

WILBRAHAM OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN COMMITTEE

Mission Statement:

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

MINUTES: Tuesday, September 24, 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 May 28, 2019:** Accepted

Motion: Ed | **Second:** Brian | **Vote:** 11/11 (Emilie and Tracey arrived after this vote)

Correspondence – Joe

- Stoughton Smead from Conservation came to discuss the number of dead trees, which is 10 times the normal count due to infestation and disease. He was hoping that there might be some way to remove the trees. Steve and Joe did not feel that Open Space is in a position to fund the removal of trees, particularly on private property. Jay said that the tree problem is a town-wide issue. He and Joe suggested bringing it to the Selectmen and looking further at possible State aid or CPC precedents. Sue pointed out that property owners will likely have to deal with their own dead tree issues, but suggested an effort be made to educate homeowners about tree damage and safety. Steve mentioned Northern Tree Service as an information source.
- John Lombard, a teacher, and the Headmaster of Wilbraham Monson Academy would like to look into the feasibility of creating a connection/bridge between Alton's Way and the Academy cross country trail. Joe will meet with them next week on the issue.

Trail Issues Discussion and Timeline (Maintenance/ Road

- Joe said that the biggest issue is that we need more people to maintain the trails. Because of the constant rain this summer, trail clearing was held almost weekly, but it still wasn't enough. People commented on the Alltrails app about not being able to access Mt. Marcy. The middle school entrance to Alton's was not mowed. Basically we couldn't keep up.
- Thanks to the WMA student volunteers and Citizen's Bank volunteers, we have caught back up for now, but a more permanent solution is needed. Bill and Sue will continue to look at other orgs/co for volunteers.
- In terms of current conditions, both Tracey and Jay said that 12 Mile is good. Sue went to Mt. Marcy which is spotty. The academy will head out October 5th to Marcy. Sawmill will need trimming.
- Sue pointed out that Marianne Wagner asked hikers to be mindful of not interrupting golfing and suggested putting the reminder on the website. Joe will do it.
- Jay said that Sue via the Wilbraham Hiking Club has introduced more locals to the trails. Sue is currently posting hikes on Wilbraham trails in the paper regularly.

- Joe made a list of all trail concerns, and the OSRPC will be discussing each issue in depth in coming meetings.
- Joe talked about committee members taking charge of implementing the changes that they propose. Bill suggested subcommittees as some issues require more effort.

Signs/ Kiosks/ 12 Mile Bridge/ Bog Bridges/ Blazes/ Sawmill Pond, etc.) – All

- Signage on use of trails is in the works. Joe said that we also need roadside signs. Mike and Judi think we might need ‘closed’ signs for winter.
- The kiosks that we currently have need repair and we need several new ones. This will be a key topic at the next meeting.
- In terms of the status of the new 12 Mile bridge, Tracey said 10 ft. were added to bridge size after rain caused erosion. This will cost more than what is appropriated. Thus the process has been stalled until a solution is found within the money guidelines; otherwise more money will be sought.
- Joe mentioned the need for bog bridges in some locations and more blazes on some trails.
- Sawmill will be looked at by Jay and Mike. They will report back.

Open Space and Recreation Plan Review of Sections, Member Responsibilities and Timeline – Joe

- Joe reviewed the strategy for putting together our individual subsections: He said to start by running off the digital copy of our subsections from the current OSRP and run off the State OSRP workbook page that corresponds to it. Check to see that the State requirements are met in the current OSRP subsection, and then make revisions and updates as needed. When doing research, make sure to write down information for a bibliography entry on each source. When contacting a source person, have specific questions ready about your subsections and make a bibliography entry on the person interviewed.
- In January we will start bringing in drafts of subsections and revising them as a committee. Hopefully, we can do 2 – 3 subsections per meeting and finish in the Spring of 2021.

Nominations for OSRPC Chair and Recording Secretary - All

*Ed left prior to this vote

- In terms of the Chair, Judi thought that, even though we hold an election each year, we should hold off on electing a new Chair until we are finished with the new OSRP since we are following Joe’s timeline and format. Committee members unanimously agreed.
 - Motion: Judi, Second: Steve
 - Vote: 12/12 – Joe remains Chair
- In terms of the secretary, everyone agreed that Marianne’s notes were fabulous so that vote was held tonight also.
 - Secretary: Marianne - Motion: Tracey, Second: Mike
 - Vote: 11/11

Back Burner – Survey/ Brochures/ Logo/ Geocaching – All

- Survey - Mike reported that we now have over 300 surveys for data. He felt that the end of year should be the cut off for collecting data. All agreed. He then shared some preliminary findings.
- Brochures - Sue mentioned that we should be moving away from brochures and look to links and QR codes as the most current means of exchanging information.

New Business - All

- Judi brought up an article about taking kids hiking. Emilie will provide the link to Marianne who will include a meme about hiking with kids on our Facebook page.

Audience of Citizens - none

Next Meeting Date: October 29th, 2019

Adjourn: 8:45 Motion: Judi Second: Tracey Vote: 12/12