

From: Susan Mazurski May 6, 2011 3:21:58 PM
Subject: Open Space Committee Minutes 03/02/2011 APPROVED
To: SimsburyCT_OpenMin
Cc:

MINUTES
OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – March 2, 2011

1. Call to Order

Mary Glassman called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room at the Simsbury Town Hall. Committee members present were: Margery Winters, Mike Paine and Jim Gallagher.

2. Public Audience

There was none.

3. Review/Adopt minutes of November 3, 2010

The November 3, 2010 minutes were tabled until the next regularly scheduled meeting.

4. Approve 2011 Meeting Schedule

Ms. Winters asked to change to the meeting time from 4:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Mr. Gallagher made a motion to approve the 2011 meeting schedule with the meeting time being changed to 4:30 p.m. Mr. Paine seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

5. Discuss Open Issues

Regarding the Meadowood project, Ms. Glassman stated that the Board of Selectmen referred the request from Griffin Land to place additional restrictions on the property to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission asked several questions and are still waiting for a response from Griffin Land. The Town has not received any further information and will not move the project forward at this time.

Ms. Glassman stated that the Town has asked that Griffin Land increase the

amount of compensation to the Town, although Griffin Land has not yet responded to that request. The Town will not consider the proposal until they get the needed information.

Mr. Peck suggested that if the Town came up with an amount that is satisfactory to Griffin Land and the Town does move forward, organic farmers may be able to move over to part of the property and Griffin Land can use the other part for their bird habitat.

Ms. Glassman stated that the Town has several agricultural leases. They have received requests to extend these leases with the following farmers: George Hall Farm, Anthony Napolitano; Rosedale Farm; and George Hall Farm. Ms. Glassman questioned if the Open Space Committee members wanted to discuss moving these leases to the Meadowood Triangle. There are several neighbors who were opposed to this, which is why the farmers leased the side of the Triangle. Ms. Winters stated that the Conservation Commission would like to see the area between Barndoor Hills Road and the stream be more of a conservation area rather than a farming area. Mr. Paine stated that he does not have an issue with this, as long as Barndoor Hills remains a corridor. He believes that the Planning Commission would be fine with this as well.

Regarding the wood lot at Tulmeadow, Ms. Glassman stated that she spoke with Mr. Howard of the Simsbury Land Trust. Under Federal Grant funds, the Land Trust cannot hold the easement directly. They have asked the Town to step in and provide some technical support if needed. The Town has already funding a portion of the purchase. The Simsbury Land Trust will be sending a written request to the Town.

Mr. Gallagher questioned if the Town could buy the easement and the property and then sell the property back to the Simsbury Land Trust. Ms. Glassman stated that the Simsbury Land Trust is working with their attorney regarding what needs to be done.

Ms. Glassman stated that the Town did receive the Ethel Walker grant for Parcel B. They are currently working on a technical problem with the proposal. There is a request, under the contract that the Town signed initially for the optional agreement that the Town needs to go to referendum for, there was a time frame in which the Town had to notify Ethel Walker by next March. The problem with this is that the Town does not go to Town meeting until May. Ethel Walker does not have a problem changing this timeframe.

Regarding the tobacco shed at Firetown Road, Ms. Glassman stated that one of the questions that came up at the budget process was what the Town's long term interest is in this shed. Mr. Sawitzke looked at the shed to see

what repairs would be needed. She stated that money was recently put towards the shed to stabilize it. Ms. Glassman stated that the question now is if they need to start identifying funds to take the next steps in fixing and using the shed.

Mr. Peck stated that this could be a project for a trade school. He stated that he did look into this last year and there is some interest.

Mr. Gallagher stated that the shed could be used for storage. He feels this would also be a good project for a trade school to undertake.

Ms. Winters stated that, from a historical standpoint, she does not want to lose this shed. She questioned how much money was put in for stabilization in the past. Ms. Glassman stated that money was spent to fix the front door and for the cable to stabilize the shed. Mr. Paine agreed with Ms. Winters regarding the historical standpoint. He also feels that this would be a good storage space.

The Committee agreed to send a message to Town staff that this tobacco shed is worth pursuing a use for it.

Mr. Peck stated that the Conservation Commission, at a recent meeting, looked at a proposal for the construction of a swimming pool at 18 Old Stone Crossing. As part of this process the applicant cleared some of the trees in the open space next to the property to use for lawn. A replanting plan was submitted by the owner. The selection of the species was good although the location was not as good. The Commission would like the owner to relocate the plantings along the property line.

Ms. Glassman questioned if the Town should sell this piece of open space for fair market value. She stated that this may be an option because over time, if the homeowner continues to use this area as lawn, eventually, it will become their land.

Mr. Peck stated that the continued use of this property is a legal issue. He stated that this application will be going back to the Planning Commission because it was a planning determination that set this aside as a tree preservation area.

Ms. Glassman stated that these types of issues need to be cleaned up legally or there needs to be a settlement with the property owner when the Town is not interested in maintaining the open space or when there is no value to it to the Town.

Ms. Glassman asked that Mr. Peck make a list of other properties that are encroaching on Town open space for the Committee members to review and

discuss. She asked him to also discuss at the next meeting, the penalties for open space violations and the history of these properties in Town.

Ms. Winters stated that the Tree Committee used to be a part of Main Street Partnership, although they are not anymore. They would like to become a subcommittee of the Open Space Committee. Ms. Glassman stated that she will need a list of the Tree Committee members. This Committee can then adopt this and will send it to the Board of Selectmen to ratify.

Regarding Arbor Day, Ms. Winters stated that the Tree Committee is working on a tree walk. The walk will include the main section of Hopmeadow Street. Ms. Glassman stated that the Tree Committee needs support for Arbor Day, the Town would be happy to help with supplying some trees.

Mr. Peck stated that the Zoning Commission was sworn in as members of the Aquifer Protection Agency. There will be a hearing in May on the Statutory Aquifer Protection Ordinance.

6. Adjourn

Ms. Winters made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:40 p.m. Mr. Paine seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.