

Open Space Committee
Wednesday, October 12, 2022
4:30 PM- Simsbury Town Hall
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT

PRESENT: Wendy Mackstutis, Margery Winters, Kelly Kearney, Karen Cordner, and Susan Masino

ALSO PRESENT: Tom Tyburski, Director of Parks and Recreation, Caitrin Huysman, Recreation Coordinator, were also in attendance.

Absent: Anne Erickson, Erin Leavitt-Smith

Call to Order

Ms. Mackstutis called the meeting to order at 4:32 PM

1. Public Audience

2. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Cordner made a motion to amend the June 1, 2022 minutes to reflect a spelling correction of “grand” changed to “grant” and to approve the same. Ms. Winters seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in favor.

3. 2023 Regular Meeting Schedule

Mr. Tyburski shared that the big change to the meeting schedule is that the full Committee will meet just four times a year and the work group will meet the remaining months.

4. Co-Branding Opportunity with Hometown National Park

Ms. Masino shared that they wanted to put some information about Hometown National Park on the Open Space website. Simsbury has all these natural and historic resources as does the Farmington Valley, she stated that she wrote to them but they were a little bit touchy about their branding. They came up with this co-branding idea, could put their logo on our website and say we are aligned with their principles. They are excited about this because they feel like this is something other towns would adopt. Ms. Masino stated they wouldn't be committing to anything specific, it would just be saying we are aligned with these principles. Ms. Mackstutis stated it may be good to have the Town Manager's Office create a resolution on this. Mr. Kearney recommended that it be simplified on the website so it is easy to understand.

5. Trap Rock Ridge Enabling Legislation

Ms. Masino stated she has been pulling together what the special things are about Simsbury and finding documents to put on the Open Space website. She stated the Trap Rock Ridge are the mountains on either side of the valley, it is very special feature of Connecticut. Simsbury has more than any other Town. Onion Mountain is the only Trap Rock Ridge in the State that doesn't have a trail along the spine and there are all kinds of special stuff that grows in this habitat. Years ago, the State adopted enabling legislation which provided towns the opportunity to protect the top of their trap rock ridges, Simsbury hasn't adopted it yet. Ms. Masino will send everyone a link to the enabling legislation. Ms. Mackstutis asked who would be responsible for

permitting us to be part of this. Ms. Winters stated it would be Conservation and Planning and Zoning.

6. Status of Open Space Template Format and Topics

Ms. Masino shared that CT Bear Coalition is working on an update which we could adopt. The topic of light pollution/the dark sky initiative was discussed. She shared that it has wild life impacts, major health impacts and using more energy than we need to. Mr. Tyburski stated that these topics would be part of the toolbox on the website. He stated that the Board of Selectmen did approve that Open Space could have their own social media page so they will be working behind the scenes next week on this. Ms. Masino suggested creating a rotating list of photos for the social media page.

7. Schultz Park- Arboretum Status

Ms. Masino stated that she thinks they have a full blown Arboretum in Schultz but they just aren't advertising it. There is a map of the trees in the ceiling of the gazebo. Mr. Tyburski stated they recently painted the gazebo so it needs to be re-installed. Mr. Tyburski clarified that an arboretum is basically a tree museum, when that park was designed each tree was given a placard about it.

Ms. Mackstutis asked if they just declare it is an Arboretum or if they should officially do something. Ms. Masino stated that she needs to check out the map of the tree species to verify. She stated that they could just say it without doing anything else or they could have it accredited which they would need 25 species to submit that application. She stated that there are only 16 arboretums in CT and only 7 are accredited.

Ms. Corder asked what the process is when they see a potential property for the Town to acquire. Mr. Tyburski stated that there is a criteria for open space acquisition on the website which was approved last year. He stated it is usually the land owner who approaches the Town, the biggest things they are looking at right now is if it is connected to another open space parcel. Ms. Mackstutis stated that there is a budget process usually executive session at a Board of Selectmen meeting.

ADJOURN

Ms. Corder made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Masino. All voted in favor. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 5:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Taylor
Committee Clerk