

Hamilton Open Space Committee

Minutes - August 18, 2016

Hamilton Wenham Regional Library (6:40pm - 8:00pm)

Present: Gretel Clark, Jackie Hodge, Rosemary Kennedy, Zachary Peters

- Past meeting minutes: Accepted; no comment
- Old Business:

Gretel Clark reminder of the importance of compiling previously discussed Property & Inventory Priority List for cmte to have on file, and to include conservation and chapter lands. All agreed. This will be addressed by full committee.

Follow up - Nancy Baker's reminder a final draft of committee goals needs to be prepared, perhaps by sub-committee, then approved by full committee. A suggestion was accepted that the draft list (11 items) from the June 2016 meeting should be discussed at the next meeting.

ACTION: All members are asked to review this list and prioritize the most important or force rank order of items. Come prepared to finalize September 20. (List will be re-sent to all members by Rosemary Kennedy to insure receipt.)

- New Business:

Rosemary has interest in initiating **replacement of 4 cut trees at regional library** street perimeter. After preliminary discussion, the library head has interest. Ideas on how to obtain trees/labor to replace with new maple trees were discussed. She will check with library trustees and/or Friends of the library (Gretel's suggestion).

Scenic roads - rock walls. Jackie pointed out several rock walls may have been disturbed on Cutler Road and Asbury Street. She will investigate scenic road designation and any available zoning information and f/up.

Jackie made the point that it might be useful to consider **expanding cmte to more associate members** and **identifying interns** for specific project needs. She cited a Gordon College environmental biology rising senior she met who is currently interning at the Ipswich River Watershed Assoc (has GIS skills).

Status of the open space delineation and proposed parking lot at the Patton Homestead was discussed. There is concern there may be plans for further encroachment on designated open space (~9.1 acres) for ~180 car parking lot, and sense of urgency to determine status of activity towards new work at the site and any open space infringement. The town web site summary of the parcel bounds, restrictions and history of purchase/CP Berry build was reviewed/discussed. It was also noted the committee's previous interest in insuring signage be installed to designate all open public space/walking paths at the Patton Homestead. A potential partial rock wall disassembly will be also be checked.

Zach proposed, depending on outcome of investigation, a letter may need to be swiftly drafted/sent to all pertinent town parties, via the Conservation Commission, addressing the matter. He emphasized the need

for comparing a surveyed plan, town approved build plan and actual 'as built' documentation including accurate open space areas. The town site's description of the development is not current. All agreed.

ACTION: Site walk Sunday morning, August 21 - Rosemary and Gretel. Others please attend if possible. They will also make inquiries to determine current status of any proposed activity.

- **Meeting Presentation – Massachusetts Office of Geographic Information - MA GIS Service**

Zach gave a 40 minute presentation/demonstration of features of the MA GIS mapping system – the vast resources available for accessing valuable digitized geographic and other data via web-based GIS. He explained there are maps and data layers, ready-made maps on a number of interesting topics (scenic area, railroad stations, farmers markets, etc.) for the entire state. (He also noted prior state system included old maps some of which can still be accessed for reference/comparison purposes.)

In addition, image data layers are available for numerous categories/sub-categories (ex. coastal, wind, environmental, conservation, water, wildlife, open space) which can be used to access information and build custom maps. It is integrated with Bing and Google maps for further aerial vantage views.

Additionally, cities/town expend funds to integrate their data with state data for multiple uses (assessors data, sewer lines, bus routes, etc.). This greatly increases information available to all citizens. The system allows for pdf or excel data dumps, and can even create property owner mailing lists to follow up on needed projects.

The Hamilton GIS link is accessible on the Assessors page of the town website.

Members noted it would be important to verify with Hamilton assessors how often the GIS information is updated and how corrections are made. It would be helpful to know how current the data is. Further, all agreed GIS can be a valuable tool to identify all protected land and potential protected open space candidate parcels.

Members were fascinated and energized by the tremendous resources and ability to access and manipulate interesting information and specific Hamilton data. All greatly appreciated Zach's contribution and time spent providing this initial introduction, and would recommend a follow up in the future for all members.

It was noted Paul Penner, former member is available to assist the committee with custom map preparation upon request.

- **Next Meeting September 20, 2016 same location**

Prepared by J. Hodge