

Hamilton Open Space Committee
Minutes of Meeting of May 4, 2017
Meeting Held at Hamilton Wenham Library

Members Present: Gretel Clark, Anne Gero, Jackie Hodge, Zach Peters, Emer McCourt,
Rosemary Kennedy

Others Present: George Tarr, Richard Boroff.

The meeting opened at 6:35 pm.

The members acknowledged that Mr. Boroff was recording the meeting.
Ms. Hodge noted and all agreed that she would administratively run the meeting.

Approval of Prior Minutes

The members unanimously approved the minutes of the meeting of March 8th.

Anne Gero provided comments on the draft minutes of the meeting of April 13th. Mr. Peters will revise and recirculate the draft minutes.

Emer McCourt will bring to the next meeting the minutes she drafted for an OSC meeting in January. Comments had previously been provided and incorporated by Emer, but had not been recirculated.

Patton Homestead Open Space

a. Parking Lot Update.

Ms. Clark, Ms. Gero and Ms. Hodge provided a summary of the All Board meeting held on April 27th regarding the location of a parking lot at the Patton Homestead property. Several locations were discussed at this meeting, including (1) an area at the bottom of the hill toward the river (which was the subject of the most recent site plan application submitted to the Planning Board), (2) the area of the old swimming pool, (3) the field adjacent to Asbury Street next to the rose garden, and (4) areas next to the existing homestead buildings and barns. Possible construction materials discussed consisted of gravel and a plastic base through which grass could grow. The locations/construction materials were compared on the basis of cost, distance from the Homestead building, and impact on scenic views. A straw poll was taken of all in attendance at the meeting and the large majority favored the field along Asbury Street next to the rose garden with the plastic base. Ms. Hodge noted that this location would require yet another cut in the stone wall, and that the previously made cut would remain so that traffic could be one way through the existing parking area adjacent to the homestead building. Ms. Clark noted that the favored location and materials is exactly what was proposed by the OSC several months ago.

George Tarr noted that after the All Board meeting he made an additional proposal to Mark Johnson for a configuration of parking next to the existing buildings. It's not clear what, if any, consideration will be given to his proposal.

b. Patton Riverwalk

Ms. Gero noted that Dorr Fox, the coordinator for the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) requested that he be informed by May 5th of projects for which Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding may be sought. He was requesting this information so that it could be presented to the CPC at its next meeting on May 11th. Ms. Gero noted that since the Town of Hamilton owns the Patton Riverwalk land it would be appropriate for the Town Manager or one of his staff to either apply for CPA funding for Patton Riverwalk signs or authorize the OSC to do so. Gretel Clark volunteered to meet with the Town Manager to review this issue with him.

Ms. Gero noted that Dave Rimmer of Greenbelt has yet to provide to her schematics or cost estimates for the sign along Asbury Street or the kiosk at the trailhead.

Ms. Gero met with Jim Hankin to review what approvals are required from the Conservation Commission for the installation of the sign and kiosk, the installation of a new gate or chain at the trailhead, and putting some additional gravel on the parking area and road from Asbury Street to the parking area. Jim first noted that the wetlands flagging done in connection with the Patton Ridge project will be expiring in August. He therefore strongly advised that an application should be made to the Conservation Commission to extend the time period for the validity of this flagging. He said that the application must be submitted to and approved by the Conservation Commission before the time period expires. If this does not occur, then the wetlands must be reflagged.

Mr. Hankin also noted that a Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) is certainly required for all of the work (even for merely installing the sign along Asbury Street), and that the Conservation Commission may require a Notice of Intent (NOI). A portion of the work appears to be located within the 50 foot No-Build zone under the Hamilton wetlands bylaw and should be avoided if possible.

Ms. Gero noted that any filings with the Conservation Commission also would need to be made by a Town official or would need to be authorized by a Town official. Ms. Clark agreed to speak to the Town Manager about this issue as well.

c. Patton Ridge

Ms. Hodge noted that the Conservation Commission will be once again considering the Patton Ridge violations/easements at its meeting on May 10th. Mr. Peters and Ms. Kennedy said that they would attend this meeting in order to support the positions set forth in the OSC's recent letter to Conservation Commission. regarding Patton Ridge.

OSRP

Ms. Gero informed the group of her discussion with Jim Hankin regarding the comment letter dated April 13, 2017 submitted to Jim by the OSC on the draft Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). Jim noted that he had not had an opportunity to review the letter in any detail but that addressing a number of the comments would require a significant amount of work. Ms. Gero offered to Jim that once he has reviewed the letter he should

reach out to the OSC and that members of the OSC may be able to help him with specific issues.

Ms. Gero noted the need to focus on the second OSRP comment letter regarding goals, objectives and action items. Ms. Hodge voiced her reluctance for the OSC to work on a second letter until the OSC had reason to believe its comments would be taken seriously. It was agreed to defer this discussion to the discussion on the priorities of the OSC.

Sagamore Hill/Donovan Reservation

The members reviewed a site plan review application that Greenbelt had submitted to the Planning Board for consideration at its next meeting. The application is for a parking area off of Sagamore Street that would accommodate automobiles and horse trailers.

The members were very much in favor of the application although Mr. Peters had some questions about the application documents, including whether any handicapped parking spaces were planned, how the drainage would work, why work was proposed within the 50 foot No-Build zone, etc. The members agreed that it would be appropriate for Mr. Peters to contact Dave Rimmer directly to ask him these questions rather than wait until the Planning Board meeting.

The members voted unanimously to approve the submission of a letter to the Planning Board in favor of the application and noting any concerns of Mr. Peters that remain once Mr. Peters has had an opportunity to talk to Dave Rimmer. Mr. Peters agreed to draft such a letter.

OSC Priorities

Ms. McCourt reviewed the list of priorities that was approved by the OSC approximately one year ago. A copy of that list is attached. Ms. Hodge noted that the Patton Riverwalk should be added to the list given the amount of time the project will take over the next few months.

Due to the hour, it was agreed to defer further discussion of priorities until the next meeting of the OSC

OSC Member Vacancy

The members discussed the interest expressed by Ms. Dolce in becoming a member of the OSC. Ms. Hodge questioned whether Associate Member status might be more appropriate for Ms. Dolce given the fact that she travels in the fall and winter. Ms. Gero noted that existing members have had varied availability to attend meetings and/or participate in producing work product and that future Full Members should not be held to a higher standard. The members then voted to approve Ms. Dolce for whichever type of membership she preferred with Mr. Peters, Ms. Kennedy, Ms. McCourt, Ms. Clark and Ms. Gero voting in favor, and Ms. Hodge voting against.

It was agreed that Ms. Gero would contact Ms. Dolce and ask her which membership she wanted to have, and then inform Jim Hankin of the OSC vote.

Next Meeting

The members agreed that the next Open Space Committee meeting would be on Thursday June 6 at 6:30 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

2016 OSC "Things to Do"

1. Define "open space" and identify its value
 1. under Open Space Plan
 2. under zoning by-laws
2. Public outreach
 1. fact sheet / list of places and value of open space
 2. promotion of use of open space
 3. trail maps / markings
 4. tie in with Recreation Dept
3. New activities
 1. invasive species education and removal project, school project?
 2. tie in with school curriculum
 3. light pollution by-law
 4. tree/arbor replacement - vista
 5. property inventory and priority list
4. Maintain and track Open Space Plan
5. OSC training - GIS, etc
6. Review of other towns for suggestions/models