

Open Space Stewardship & Policies Work Group
Wednesday, March 3, 2021
4:30 PM- Via Zoom Video Conference
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT

PRESENT: Margery Winters, Susan Masino, and Tim Walczak

ALSO PRESENT: Tom Tyburski, Director of Culture, Parks and Recreation and Zoning Compliance Officer, Tom Hazel, and Tom Fitzgerald, Management Specialist were also in attendance.

Call to Order

Ms. Winters called the meeting to order at 4:34 PM

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the January 21, 2021 Open Space subcommittee workgroup meeting were accepted.

2. Model Agriculture RFP and Lease

Mr. Walczak stated that he reached out to a couple farmers for feedback on the lease but has not heard back.

Ms. Winters asked if anyone reached out to Millwrights to tell them there is land available to be rented. Mr. Hazel stated he will make a note to check with Mr. Glidden. Ms. Masino stated that she believes they have a location secured. Mr. Hazel stated that perhaps the Town could be a future option based on commute and especially after the breakup of the triangle.

Ms. Winters asked how they notify farmers that they have land available. Mr. Tyburski stated that they put the RFP on the state website but they could also post it on the Town's website but he believes most of the news is spread through word of mouth. Ms. Winters suggested notifying the head of the Farm Bureau Association. Ms. Masino stated that the Northeast Organic Farming Association would be an excellent group to reach out to as well.

Ms. Winters stated she believes the Agricultural Usage policy is good to go other than a few formatting issues.

3. Draft Open Space Acquisition Policy

Ms. Winters stated that during the regular Committee meeting there was discussion about needing a definition for active vs. passive recreation. Mr. Hazel stated that he did reach out to Trust for Public Land for guidance on how they define it, however, he has not heard back. Mr. Hazel stated he did insert some legal definitions from the beginning of the document where it read "passive recreation" and listed a few items that would qualify. He stated he added in "active recreation" in the same manner including ball fields, hard surface courts, playgrounds, pools, etc. Mr. Hazel stated later in the document where it reads "passive recreation" and there was a bullet point list, he put "active" and added the recreation and highlighted those. Mr. Hazel stated that as the Town is actively acquiring property they get to set and justify what can and cannot be done on that property. Mr. Hazel stated that the ball is in their court by providing a general definition of passive recreation. He also stated that one of the definitions under the planning rules is that you cannot have conflicting uses so you could not have a walking/hiking

trail and use it as a motorized trail, for example. Ms. Winters stated she felt it was more of a facilities issue. Mr. Hazel stated “passive” is light on the land and “active” is going to have more facility usage. Ms. Winters shared an example she found from another Town that read “to promote social interactions, healthy living, environmental preservation and environmental education while meeting the active and passive recreational needs of its residents.” Ms. Winters stated if they added in something like that then the Town will make the determination on a property by property basis. Mr. Hazel stated that for their basic definition it's just a guideline in this document and it's not concrete and he doesn't think they should make it concrete so as to not be hemmed in.

Ms. Winters stated that the only other item that needed to be amended in the policy was in Section Four, they wanted to add it “in no particular order”.

Mr. Hazel stated that he can try to create a map that has a color coded breakout of open space by use type.

Ms. Winters suggested they begin working on the mowing policy and she will resend the document that was previously sent so it can be discussed at the next meeting. Ms. Winters stated the agricultural lease and land use policy should be ready to go for the next Committee meeting. Mr. Tyburski stated that encroachment was also a topic the Committee wanted them to discuss.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Taylor
Committee Clerk