA of Brown Walker Planners of Newburyport, Massachusetts made a presentation. Her firm has been hired by the Town to perform discrete duties related to the “Second update and Revision” of the Town’s Open Space Plan (“OSP”). These original duties included:

- Providing mapping service to update the maps;
- Updating the demographic data;
- Help with formatting the document and ensuring it meet the state’s required elements.

She has since been additionally tasked with doing stakeholder interviews, documenting their concerns, and helping run up to two public forums to discuss the draft revised OSP. One of these forums is tentatively scheduled for October 26th or 29h at the Town library. She has already spoken with the following stakeholders:

1. Nancy Baker, of the OSC
2. The Opens Space Committee (at this meeting)
3. Essex County Greenbelt Association
4. Hamilton Agricultural Group (Peter Britton only)
5. Essex County Trails Association
6. Chebacco Watershed Association
7. Hamilton Recreation Department (Director Sean Timmons only)
8. Hamilton Land Trust
9. Jim Hankin, Conservation Commission coordinator
10. Patrick Reffett, Hamilton Director of Planning and Inspections

Ms. Brown felt that the bulk of the update of the plan is needed in the “analysis of needs” portion (Chapter 7). The OSC provided the comment that the analysis of needs is based on the survey done at that time, and they strongly believe the survey should be redone to determine what the needs of the citizens currently are. OSC also noted that the survey should be as close to the original as feasible to be able to truly determine changes in the citizens needs. Ms. Brown commented that she agreed but the Town did not have the funding. She noted that the state **will not** accept old survey data.

The OSC noted that the draft copy of the OSRP as provided was not a red line/strike out version and therefore it was very difficult to determine what changes had been made. Ms. Brown said she would try and facilitate the OSC receiving a red line strike out version of the current draft.

The OSC noted that a comment on the draft plan was inaccurate and that the Town's groundwater protection Overlay District does provide a higher degree of protection for the town groundwater resources that just oversight by MassDEP.

The OSC thanks Ms. Brown for her time.

The OSC discussed that as Coordinator, Ms. Gero will act as a clearinghouse for any comments to the Ms. Hodge developed draft bullet list and that all comments should be direct to her to compile comments for review by OSC. It was discussed that this should be the procedure for all documents.

The next Open Space Committee meeting was scheduled for October 27, 2015, at 6:30 p.m. at the Library.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Zachary Peters