

Open Space Committee
March 16, 2021, 4:00 PM --Zoom Meeting

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

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

Call to order 4:07 pm

Agenda approved.

Minutes of 2/16/21 meeting approved.

Chair Report, B. Hurter:

Bruce reported on progress on grant proposal for funding of open space Five-Year plan. With D. O'Connell's help, we have contacted Jeff Thibodeau, Executive Director of the Orenda Wildlife Land Trust, who is interested in apply for the grant and writing the 5-Year Plan. Bruce will contact Maria Broadbent, Town Administrator, to request for funds to pay him (estimated\$1500). D. O'Connell recommends keeping Hillary and Doug (Town Health Dept.) informed. Both the Town (Maria Broadbent) and Conservation Commission will need to sign off on the grant application, so Bruce will reach out to them.

J. Cumbler reported that the chair of Cons Com has resigned and that Mike Fisher is serving as Interim Chair. Bruce will work with Mike until the new Chair is appointed.

Vice-Chair Report, T. Slack not present to report.

Standing Assignments

Property management, F. Streams: Nothing to report.

Trail Guides, L Southey: D. O'Connell, B. Hurter, B. Jackson, and Lynn have signed off on revisions to Box Turtle and Drummer Cove Trail Guides. The committee agreed that they do not need to review, authorizing Lynn to release PDFs to the printer. WCT will pay for the reprints. Next, Lynn will send Denny the files for Bayberry Hill and Fox Island Marsh/Pilgrim Spring for review.

Elementary School, B. Jackson: Bob reported that the grades 3-5 teachers are enthusiastic about having the Trail Maps to distribute. He'll follow up in the next week to see whether they want any assistance from OSC in developing activities to go along with the maps.

Bob expressed an interesting in continuing to work with WES – as a consultant or in another role – once he retires from the OSC.

Liaison Reports

WCT, B. Hurter: Bruce reported that Mass Audubon wants to construct kayak racks on their land near the Agger Property on Lt. Island. J. Cumbler said that Cons Com is drawing up guidelines and that Melissa Lowe should contact Doug Guey-Lee for requirements.

D. O'Connell reported that WCT plans to open the new Herring River trail by the end of May. Currently they are working with a contractor to schedule construction of the parking lot.

Friends of Herring River, L Southey:

- The permit applications went through pre-application review by MassDEP and the Friends are working to address their comments and hope to submit final permit applications by the end of the month (Section 401 of Clean Water Act, Water Quality Certification and Chapter 91). Application to the US Army Corps of Engineers (Section 404 of Clean Water Act) will be filed shortly thereafter.
- The culvert work funded by Mass Environmental Trust is moving along and should be finished by June 30. At that time, they hope to have a preferred design plus anticipated costs.
- J. Cumbler raised concerns about the lack of funding for the culverts, and Lynn explained that this work is outside the area of the restoration project but needs to be completed simultaneously.

Housing Partnership: J. Cumbler: John said that one question needs to be resolved on the Lawrence Road Housing Project before final approval. It concerns the waste disposal part of the project: Does it apply to Lawrence Road only or also to the surrounding properties (e.g., Police and Fire stations, WES).

CPC: B. Jackson: CPC has funded all affordable housing requests, including funding a room for artifacts at the Wellfleet Historical Society and \$15K for temporary veterans' housing in Dennis, which will serve the Outer Cape. The available funds outpaced the requests, and the excess will be returned to the CPC fund balance.

Bob took this opportunity to present his perspective on the historical relationship between OSC and the CPC, which filled the funding gap when the Land Bank was discontinued. Because OSC has been paying off debts, we have not accumulated any reserves for land purchases in several years. Based on the financial report provided by Mary Rogers, the committee will have accrued \$110,675 in CPC reserves by July 1, 2022.

Bruce mentioned that he has spoken with the OSC chairs in Orleans and Truro, and both are in a similar situation; i.e., having limited opportunities to purchase land. Truro OSC has stepped back from land purchases, and Orleans is working in close partnership with the Orleans Conservation Trust.

Bob reminded the committee that the last land purchase OSC proposed (the "Link Lot" on Drummer Cove) did not get the required two-thirds vote at Town Meeting in 2015. He suggested that the committee take this opportunity to define what our role should be so that we are in a better position to gain town support for future purchases (should desirable land become available).

Various strategies for gaining town support for OSC were suggested:

- P. Sagan suggested more outreach and publicity about the value of Wellfleet's open space and conservation lands.
- B. Jackson said we should actively recruit committee members who are working and raising families in the community.
- J. Cumbler said that we need a clear vision of what we're trying to accomplish and how it would benefit the town, and then to demonstrate that vision with a map showing properties currently in conservation and properties we should be targeting (for wildlife corridors, etc.)
- B. Hurter mentioned that the committee's vision should be reflected in the 5-Year plan. He said we should also consider conducting a survey of town residents about their attitudes, awareness, and use of town conservation properties.

This discussion will be continued in future meetings.

NRAB: T. Slack was not present to report.

Old Business

Guidelines for Conserving and Preserving Land – F. Streams proposed that statement 7 be revised to read: "Protect for public access land near ocean, bay, and pond." He explained that the phrase "limited and appropriate" is determined by Cons Com, so it is unnecessary to state. The motion passed 4-1. It was agreed that we include these guidelines as an attachment to these minutes and also communicate them to CPC and Cons Com. D. O'Connell suggested that they be posted on the town website, which we will explore.

Properties for Consideration

No discussion.

New Business

Rights of Public Access Committee: B. Hurter reported that the RPA committee is looking at access issues at Turtle Point and through the Agger Property, and it makes sense for OSC to develop a relationship with them. Options include requesting that one of our members attend meetings in a liaison capacity or serve on that committee. We will explore with J. Riehl when he returns. Meanwhile, P. Sagan will find out when the next RPA meeting is and inform OSC members in case anyone is able to attend.

Meeting adjourned 5:27 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Sagan, Secretary, OSC