

Open Space Committee

Minutes of October 6, 2015 meeting

Hamilton-Wenham Library

Present: Anne Gero, Gretel Clark, Nancy Baker, George Tarr, Emer McCourt, Jackie Hodge

Meeting was called to order by Nancy at 6:40 p.m.

Anne shared copies of the document concerning the Sagamore Hill property that essentially she and Nancy, with clarification from Chris LaPointe, drew up. It involved a summary of facts about the Essex County Greenbelt's proposal for the acquisition of the Sagamore Hill property in addition to a section outlining a list of the Benefits this acquisition would bring to Hamilton.

The following points were covered concerning Sagamore Hill:

- The Mass. State grant of \$250,000 has been approved
- The Trust for Public Land signed the original agreement with Donovan et. al. and then passed it on to Greenbelt
- Neighbors to the Sagamore Hill property have committed to putting portions of their land into conservation restrictions that will amount to 185 acres, putting the total land mass over the necessary 500 acres needed to qualify for State assistance in purchasing the land.

Discussion followed as to how to use the document. It was decided not to use the "Facts" section and to focus on the "Benefits" section. Some points were deleted and others added.

Nancy presented an analysis of all the Open Space related projects financed by the Community Preservation Committee since its inception in 2006. It was found that less than 12% of total CPA funds have been spent on, what they called "open space." Of these projects, only 8.7% was allocated for the acquisition of open space. In fact, on careful examination, the committee found that the one property acquired (the Donovan playing fields) would not even qualify as "open space," because it was acquired for recreation purposes.

Jackie Hodge arrived at 7:25, at which time she proposed that the committee create a bullet point presentation (concerning the benefits of acquiring Sagamore Hill for the town) that could be used at Town Meeting. She also suggested that among the "benefits" should be a point about the regenerating effect that walking the historic

trails, viewing the ancient stone walls and rolling open fields would have for the visitor to this unspoiled place.

With 8:00 approaching and the need to vacate the library, the Committee voted (on the steps of the library) 4 to 2 to deliver the "benefits" section of the paper discussed above with Anne making the agreed upon changes at her home before delivering the document to the Planning Board, that was meeting concurrently at Hamilton Town Hall. The OSC felt that it was important for land use boards to have the benefit of its work concerning analysis of the project with a list of its implications for the town.

N.B.: Planning Board was scheduled to vote that evening on its position concerning Sagamore Hill before sending its representative to the Community Preservation Committee's meeting. (In turn, the CPC's meeting was scheduled for Thursday of the same week, at which time they were to be voting on which projects they would fund and bring to a vote at Fall Town Meeting.)

Please see the "Benefits" document attached.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:10, p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Gretel Clark