

Open Space Stewardship & Policies Work Group
Wednesday, June 7, 2023
4:30 PM- Via Zoom Video Conference
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT

PRESENT: Margery Winters and Susan Masino

ALSO PRESENT: Tom Tyburski, Director of Culture, Parks and Recreation was also in attendance.

Call to Order

Ms. Winters called the meeting to order at 4:32 PM. She amended the agenda to include item (2) Public Audience.

1. Adoption of May 3, 2023 Minutes

The minutes of the May 3, 2023 Open Space subcommittee workgroup meeting were accepted with the amendment under Homegrown National Park Co-Branding. Ms. Masino clarified that she did not speak to Mr. Tallamy but spoke to the co-founder of Homegrown National Park (name to be determined).

2. Public Audience

There was no public audience.

3. Discussion on Belden Forest Hemlocks

Ms. Masino stated she spoke with Dr. Carol Chia who is the person who has the beetles that can be released to eat the adelgid and she agreed there isn't much of an issue and not even enough adelgid to feed her beetles at Belden Forest. She will follow-up to see the mortality rate at Stratton Brook Park.

4. Discussion on Traprock Ridgeline Protection

Ms. Masino stated for the next meeting they wanted to have little boxes maybe in the POCD to highlight special things, she hasn't written anything yet but maybe that would be a good target for the next meeting. They could also think if there are other topics like the Traprock Ridge or light pollution that would be good as highlight boxes.

5. Discussion on an Ecological Study

Ms. Masino stated that there is no update, it is just something they need to think about for Capital planning. Mr. Tyburski shared that at some point this summer they should get dates from the Town manager's office regarding the capital planning discussion, he will relay the date to the group when he finds out. Ms. Masino stated before Town Forest Pond is done with the allocated money, she would like an opportunity to speak to Mr. Tyburski to confirm it is the right time of year and that it is dredged enough. Mr.

Tyburski stated that he believes the Engineering Department is looking at doing it in-house with the Public Works staff.

6. Discussion of field management at the Triangle

Ms. Winters shared that a few weeks ago Ms. Heard and member from the pollinator pathway toured the fields with DEEP to get their evaluation of the status of the field. They noticed there was a large amount of oriental bittersweet and mugwort. One of the recommendations was to mow it early after the birding season, August 1st was suggested. She stated that this doesn't match up with their meadow mowing policy but this is an invasive plant plot. Ms. Winters also shared that they need to look into how else they can control these invasive plants which also goes back to the fact that the Town needs an invasive plant management policy as well. Ms. Masino commented that this may be the perfect starter project for them to focus on, she would suggest having Mr. Allen come out to get a consult and price for this one specific project. Ms. Winters stated there will be multiple stages of this project including re-seeding. Ms. Masino suggested for the next meeting they attach the service forms that she did before to see if those would be acceptable to move this forward. Ms. Winters also suggested that when they do mow on August 1st, the suggestion was that someone walk in front of the mower due to potential box turtles.

7. Other Business

Ms. Masino shared that the third episode of the Beaver Pond Wildlife series at Simsbury Grange will be held June 8th, with social hour at 6:00, the movie at 7:00 and then a Q&A with the filmmaker after. Also, this week, you can drop off entries for the Agricultural Fair on Saturday. Ms. Masino stated that they have previously talked about having a joint session on light pollution and invasives as part of the pollinator pathway series. She commented that Greenwich is doing just that. She wrote to Avon because she thought they were doing one but she hasn't heard back yet. Ms. Winters stated that Canton is doing one next week. Ms. Masino suggested that on the next agenda they look to schedule this.

Ms. Masino also wanted to suggest having Simsbury Open Space partner with a couple of other groups to bring the Beaver Pond movie to Cinestudio in Hartford. Ms. Masino also shared that she is co-author on a big report called Wildlands in New England that was just released. Mr. Tyburski shared that Burgers on the Bridge is happening currently on the Flower Bridge.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Taylor
Committee Clerk