

Hamilton Open Space Committee
Minutes of Meeting of April 13, 2017
Meeting Held at Hamilton Wenham Library

Members Present: Gretel Clark (GC), Anne Gero (AG), Jackie Hodge (JH), and Zach Peters (ZP), Emer McCourt (EM), Rosemary Kennedy (RK)

Others Present: Marcia Dolce, Richard Boroff.

The meeting opened at 6:40pm.

The members acknowledged that Mr. Boroff was recording the meeting.

JH noted and all but AG agreed that she will administratively run the meetings on as-needed basis.

Next Meeting

The members agreed that the next Open Space Committee meeting would be on Thursday May 1 @ 6:30 PM

Patton Homestead Open Space

JH & ZP reviewed what happened during a joint Conservation Commission/OSC site walk on April 8, 2017, around the Patton Ridge development and portions of the 9.1 acre parcel of dedicated open space at the Patton Homestead. There was no OSC quorum. Present were: ZP, JH, Jim Hankin, Alan Berry; his lawyer Mr. Hill; George Tarr, Virginia Cookson; Chris Currier. Mr. Berry had done work to address items discussed in the OSC letter of September 12, 2016, together with things discussed during a previous site walk, including, but not limited to: removal of trash and debris, the capping in place of all identified drainage lines off of their property (3 locations; 7 pipes (?); staking of the back property lines to identify lawn encroachments onto the 9.1 acre parcel. It was discussed that certain trees on the 9.1 acre parcel will need to be maintained by the Condo Assoc. Mr. Berry felt that the entire rain garden structure was on Patton Ridge Property and would not need any agreement with the Town to maintain. Mr. Berry stated that he will instruct the landscaping people that the 9/1 acre parcel will not be mowed, and thusly will demarcate Town land from the development's land. JH requested better survey marking in certain areas behind Buildings 8, 9, 10 to help define this line. Metal stakes will be left in the ground for future survey work. Mr. Berry noted that Mr. Hill has been working with Town Counsel to identify the extent of needed easements and to establish a working document detailing the responsibilities of the Condo Assoc. to do work and maintain portions of the open space 9.1 land including tree management and slope maintenance. ZP requested and Mr. Berry agreed to stake the property line in the area of the swale and drainage components to better identify what portions of the entire swale structure (including slopes back to natural grade) were on which property. JH noted that the Conservation Commission will revisit this issued at its May meeting and that OSC may want to continue to support its 9-12-2016 letter. A motion was made to continue to support the 9-12-2016 OSC letter before the Conservation Commission. The motion was seconded. Discussion

followed. AG felt that we may want to let the letter speak for itself, and not continue to press what may be smaller issues when compared with others before the OSC at the same property. ZP noted that he felt this was more just in support of OSC's previous opinions as expressed in the letter. The OSC voted 5-1, with AG dissenting, to continue to support the 9-12-2016 letter before the Conservation Commission.

AG and GC led a discussion on the status of activating the Patton River Walk. Essex County Greenbelt Association has been promising to put together schematics for a sign and kiosk. All work/issues will need approval of the Town Manager and a building permit will be needed for the signs. The Building Inspector confirmed that permits will be needed for the signs. It was discussed that the money for the sign along Asbury Street should be only a few hundred dollars. Due to timing, the source of the money needed now may not be suitable for the current round of CPC funding. JH discussed the timing of current CPC. AG has spoken to Dorr Fox, the CPC Coordinator regarding whether the CPC money can be used for trail signs. Although Mr. Fox was initially of the view that such signs didn't qualify, he has changed his position based on AG research, conversations with into other town's uses of CPA funds including conversations with other towns.

OSRP

The OSC discussed the current version of their letter re: Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) dated April 13, 2017. A motion was made to sign the letter and submit it to the Mr. Hankin/Conservation Commission. The motion was seconded and discussed. The OSC noted that this is just the first of more work to do to provide complete comments to Mr. Hankin and that the next part will be the goals etc. The OSC voted 6-0 to have all members sign the letter and submit it to Mr. Hankin.

OSC Priorities

JH led a discussion on upcoming priorities for the OSC.

AG and others noted that the OSC previously discussed priorities and that EM drafted a list of action items based on this discussion.

AG noted that the OSC has had trouble get items on previous lists done. As concurred to by the rest of the OSC.

EM will look for list and disseminate for future discussion.

It was discussed that the following priorities remain (no particular order):

- Activation of the Patton Riverwalk;
- Road over wetlands bylaw. It was discussed that Phase I of the bylaw changes has been held up by State review. The planning board has noted OSC previous comment on the matter and deferred responding until later in the process;
- Oversight of the proposed Patton Homestead parking lot and its connectivity to the 9.1, acre parcel etc.;
- OSC's OSRP Phase 2 comments re: Town goals etc.;
- Dark Sky (light pollution bylaw) bylaws or rules;
- Defining and explaining the benefits of Open Space for the Town;
- Connecting Open Space to the school system;

- Producing updates trail maps and promotional materials for residents and others to promote the use of Hamilton's open space.

OSC/Members/Vacancy

The members were introduced to Ms. Dolce who is interested in becoming a member of the OSC. JH discussed being an Associate Member which requires no Conservation Commission input, vs., a regular member. Ms. Dolce is a 25-year Town resident who uses the open space and formerly worked for the National Park system. It was discussed that it would be good to have members with expertise in different disciplines including graphics, maps etc.

The general terms of OSC appointments and the status of OSC member's appointments was discussed. EM and AG terms may be coming to an end. EM expressed interest in remaining on the OSC; AG is reserving her decision until later.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.