

1 **CALL TO ORDER**

2 First Selectman Lisa Heavner called the regular meeting of the Open Space Committee to order at 4:32
3 PM on Wednesday, March 2, 2016. The meeting was held in the main meeting room of the Simsbury
4 Town Offices located at 933 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, CT. In attendance were the following
5 committee members: Don Rieger, William Rice, and Helen Peterson. Staff included Gerard Toner,
6 Director of Culture, Parks and Recreation; Town Engineer Jeff Shea; and Assistant Town Planner
7 Michael Glidden.

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9 **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

10 All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

11
12 **PUBLIC AUDIENCE**

13 No one spoke at public audience.

14
15 **REVIEW/ADOPT MINUTES OF JANUARY 6, 2016**

16 No changes were made to the minutes.

17
18 **PROPOSED GAS PIPELINE – PENWOOD STATE PARK**

19 Energy infrastructure company, Kinder Morgan, is proposing to add an additional gas pipeline adjacent
20 to its existing line that runs through Penwood State Park. The proposal is before the Federal Energy
21 Regulatory Commission.

22
23 Mr. Glidden said his research of the available submission documents shows that the proposed pipeline
24 is in Bloomfield. He said there is nothing in the official application online that shows any activities in
25 the Town of Simsbury, including the construction easement and modification of their easement.

26
27 There was some discussion on the possibility that an alternate easement was being proposed, but
28 nothing suggesting where it may be located.

29
30 Simsbury Land Trust Trustee Sally Rieger said there is no official Simsbury route as far as they are
31 aware, but that the Wintonbury Land Trust in Bloomfield sent an email to the Simsbury Land Trust
32 stating there is a group of Bloomfield citizens who have suggested the proposed pipeline should be
33 rerouted so it should run along the right-of-way out of Bloomfield and into Simsbury.

34
35 Ms. Heavner said both Simsbury and Bloomfield don't want the pipeline for similar reasons. She said if
36 the town discovers the pipeline is being proposed in Simsbury, the town would reject that proposition.
37 She said keeping the pipeline along the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) right-of-way is
38 preferred.

39
40 Ms. Rieger stressed that the land trust was against the line running through the newly-acquired
41 Tanager Hill property or the Mortimer property. The group was not opposed to the MDC route. The
42 desire would be that the pipeline should stay on the other side of ridge line, staying away from the
43 important and environmentally significant wetlands and uplands of that particularly valuable area. She
44 listed different species that use the area as a migration route, or a habitat, and important
45 watercourses in the area. People use the area for walking, and cross country skiing.

47 Mr. Rieger said he was not surprising Mr. Glidden didn't find documentation as the comment period
48 closed in October 2015 so it's a quiet period where FERC is thinking about what it wants to do.
49

50 It was suggested that a letter be written to oppose any placement of the pipeline in Simsbury. But Mr.
51 Glidden was asked to first find out from the company's public outreach person if an alternative is on
52 the table and if so, can the town see the plans. If Simsbury is on the table, then the town can react. Ms.
53 Heavner said she can write a letter, if needed, and get it co-signed by the Simsbury Land Trust and the
54 Farmington River Watershed Association.
55

56 **OPEN SPACE INVENTORY UPDATE**

57 Ms. Heavner updated the committee that the Chapter 21, Fund for Land and Preservation Ordinance
58 was passed unanimously by the Simsbury Board of Selectmen.
59

60 A change to the ordinance was any net proceeds of distribution "should" be added versus "shall" to the
61 open space fund.
62

63 The committee then talked about the Open Space Stewardship Policy they have been working on. A
64 policy is a working document that is used for guidance.
65

66 **MOTION Mr. Rieger moved to adopt the Open Space Stewardship Policy. Ms. Peterson seconded.
67 And all voted in favor, the motion passed.**
68

69 Mr. Rieger said there was a change to the open space inventory itself; he added the classification of
70 "scenic."
71

72 **MOTION Mr. Rieger moved to accept the Inventory of Town Owned Open Space: A Work-In-
73 Progress, Working Draft as of Year End 2015. Mr. Rice seconded and all voted in favor, the motion
74 passed.**
75

76 It was noted that the inventory would be added to the open space committee's homepage on the town
77 website.
78

79 Mr. Rieger brought up the issue of the town initiating the sale of open space and suggested adding a
80 policy for that. He read a statement he had written.
81

82 "Because the town code provision setting forth the process for considering proposals for
83 disposition of parcels of town-owned open space charges the Open Space Committee with
84 responsibility for evaluating any such proposal and making a recommendation to the Board of
85 Selectmen, it is the Open Space Committee's view that it would be inappropriate for the
86 Committee to *initiate* any such proposal lest its required evaluation be tainted with the
87 appearance of predisposition.
88

89 "It should be for others to raise such proposals to the Board of Selectmen and the Board of
90 Selectmen to determine whether to initiate the process set forth in the town code.
91

92 "In accordance with its Open Space Stewardship Policy, the Open Space Committee has made
an effort at classifying the many town-owned open space parcels according to the roles they
serve and the burdens of their maintenance. That classification is published as the *Inventory of*

93 *Town Owned Open Space, A Work-in-Progress.* The Open Space Committee hopes that
94 resource, which is available on the town web site, will be helpful to others in assessing open
95 space policy."
96

97 Mr. Rice asked if the committee would be in a unique position to recommend an open space piece that
98 might be sold before someone else brought the idea to them. Mr. Rieger said he thought Mr. Rice was
99 giving the inventory too much credit in terms of its analysis.
100

101 **MOTION** Mr. Rieger made the motion to amend the Open Space Stewardship Policy to incorporate at
102 the end the addition of the language above. Ms. Peterson seconded and all voted in favor, the
103 motion passed.
104

105 **1 OLD BRIDGE ROAD UPDATE**

106 Mr. Shea said the town has not heard from FEMA yet, but is still in the mix. Ms. Heavner asked that the
107 suggestion the road be moved be taken off the table as there is no funding for such a proposal. She
108 asked that Mr. Shea run through the checklist with the architect and meet with the flower bridge
109 people as the concept is refined. There was some discussion on budgeting as the project moved
110 forward.
111

112 **OTHER BUSINESS**

113 Mr. Rieger asked about the re-vegetation of Helen's Way off of Iron Horse Boulevard, which saw some
114 clear cutting. Several possible options were mentioned for that area, and other open space parcels that
115 need stewardship.
116

117 **ADJOURN**

118 Mr. Rieger moved to adjourn and Ms. Peterson seconded and all voted in favor. The meeting was
119 adjourned at 5:27 PM.
120

121 Respectfully submitted,
122 Stephanie Riefe