

WILBRAHAM OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN COMMITTEE

Mission Statement:

Preserve significant open space by investigating, educating, planning, and cooperating.

MINUTES: April 30, 2019

Attending: Joe Calabrese, Marianne Ingrid Moner, ~~Steve Lawson~~, Brian Fitzgerald, Jay Taylor, Judi Theocles, Ed McCorkindale, ~~Susan Burk~~, Bill Shepard, Edna Colcord, Mike Pelletier, Tracey Plantier, Emilie Egan

Meeting Began: 7:04 pm | **Minutes for March 26, 2019:** Accepted

Motion: Judi | **Second:** Edna | **Vote:** 11/11

Correspondence – Joe:

- Regarding the latest solar farm in which the project was brought to the Planning Board before a Chapter 61 restriction was lifted, Tracey felt that there should be a better set of procedures. She will have the Planning Board discuss it.

State Open Space Conference – Jay, Edna, Bill, Tracey:

- Jay took away the idea of maximizing the use of the committee, mentioning the importance of creating both public and private partnerships such as with the WMA which has facilities and access to funds and shared values.
- Jay said that a new OSRP workbook may be available in 2020.
- Jay discussed a park grant that is available for cities under 35,000.
- Jay said that, according to Melissa Cryon from the DCR, we need more pictures/maps/demographics and less long winded writing.
- Bill got a boost from the conference and liked the concept of a dazzling OSRP that would be enjoyable to read. He also talked about getting support such as specialized knowledge.
- Tracey mentioned having events such as a coyote talk – something visible and creative.
- Edna pointed out that we are ahead of the curve as we have a website, a Facebook page, a survey, etc.
- Tracey brought up the Keystone Project and suggested having a representative come to a meeting.
- Tracey and Jay suggested discussions/collaborations with conservation and other committees. Joe explained that we've tried it before and found committees busy with their own issues and reluctant to add more work to their load. The key is to find help among the paid staff who can do the work as part of their daily job.

Trailwork and Issues – Jay:

- Steve and Jay went last week to check out the Rice Preserve bog area. They found it still muddy even with the bog bridges. Jay suggested putting in a bypass of the mud. As a result, a trailwork day with students from WMA is scheduled for May 11th from 9 – 12.

Committee members need to bring small tools, and loppers. The bigger tools will be brought by Jay and Bill.

- National Trails Day is June 1st so Jay suggested to have the Mt. Marcy grand opening on that date, and all agreed. Emilie suggested a welcome area with coolers and posting the event on FB. Joe will contact the newspaper.
- National Summit Day, August 3rd, may be a good day for another hike day.

OSR Plan Section 5 – Joe:

- Joe provided a review of past four discussed and assigned sections. He then went into Section 5 which discusses protected, semi-protected, and undeveloped land. He stressed that 49% of current land is developed and only 12% is fully protected. The rest is either semi-protected like the golf course and school grounds or unprotected such as privately owned land. There is an ebb and flow among these areas, but the percentages mostly remain the same. Joe stressed the importance of staying vigilant if we wish to maintain the rural character of our town.
- Joe then explained the charts which listed the specific pieces of land in each category and spreadsheet information about each parcel which includes the current and potential use of the property, who oversees it, and whether or not it is accessible to the public.
- Graphs and charts should be easy to update with data from the assessors.
- Jay, Mike and Marianne will work on this section and seek clarification and help from Kathy Barnes in Accounting who has volunteered to help.

Back Burner – Survey, signage, story walk, state site, brochure - All

- The survey was tabled until Mike could add and assess more data.
- Marianne agreed to look at our current trails brochure and to try to update it by adding the Easy Trail and Mount Marcy Trail.
- Tracey said that we could contact the CPA for additional money for signage because we can apply at any time.
- Joe asked the “trail buddies” to bring a list to the next meeting about possible new signs.
- Because of the time, the other issues were left on the back-burner for a future meeting.

New Business - All:

- Joe will contact the paper about articles on Mount Marcy Hike Day and the new OSRP update.
- Joe reminded everyone about Community Fest, the Town Meeting, and Voting - May 13 and May 18.
- Marianne discussed a dog walker at Alton’s Way with off leash dogs. Everyone felt that the best approach is contacting the ACO.
- Judi said that Whale Rock was at one time painted, and it would be good to paint it again. Reaction was mixed. Joe felt that the Conservation Commission would not go for it.

Audience of Citizens - N/A

Next Meeting Date: May 28, 2019

Adjourn: 8:31 **Motion:** Mike **Second:** Tracey **Vote:** 11/11