

Wellfleet Open Space Committee Minutes September 19, 2023, Zoom Meeting

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

Meeting called to order 4:36 PM

Agenda approved.
Minutes of July meeting approved, with one correction.

Chair report (J. Grieb): Deferred until liaison report on Community Preservation Committee.

Vice-Chair Report (B. Hurter): Nothing to report.

Standing Assignments

Property Management (B. Hurter): Bruce has no progress to report, due to the vacancies in the Health and Conservation Department. Denny O’Connell announced that WCT has been awarded an AmeriCorps position, but the Town did not receive an appointment.

Trail Guides (P. Sagan): Peggy reported on distribution of the new Trail Guides. Distribution points are Town Hall, Wellfleet Public Library, Chamber of Commerce, and Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary.

She asked whether we might consider providing a more affordable option in addition to the expensive-to-print trail guides – an attractive “rack card” with a QR code that directs one to the WCT website, where all Trail Guides/maps can be accessed as PDFs. Denny said something similar has been discussed at WCT Board meetings, and that the time might be right to reconsider the idea.

Community Outreach (P. Sagan): Peggy will reach out to the new principal of WES to acquaint him with the OSC/WCT outreach program. We can meet with him if he would like more information about what we’ve done in the past or discuss ideas for the future.

We need to explore venues and dates for an outreach meeting this fall to present findings from the Open Space and Recreation Survey and solicit comments from attendees.

Liaison Reports

WCT (D. O’Connell for J. Grieb): Denny reported on a successful Annual Meeting. He said that the Annual Walk to Pilgrim Springs, delayed one day due to hurricane warnings, drew 35-40 attendees.

WCT has finalized the purchase of the Bouchard property that adjoins Pilgrim Springs. Several tasks remain, including removing a dilapidated building. Denny said they want to explore creating a parking area and an ADA-compliant trail.

Friends of Herring River (T. Slack): Tom has several updates for the Committee:

- The work progresses on constructing a temporary bridge.
- NPS has tapped into funding of approximately \$9 million for the Mill Creek Water Control Area and is working to gain access through WCT property.
- Planning continues on plans for low-lying roads in the area, with construction scheduled for 2024-25.

- The Friends of Herring River Annual Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 27, at the Chequesset Club Boathouse. All are invited.
- The Annual Coastal Cleanup is October 9. Participants meet at Mayo Beach at 10:00 for assignments and supplies.

CPC (J. Grieb): John distributed a first draft of the CPC application to create an Open Space Fund, based on the proposal Bruce developed last year, and asked that the Committee review it and suggest revisions. The deadline for applications is October 16. Prior to submission, John wants to schedule meetings with Gary Sorkin (Chair, CPC), Town Counsel, and ConsCom (possibly Mike Fisher, who also serves on CPC). His goal is to build consensus about how the Fund can be used; that is, for what purposes (land purchase, restoration, maintenance, etc.). Bruce reminded the Committee that some CPA funds should be kept separate from the Open Space Fund to be available for recreation and other approved CPA purposes.

To avoid any confusion with Wellfleet Conservation Trust, Tom proposed that we consider a less-restrictive name (than “conservation” or “acquisition”), calling it the “Open Space Reserve Fund,” as several other towns has done.

Bruce recommends that we include in the proposal a few examples of how other towns have used their Open Space Funds, along with the list of all Towns that have created such Funds.

Housing Partnership (B. Hurter): Sharon Agger has assumed the chair (from Gary Sorkin). The immediate focus is breaking ground on the Habitat for Humanity houses on Old Kings Highway.

NRAB (T. Slack): No proposals have been received for the RFP for a consultant to define the scope of the Harbor Survey. NRAB is working with WHOI to study “black custard” in Duck Creek.

Old Business

5-year Plan: John contacted the Cape Cod Commission to explore whether help is available for creating the required maps for the Plan. Gary Prahm, GIS Analyst, responded with a set of 5 basic maps as an example of the format and detail and has suggested different approaches, depending on the goals of the 5-year Plan.

After a late summer vacation, the subcommittee will resume meetings on September 28.

Properties for Consideration

Not discussed.

Next Meeting – October 17

Meeting adjourned 5:28 PM

*Respectfully submitted,
Peggy Sagan, Secretary*