

WILBRAHAM OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN COMMITTEE

Mission Statement:

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

MINUTES: May 29, 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: 7:01 pm | **Minutes for April 30, 2019:** Accepted

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

Correspondence – Joe

- Nothing open space related in correspondence just a driveway permit from Planning.
- Tracey mentioned a new study that she received from UMass that discussed the cost to the Town of developed land versus conservation land. She will send everyone a copy.

Mount Marcy Day – All

- There will be three hikes during the day: open space members will supervise and conduct the 10 am session. Tracey will do the 1 pm walk; Jay is taking the 4 pm hike.
- The parking for the committee will be on Algonquin Street, 9:30 arrival time.
- Bill asked the approximate length of the north and south portions of Mt. Marcy. According to Joe, they are roughly half a mile each, one mile round trip.
- Steve will give a short speech at the 10 am ceremony.
- The ribbon can be tied to trees on the south side or held by open space members if necessary (Tracey has the ribbon). Joe asked that a few members direct parking.
- Joe mentioned an error in the Marcy newspaper story. Judi suggested a letter to the editor to correct the error. Steve said he feels the speech will address the mistake.
- Joe took a moment to review all the work to get to this point with Mt. Marcy – clearing and GPSing the trail, creating a website, doing publicity, getting funds for snacks, making a poster, etc.
- Mike suggested we bring brochures and surveys. Tracey is bringing water, bug spray, and snacks, and Bill is bringing first aid.
- For Wednesday's maintenance prior to the hike, we'll use a weed whacker, scythes, loppers, and shears.
- Joe urged the group to go individually if they can't do the scheduled maintenance time.
- Tracey said that the marking needs to be finished too.
- Bill will be hiking towards end of the week and will finish up leftover work.
- Ted Malysz, a *guest speaker* from the Historical Commission, discussed Mt. Marcy history. He has been hiking Wilbraham for 45 years. He explained that, in the 30's, a light beacon, funded by the postal service, was erected on Mount Marcy for plane mail route safety. A tower was built where the cement pad is and was decommissioned by the mid 40's when planes could fly higher. It was taken down in the 70's. Ted will keep in touch as he conducts ongoing research.

Trail Work and New Signs – Jay

- Jay said that Melissa needs our requests for signs by the 31st. The committee discussed “dog on a leash” signs, and “no mechanized vehicles” signs. Jay will forward our requests to Melissa.
- The committee also discussed kiosks for new trails. Joe said that he would add kiosks as a future agenda item. Steve said that the Mt. Marcy kiosk will be paid for by land trust. Steve also said that Donny Downing, who made our other kiosks, is willing to make more.
- Bill asked the status of the Oakland Trail. Mike suggested a sign pointing back to the parking lot with two arrows. Joe said that we have one to install.
- Judi wants the old Thayer Brook sign taken down and saved before it rots. Jay will send a request to Melissa.
- Tracey said that a CPA grant should also be used for area signs outside of a trail by the road so hikers can find the trails more easily. The CPA money will cover production and installation of 8-10 signs and kiosks.

Town Meeting/Community Fest - Tracey and Joe

- Joe reported that the library story walk passed and the Twelve Mile bridge passed at the Town Meeting.
- At Community Fest, some surveys were filled out, and residents asked a lot of questions about accessing the trails and about Mt. Marcy.

Nature’s Network/Keystone Program – Tracy and Edna

- Nature’s Network - Tracey explained NN is a collaboration of 20 or so groups that figure out and establish sensitive areas of imperiled species. Mt. Marcy is in the middle of a core protection area. The groups range from the Carolinas to Maine. On their website, viewers can see the protection area map in different layers with specific information and predicted development.
- Keystone Program -Tracey described the Keystone Program which starts with three days of intensive training where attendees learn in detail about conservation and saving land, and upon completion, attendees become ‘keystone contributors.’ After the training, these keystone contributors return to their community and agree to complete a 30 hour project. They must apply to the program to get in. Those who are connected to conservation/open space in their community are given priority. Applications are taken between Jan-March, and training is in April.

Open Space Plan Update: Section 6 – Joe

- Joe reviewed the previous five sections that we’ve discussed each meeting since January. Section 6 explains the best scenario, ideal community open space and recreation goals even though they all may not be capable of being met. Joe reviewed our previous OSRP goals for us and explained that we would use survey results and feedback from other Town committees to create the new section 6.

Back Burner – Survey/Brochures – All

- Mike had no additional survey stats, but he is over halfway through his compilation. We are now at approximately 305 surveys. By next month everything should be entered. Mike also did the QR codes for the survey, Oakland and Marcy. People can scan the code with their phone to access the survey and trail routes.
- Emilie will put surveys in the teen section of the library to get their input.
- Brochures are on hold. Judi mentioned we have used Robert's in Palmer which has moved to Wilbraham to print them off.

New Business - All

- Steve asked who would cut the ribbon at Marcy. Edna suggested a child who might be interested. Bill suggested using a tool to cut the ribbon for symbolism. Most likely Steve, Joe and Jay will cut it together.

Audience of Citizens - None

Next Meeting Date: June 26, 2019, annual outdoor meeting at the Easy Trail at Thayer Brook at 6:30 pm

Adjourn: 8:36 **Motion:** Judi **Second:** Mike **Vote:** 11/11