

Open Space Committee
February 16, 2021, 4:00 pm -- Zoom Meeting

Present (Each from home via Zoom): Bruce Hurter, Tom Slack, Peggy Sagan, Fred Streams, Lynn Southey, Bob Jackson

Guests: Denny O'Connell, WCT; John Grieb, Wellfleet Resident

Call to order 4:05 pm

Agenda approved with one addition: Guidelines for Conserving and Preserving Land (Old Business). Minutes of 1/19/20 meeting approved with one correction.

Chair Report, B. Hurter:

- Bruce provided a summary of the discussions related to the Open Space Committee Charge and Purview and the Articles for Town Meeting at the February 9 Selectboard Meeting. Map 30-186 and 188, wetlands in Blackfish Creek, and Map 42-137, wetlands at end of Bayberry Trail, have been approved by SB (4 to 1) for presentation to TM in 2021 for transfer of care and custody to Cons Com. SB voted 3 to 2 not to forward Map 28-80, 82, and 239 on Indian Neck as Article for 2021 TM. We need to investigate and assess issues raised by SB as to whether Map 30-188 contains a Town Landing.
- Bruce reminded the committee that purchasing properties is another vehicle for conserving them. OSC is allocated 10% of CPC funds annually, which can be used for this purpose, but the high price of Wellfleet real estate makes this option a challenge. Currently there are two desirable properties on the market that fit the committee's guidelines. One is priced at \$800K and the other at \$1.39M.

Vice-Chair Report, T. Slack: Nothing to report

Standing Assignments

Property management, F. Streams: Nothing to report. He reminded B. Hurter that he is awaiting Bruce's sign-off on the report on the completed property inspections before he submits it to Doug Guey-Lee.

Trail Guides, L. Southey: The inventory of trail guides for Box Turtle and Drummer Cove is low, and so Lynn asked Denny to make updating them a priority. She reported that she has provided WCT the electronic files for all the trail guides. Denny said that he will send to the committee for review the new maps for all trails as well as a new map for the inside sleeve.

Elementary School, B. Jackson, P. Sagan: Peggy reported on a virtual meeting held between Bob and Peggy for OSC; Spring Beckhorn, School Programs Coordinator, for Mass Audubon Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary; and Denny O'Connell for WCT. The goal was to explore ways for OSC to connect Grades 3-5 students and their families with nature this spring that don't involve too much time/effort on the part of teachers and families. The core of our proposal to Wellfleet Elementary School is to distribute Trail Guides to all students in these grades to encourage them to visit one or more properties with their families. As a follow-up to the meeting:

- Bob will contact the grades 3-5 teachers at WES to determine (1) whether they are willing to distribute the Trail Maps and (2) if they want OSC to provide activities to go along with the Trail Guides or whether they prefer to develop their own activities.
- If teachers ask for our assistance, Peggy and L. Southey have offered to work with Bob on creating or formatting materials.
- We need to confirm whether we have sufficient inventory of Trail Guides (estimated quantity is 60).

The meeting was productive, and we left the door open to future communication/collaboration between OSC, WCT, and WBWS.

Liaison Reports

WCT, D. O'Connell: Denny reported that Cons Com has accepted the plan for the Herring River Overlook Trail. Starting next week, WCT will put in benches and trails. WCT is planning to have the property ready for the high season. L. Southey mentioned that Friends of the Herring River would be interested in volunteering on this project, as would members of the OSC. A work day is also planned for Pilgrim Springs; Doug Guey-Lee will schedule it with the AmeriCorps group.

Friends of Herring River, L. Southey:

- The Friends are still hoping to submit the Chapter 91 and Section 401 Water Quality Certification applications to the Massachusetts DEP by the end of February.
- The upper Herring River Culverts are in great need of repair. These culverts are outside the area covered by the Herring River Restoration Project. The town received a grant for repairs from Mass Environmental Trust but it was not enough, so FHR has contributed funds to this effort to enable engineering and permitting to begin.
- FHR is planning guided walks this spring to be led by members of the board such as Bob Prescott, Barbara Brennessel, John Portnoy, and Alice Iacuesa.
- A virtual Herring Count Kickoff workshop is being planned for the equinox, March 20th at 10am. The annual Herring count runs from April 1st 2021 to May 31st.

Housing Partnership; J. Cumbler not present to report.

CPC, B. Jackson: CPC will be meeting next week; nothing to report at this time.

NRAB, T. Slack: Tom reported that the Selectboard has accepted the draft of the Harbor Management Plan. He referenced a timely article in last week's *Boston Globe* about the acidification of the ocean and the impact on the shellfish industry.

Old Business

Guidelines for Conserving and Preserving Land – F. Streams noted that all the statements are positive except for Statement 7, and he proposed the phrase “from development and” be deleted. The discussion bogged down on points of grammar and punctuation, so P. Sagan moved that we table the discussion until the March meeting. The motion passed 6-0.

Open Space 5-Year Plan – B. Hurter has found grants available to towns for developing or updating their 5-Year Plan on the website of the state Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. The deadline for applications is in May – a stretch given that the applications must include a quote from a consultant. D. O'Connell offered to search the Land Trust Alliance for approved/recommended consultants.

- If we miss the year's deadline, Bruce asked B. Jackson to find out whether CPC might help fund our hiring of a consultant.
- D. O'Connell pointed out that the grant application would need to be submitted by the Selectboard as the town's executive body, so we need to factor that time into the schedule.

Properties for Consideration

Town Warrant, B. Hurter –

- As noted, Selectboard approved (4-1) for Town Meeting the Warrant to transfer Parcels 30-186 and 188 and Parcel 42-137 for care and custody to Cons Com. However, Selectboard member Curley has questioned whether parcel 188 is a town landing. Bruce is researching.
- Bruce contacted Nancy Vail (Town Assessor) about the status of 30-188, but she couldn't provide any information about the property other than that it was sold to town in 1939 for \$1. It appears that no deed was ever filed. Until we can get more information around access, Bruce suggested that we amend the Town Warrant. The motion to remove 30-188 from the Warrant and move forward with the recommendation to transfer the other two parcels (30-186 and 42-137) to care and custody of Cons Com was approved by the Committee 6-0.
- North end of Indian Neck (Map 28 - 80, 82, and 239) – Although the Selectboard voted 3-2 to NOT forward the Warrant concerning these parcels for consideration at Town Meeting 2021, Bruce suggests that we continue to explore options for conserving these properties.

Meeting adjourned 5:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Sagan, Secretary, OSC