

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 2016  
HEARING RM. 3, 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR at 7:30 pm  
MARSHFIELD TOWN HALL  
MARSHFIELD, MA

A meeting of the Marshfield Open Space Committee ("the Committee") was called to order at 7:32 pm. Chairperson Karen O'Donnell (KO), members Vicki McPherson (VM), Chris Ciocca (CC), Tom Whalen (TW), Chad Haitsma (CH) and Sue MacCallum (SM) were present. Bob Shaughnessy (BS) and Michael Biviano (MB) were absent.

There were no minutes to review.

Unless new business necessitates scheduling a February meeting, KO will contact Committee members at a later date to schedule a March meeting.

### **PROPERTY UPDATES:**

#### **Holly Road**

KO reported that she had met with Shane Brenner from Merrill. They had visited another site in Marshfield to view the different kinds of monumentation available for use in a survey. She circulated photos of different methods and there ensued a discussion of the cost of each. Going forward, the Committee will look at each property individually to decide the best method. KO will be scheduling another site visit for Holly Road. Any interested members are invited to join. Meeting date and time to follow. KO reported that Tom Reynolds had contacted her about the parking lot. She told him not to proceed with the parking lot at this time but that some type of barrier (gate/chain) should be installed to stop any vehicular access to the site.

#### **Pratt**

There has been no formal approval from AAB on our variance request. At the hearing held on November 30, Pat Brennan was asked to provide the AAB with a color-coded plan showing accessible and non-accessible pathways to the bridges and stairs. He was also asked to provide a cost estimate for stairs (\$8,800) vs. a ramp (\$140,000) from the property up

to the railroad bed. He has complied with their request. The Committee was in agreement that Pat should start the permitting process for the project now. TW stated the need to push forward if we expect to get the project going and completed. There was a discussion of the need to survey out the house and barn building envelope in order for Wildlands Trust to start the CR process for this property. TW was before the BOS on December 15, 2014, and they had voted to support the survey plan he presented. Before KO can contact a surveyor, we need to know how we are going to pay for it. There was discussion of using CPA administrative funds or possibly funds from Conservation. No monies were allocated for a survey in the acquisition costs for this property. TW suggested three scenarios for the buildings on the property: (1) sell; (2) lease; and (3) demolish. He continues to research best approach.

### **Jomat**

KO reported that the Town has closed on the property. We have preliminary comments from the Department of Conservation Services on the Conservation Restriction (CR). She will follow up with Wildlands Trust, have it reviewed by Attorney Galvin and send it in for final approval. TW noted that he has roughed out a trail. He also found multiple deer stands/blinds at the site. VM expressed an interest in walking and mapping the roughed out trail. TW acknowledged that this property does indeed abut the Riverwalk parcel.

### **DISCUSSION:**

#### **Committee Make-Up**

There was a brief discussion of the Committee officers. KO and CC will remain as Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively.

#### **Town Meeting Warrant Article – 310 Furnace Street**

KO will work with Carolyn and CPC on drafting the Article and motion with the required language for accepting the DWSP grant, should we get the award. KO will forward the draft to Attorney Galvin and EEA for approvals.

### **OSRP Update Process**

Following up on the November 19 meeting that Susan Caron attended, there was a discussion of finding funding for a consultant to help with the 2017 update. TW noted the tremendous amount of work that goes into the update, compounded with the additional mapping work created by changes in the FEMA flood maps. SM noted that mapping should be done professionally. KO will research other Towns who have recently updated to gather information on their process, if and how they used a consultant, fees and funding source. CC commented that since the CPA mandates the plan and update, they should fund it. He asked if Historical Preservation and Affordable Housing have similar requirements. They do not. There was discussion of how and when CPC would entertain a request from Open Space for funding and if the funds should come from CPA administrative, fund or unfunded balances. It was suggested that cost estimates be solicited from Conway School of Design and BL Industries.

### **Conservation Restrictions**

KO will meet with Wildlands re: outstanding CRs. SM reported that Mass Audubon is poised to hold the Bennett CR. TW asked how much that would be. SM is not sure. KO asked about a possible funding source. Possibly Conservation. She will talk with Jay. KO reported that it looks like the Maryland St. CR is moving forward with the Trustees of Reservations.

### **Comprehensive Trails Working Group**

KO reported that she had attended the first meeting of the working group. Her request to have Open Space rotate members was not very well received. She will continue as the Open Space representative and, if she cannot attend, VM is also in the group, so we will have coverage. The next meeting is scheduled for January 27. A lengthy discussion ensued. CC reported that representatives of the group had visited his Recreation meeting. Requests for input were cut off, and he questions the true intentions of this group. TW talked about the survey being put together for town wide input and participation. He feels that they should be looking for more information from the community and that they are making assumptions about the community that are not correct. TW thinks they should be exploring all outdoor recreational access trail opportunities (i.e. kayak, canoe, hiking, bike etc.) SM mentioned that

someone from the trails committee or possibly BL Industries had come to the Audubon property and mapped the property using GPS. Audubon trails are mapped, and she would have shared the GPS information had they introduced themselves.

### **CPC Land Acquisition Policy**

TW led the discussion of funding sources for Open Space purchases. He acknowledged the CPC Open Space/Recreation 10% set aside and the CPC unfunded balance but expressed concern over diminished CPA funding (% unknowns and additional towns adopting the statute and reducing the amount each participating community receives). It is apparent that Open Space, Recreation, CPC and Town Meeting have to consider outside funding sources: grants, short-term borrowing, bonding, etc. Applying for grants is time consuming, especially for a volunteer board and there is no guarantee that you will be successful in your bid for those funds (example: Jomat). Other communities are experiencing the same issues, and we can expect to see already competitive grant rounds becoming even more competitive. TW would like to see Open Space explore the possibility of purchasing deed restrictions or development rights. He suggests that we could reduce the cost 50% or more, increase the buying power of existing funds and the land would stay on the tax rolls. SM noted that buying deed restrictions or development rights is complicated and a hard sell because you are spending money, but you don't actually own the land and there usually is no public access. CC and KO agree that it is a tough sell. VM noted that it would only work for certain properties. TW suggested it could be in the form of an easement that is the missing link in a trail network. TW also suggested reaching out to the CPA Coalition to see what has been done in other communities. CH commented that communities do things but it is more important to know if they are successful. SM stated that CRs and Agricultural Preservation Restrictions are done but not in a town like Marshfield. They are usually put on very large tracts of land. There was discussion of creating an Open Space/Conservation fund through CPC that would allow land acquisitions without having to wait for Town Meeting. TW noted that it would be beneficial if we were able to act quickly when Chapter 61 lands are offered to the Town, considering the fairly short response time allowed by the law. SM talked to the Committee about a new mapping tool developed by Mass Audubon in partnership with The

Nature Conservancy and LandVest that helps communities to prioritize parcels for resiliency protection in light of predicted climate change. She thinks it will help us in our ranking process to prioritize parcels and focus our efforts and the Town's financial resources on protecting those priority parcels. She will send the link to Committee members.

KO made a motion at 9:15 pm to enter into executive session not to return to regular session, for real property discussion because discussion in an open session may be detrimental to the Committee's negotiating position. TW seconded. Roll call vote: TW yes, VM yes, CH yes, CC yes, SM yes and KO yes.

**Submitted by Karen O'Donnell**

Survey Monumentation Photos