

Minutes of Open Space Committee Meeting, March 16, 2022

In Attendance:

Janet Chayes, Michele Turre, Andrew Levchuk, Mac McCoy, Steve Jackson, Jack Farrell

Approved minutes of July 20, 2021. Next meeting set for May 10 at 7pm.

Mac noted points on July minutes that he was to revisit the project to check the decay of posts in S. River Meadow and confer with Janet and Michele on how or what to repair them with, and to follow up with the invasives.

Janet pointed out how to link to the Committee Google Docs page, and highlighted need for individual members to renew the Conflict-of-Interest Training required by the state.

Pollinator Plan: Bigelow Meadow Jack reviewed the background of the gift of the Bigelow Meadow to the town, its present state, a proposal to deal w/ invasives with longer term plan to create a walking path and native plant installations, while being sensitive to neighbors' concerns. No one agreed to coordinate the project. But Steve agreed to walk the property and make suggestions on timing of invasive treatment and plantings to screen the nearest house.

Native Plantings for Town Office Committee welcomed Cayte McDonough who presented a detailed plan to re-landscape the front of the Town Office with a native plant plan to also address run-off water issues. The Select Board had approved moving ahead on the project.

Committee agreed that various parts of the community were likely to respond positively to fundraising efforts. Cultural Council noted as a possible go to, primarily for signage (funds are not awarded until Dec.).

A move to allocate \$2,500 towards the native planting project for Town Office was approved.

Mac requested that a more detailed budget be prepared for better idea of total costs.

Janet noted that the Committee has about \$40,000 in the Small Cities Grant earmarked to implement the Open Space & Recreation Plan. This can be used for native plant/pollinator projects.

Open Space & Rec Plan (OSRP) Action Plan is ambitious!

Janet asked what people thought of recommending an ad hoc committee to investigate planting of shade trees along Main Street which is part of the OSRP. Steve said this is usually a duty of the town tree warden.

Long standing OSRP agenda item: identify priority areas of conservation interest for protection.

Michele noted 'Masswoods' was a resource for assessing how to go about putting areas into conservation. She will circulate a packet of info to discuss at the next meeting.

One goal is more progress curbing invasive plants throughout town. Cayte suggested a paid coordinator to implement management plans was probably needed.

New Business (not anticipated in advance): **Tree Selection Expertise for South River Meadow.** Currently there's a Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Riparian Buffer Project. For this grant funded project, graduate students from the Conway School are identifying riparian areas within the lower Deerfield River Watershed to address flooding and erosion, and to plant climate adapted trees. A move to allocate up to \$500 for Naturalist Laurie Sanders to consult on this. (She did the extensive Natural History Assessment of the South River Meadow.)