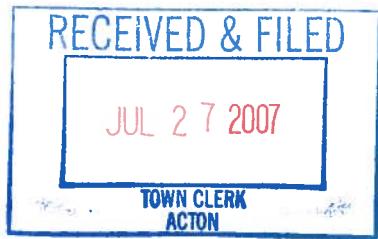


Open Space Committee minutes - approved
May 11, 2007



Attending: Dick Hatfield, Kathy Fochtman, Peter Ashton, Andy Magee, Ruth Martin, Jane Ceraso, Charlie Carlson, Karen O'Neill

Visiting - Nan Millet, Susan Mitchell Hardt

1. Kathy noted that the Recreation department is sponsoring a free concert, Friday June 15th (6:30 - 8:30) including the Air Force Jazz Band. They would like to have a reception for Don Johnson at that time and are looking for volunteers.

2. Report on the protection for the Acton Conservation land. We continue to work to understand if the Acton Conservation land is truly protected - or if it could be easily converted to other uses. The discussion began with Dick Hatfield reporting on his discussions with Heidi Ricci (of Mass Audubon) and Jack Corwley and was referred to legal counsel at EOEA. EOEA reported they do not know of anyone / any town going through the conversion process and getting a waiver on the compensation clause. (Compensating land must be provided if conversion is allowed). Discussion notes:

* Article 97 land purchases (made without self help funds) do need CR for complete conservation protection. Jennifer Soper acknowledged that if self help funding was used, then the land can not be converted unless there is equal compensation land provided.

* Based on this research - Dick proposed that both Nashoba Brook (123 acres) and Stoneymeade at 44 acres need additional protection. Both were set-aside in the PCRC process.

* A motion was made to push forward with CR's on these properties. It was noted that some additional research is needed (do we know if conservation easements have been placed on these lands?). The motion was tabled until the research is complete.

* Susan - noted that Spring Hill has no record of Self funds used – the land was donated. Only the Camp Acton portion was purchased with self help funds. Action: Susan will research to see if there were levels of protection voted in town meetings.

* Peter Ashton - review the Arboretum Land history and town meeting notes. All parcels were purchased with self help funds (except with Donald portion - which has a CR) - and are therefore, safe from conversion.

* Andy asked - what level of protection does a PCRC afford?? Do we need to modify the PCRC bylaw so that CR's are required?? It was noted that the open space set aside in PCRC developments is often used for disposal fields and therefore would not be acceptable CR's.

* Peter - Action: He will review the Open Space plan records and get files of land history. He will update the inventory of Open Space land (as part of the updating of the Open Space Plan)

3. Open Space and Recreation Plan - Peter and MaryAnn Ashton have volunteered to lead the effort to update the OSRP. They will draft additional people to write certain sections. Main tasks to be done.

- Tom Tidman needs to send an electronic version to Peter
- OSC needs to edit the survey - so a new one can be sent out (ACTION ITEM FOR ALL)
- OSC needs to look at each section of the plan and review SC needs to consider what additional items should be added to the plan (i.e. "climate change" section?)

ACTION ITEM for NEXT MEETING - Review section 8 - 9 "Goals and Objectives"

4. Karen provided a quick update on the Heath Hen meadow work. Susan Mitchell Hardt (ACT) and Christa Collins (SVT) will meet with Karen to review the parcels in this area and try to develop a list of potential land purchases for conservation.

5. The OSC has been focused on protecting existing conservation land – but we need to shift focus now to purchasing land with CPA funds. Andy noted that the Kennedy land would be an important opportunity, if ever possible. Research needed on who owns which parcels of this land. ACTION ITEM: Charlie

6. Acton Conservation Trust (ACT) - Susan provided an update on work that ACT is doing: Working on oversized lots in Spring Hill (9 acres) which have expired 30 year deed restrictions. They are also working on the Moritz property - land is currently in Ch. 61. It is a prime potential purchase, however, help is needed to make the financial case to the landowner. ACTION: Charlie will research ownership of this property.

7. Andy asked the group to comment about the sidewalk project from post office to Veterans field. The majority were in favor saving the trees.

NEXT MEETING - June 15th, 7:30 AM in town hall. The agenda will be focused on doing the survey for the OSRP.