

Open Space and Recreation  
Tuesday January 12, 2021  
ZOOM Meeting Minutes

Call to order at 6:02PM

Members present: Peter Pescatore, Tom Callahan, Marisa Manley, John McMahon, Sue Cummingham, Dee Riley  
Other guests: Sarah Burgess, Brian Joyce, Michelle Leary

Once a quorum was realized, the chair asked for comments on the minutes from the December 15th meeting. The chair pointed out an error regarding his discussion with CPC, which was edited. There were no further edits recommended and Dee Riley moved to approve the minutes. Tom Callahan seconded. The motion was approved 6-0-0.

Sidewalks: Brian Joyce, Director of Public Works, gave an overview of the sidewalk and road program for the Town of Cohasset. Cohasset has 40 miles of road, approximately 2 miles of which are re-paved annually, along with any sidewalks along that road if they exist. Brian Joyce also gave the committee an overview of sidewalk cost, which can range from \$80 a linear sq. ft to \$300 a linear sq. ft depending on both topography and quality choices. There are currently two town sidewalk projects underway; one to connect the Fair Oaks neighborhood down Sohier St. to 3A, and another to connect Alumni Field to Pond St. There is also an approved project by the state to add sidewalks and bike lanes on either side of 3A from Beechwood Street into Scituate. This is likely to commence in 2022 or 2023.

Brian Joyce was also able to comment on the feasibility of connecting N. Main St. to the MBTA station. It would be a challenging project because the terrain is difficult on either side, either wetlands or ledge and a hill. Brian Joyce was able to confirm this would be an expensive project and is not currently on the list of proposed sidewalk projects for the town. The chair approximated that this sidewalk project would cost around \$1,000,000.

The town typically spends \$600,000-\$700,000, annually on sidewalks through both state funding and the town capital budget. Brian Joyce also pointed out that currently sidewalk repaving and maintenance is a higher priority than new sidewalks.

Grant Sub-Committee: Dee Riley was able to connect with Lauren Lind, to get more information on the town's grant proposals. The deadline for the LWCF grant is 2/1 so we will not be able to file this year. The chair suggested collecting the requirements now, and we can aim for next year.

Dee Riley also reported that the sub-committee will start meeting monthly.

Bylaw Sub-Committee: The chair was able to connect with Chris Senior, town manager on the Tree City USA application. The application was missing an element and was not able to be

finalized before the end of 2020. The chair will follow up with Chris Senior again to get this completed before the end of 2021.

The chair will continue to nudge Chris Senior regarding the town Tree Policy edits. The goal is to get these edits in front of the town selectboard, as this policy is fundamental to the town's handling of trees.

Harbor Committee Plan: The chair was unable to attend the last Harbor Committee meeting but will follow up with Tim Davis for minutes from the meeting.

Master Plan Working Group: There are 5-6 bylaw initiatives currently being reviewed. The chair and Tom Callahan reported there are drafts of three of these underway. The most fundamental to the Open Spaces and Recreation Committee is the land management review, which the working group is aiming to submit before the annual town meeting.

Tom Callahan also raised the idea of zoning and housing choices and do we want to see these "open spaces" being developed? He pointed out the land behind Shaws on 3A, which is significant in size and has wildlife interest. This land has developer interest but as a committee we should start considering open land in town for sale and identifying properties we do not want developed. The chair pointed out that it is in our committee implementation plan to take inventory of open properties in Cohasset, and it should be the goal of our committee to have a written opinion ready to submit to the town to advise on available properties. Marisa Manley asked if there existed a rubric for what would make an ideal open space and the chair suggested that the Cohasset land management trust might have that. Tom Callahan will inquire if the land trust has criteria for purchase and Michelle Leary was able to furnish a real-time open property list for the town for the committee to review.

Current Action Item Progress:

Whadleigh Park: Marisa Manley had inquired about land details from Mary Quill, town assessor but has not heard back. She will continue to follow up.

SkatePark: The recreation meeting was cancelled in December and has not been rescheduled. John McMahon stated the committee will be setting a date for a January meeting.

Trails Project: Tom Callahan has been busy in Wheelwright park hanging signs on obscure trails. Tom also reported one sign casualty, likely due to wind damage. He is currently restoring it and will return it back.

It was also discussed that there is an entrance to Wompatuck behind the Water Department, which is not often used. The chair suggested once we have the maps digitized by the town engineer the committee should work to promote this area, along with the digitized maps.

Earth Day: There is a meeting scheduled for tomorrow, January 13th, 2021 at 5:30 to discuss Earth Day with interested parties. The chair suggested there is concern that the selectboard

won't approve the event application due to the pandemic and gathering guidelines, but he will submit the application by the end of January.

Graffiti: Sue Cunningham is collaborating with a former student and Nicole to do small group presentations in school to raise awareness and also solicit more hands for cleanup, when the weather is nicer.

The chair asked for a motion to adjourn. Dee Riley moved the motion and Tom Callahan seconded. The motion was approved 7-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:06 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Marisa Manley