

Wellfleet Open Space Committee Minutes December 20, 2022, Zoom Meeting

Present (via Zoom): Bruce Hurter, chair; John Grieb, vice chair; Fred Streams; Tom Slack; Peggy Sagan.
Guest: Denny O'Connell, WCT

Meeting called to order 4:32 PM

Agenda approved

Minutes of 11/15/22 meeting approved with 1 correction.

Chair report: B. Hurter announced that this was F. Stream's last meeting, as he prepares for his move to Ohio. He thanked Fred for his many years of service to the committee and to the town, and these sentiments were seconded by other members of the committee. Bruce encouraged everyone to consider a possible new member to replace Fred.

Vice-Chair Report: Nothing to report

Standing Assignments

Trail Guides: Nothing to report (D. O'Connell reporting in L. Southey's absence)

Community Outreach: P. Sagan said that she will reach out to Mary Beth Rodman at WES once students return from the holidays.

Property Management: F. Streams reported that all properties have been inspected except for Mill Hill Island (3 properties) and the 3 marshes behind Moby Dick's to Pole Dike Road. J. Grebe will inspect Mill Hill when the tides are favorable. B. Hurter said the other 3 properties are best surveyed from the road.

Liaison Reports

WCT: D. O'Connell said WCT is finishing up on a few properties. He reported that WCT has conceptually agreed to pledge to keep the Herring River Overlook as a conservation property to Ducks Unlimited and the US Fish and Wildlife Service to secure a \$2 million grant for the Herring River Project. The documentation is still being developed.

NRAB: T. Slack updated the committee on three projects:

- Harbor Study – Looking for grants and/or private donors to get this project started (since Town funding is stalled).
- Pond Group – Working with other pond coalitions (Cape-wide as well as Truro). Tom sees an opportunity for progress now that the CCNS has opened their database of pond data to the group.
- NRAB – Looking for a new committee Chair.

Housing Partnership: J. Grieb reported that the Town has issued an RFP to hire a manager to oversee the planning process for the Maurice's property.

CPC: F. Streams said that the Community Preservation Committee favorably on our committee's request to establish an Open Space Conservation Fund.

Old Business

5-year Plan: Work is currently on hold due to the travel schedules. P. Sagan reported on the status of the survey. When no response was received from Rich Waldo, Ryan Curley, or other members of the Select Board, Peggy asked B. Hurter to follow up with them. Rich responded positively; Ryan raised a few concerns about public access to the water and disability access. Peggy will respond to Ryan's suggestions and reach out to the Right of Public Access committee and the Commission on Disabilities.

The goal is to launch the survey in January. Peggy is leaving mid January for 2 weeks, so she hopes to finalize it before then. The plan is to allow 2-3 weeks for response. Elaine McIlroy provided very helpful information about how the Housing Partnership deployed their survey with help from numerous groups, including the Chamber of Commerce, Wellfleet Elementary School, and The Wellfleet Seasonal Residents Association.

To increase the number of survey responses, Peggy asked the Committee to compile their personal distribution lists, including friends, contractors, renters, and neighbors who might not appear on any "official" lists

Town Warrants: Bruce asked the Committee to review the wording of the two Town Warrants related to the creation and funding of the OSC Preservation Fund. D. O'Connell expressed concern about the name of the fund: Would "Open Space Conservation Fund" be confused by potential donor with Wellfleet Conservation Trust? A number of names were suggested, and the Committee agreed to accept "Open Space Preservation Fund." Other wording changes were suggested and the Committee voted to accept them as well. P. Sagan will revise the warrants and circulate them to the Committee for final approval.

Properties for Consideration

B. Hurter followed up on the status of two properties we had planned to submit for transfer to care and custody of ConsCom at this year's town meeting: 29 – 400 and 505 on Paine Hollow Road. The town is in the process of tax taking (initiated over 4 years ago for one of the lots), but the process is not complete. Therefore, we will need to take these two properties off the table for this year's TM.

Bruce recommends that we delay action on two other properties we have under consideration:

- Blue Heron – No deed has been registered with the County. Bruce said that Hillary and ConsCom will NOT accept the property with the current building in place; so that property is also off the table for this year.
- Bond Street – Bruce suggests that we postpone action on this property until we have others to submit; that is, in 2024.

Next Meeting -- TBD

Meeting adjourned 5:18 PM

*Respectfully submitted,
Peggy Sagan, Secretary*