

Town of Westwood
Open Space & Recreation Planning Committee Meeting
Wednesday, December 6, 2017 – 7:00 PM
Champagne Meeting Room – 50 Carby Street

Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present:

Steve Olanoff, Brian Gorman, Ann Delaney, R.J. Sheer, Todd Sullivan, Roger Christian, Kristin Styer, Michael Gay, Chuck Sheehan, Pam Kane, Joe Previtera, Karon Catrone, Nicole Banks, Todd Korchin, Abigail McCabe, and Nora Loughnane.

Members Absent: John Hickey, Maryanne Carty, Ken Aries, and Mike Jaillet.

Committee Member Introductions

Each member of the committee introduced himself or herself and stated his or her interests in Open Space and Recreation Planning.

Consultant Introductions

Ms. Loughnane introduced Nate Carlucci of PGC Associates LLC and Jennifer Goldson of JM Goldson community preservation + planning.

Review of Open Space & Recreation Survey Results

Ms. Goldson summarized the results of the recent Open Space & Recreation Survey. She noted that the town had received a total of 641 responses to the online and print survey, which was conducted between November 13, and December 3, 2017. Ms. Goldson noted that only one survey respondent was under 18 years of age, and a lower than expected number of responses from residents over 60 years of age. She suggested that the committee may want to seek additional survey results from students and perhaps from senior citizens. A summary of the survey results is attached hereto and incorporated herein.

Inventory of Lands

Mr. Carlucci stated that PGA Associates was on schedule with its work on the Community Summary section of the initial draft update and was awaiting the town's update of the Inventory of Public Lands. Ms. Loughnane noted that there have been a handful of new land acquisitions since the OSRP was adopted in 2000, as well as restrictions placed on several properties by the Westwood Land Trust. She said that she would provide an updated inventory to Nate and Gino Carlucci prior to the next OSRPC meeting.

Planning for Visioning Session

Ms. Goldson spoke to the committee members about planning for an Open Space & Recreation Visioning Session planned for January 18, 2018. She handed out a document entitled "Count-Down to Your Community Workshop – An Outreach Checklist" and asked committee members to volunteer for various tasks on the checklist, including writing letters to the editor, sending out email invitations, and posting notices of the Visioning Session on social media. Several committee members volunteered to help spread the word about the Visioning Session.

The Committee decided to hold the public OSRP Visioning Session on Thursday, January 18th beginning at 7:00 pm at the Thurston Middle School Cafeteria.

Election of Chairman

Ms. Loughnane requested a volunteer to serve as committee chairman. Planning Board representative Brian Gorman made a motion to nominate Planning Board representative Steve Olanoff to serve as Chairman. The Motion was seconded by Ms. Loughnane. Mr. Olanoff accepted the position of Open Space & Recreation Committee Chairman.

Review of 2000 Open Space & Recreation Plan

Ms. Loughnane handed out copies of the 2000 Open Space & Recreation Plan. She requested that committee members review that plan and begin thinking about which goals and objectives remain relevant today, and which the committee might consider revising.

Ch. Olanoff asked Ms. Loughnane to explain the planning process, the role of the consultants, and that of the OSRPC. Ms. Loughnane explained that the consultants would prepare a draft plan following input from the OSRPC and the OSRPC would discuss the details of the draft plan and make revisions, as appropriate. She noted that a final draft plan would then be forwarded to the Planning Board for adoption, and then to Town Meeting for endorsement.

Ch. Olanoff spoke to the committee about a list of topics that he would like to see addressed in the OSRP Update. He said that he would like to include a goal of adopting management plans for each Conservation Area in town. He suggested that the town might consider reestablishing a land acquisition fund for open space, and the possibly asking voters to adopt the Community Preservation Act (CPA). Ms. Banks added the need for trail maintenance and programming. Ms. Goldson explained to possible uses of CPA funds. Ch. Olanoff noted that he was working with Hale Reservation on a proposal for the management of a volunteer trail maintenance program. Mr. Previterra stated that he would like to see opportunities for more recreational opportunities including a canoe or kayak launch into the Neponset River. Ms. Banks added the need for indoor and outdoor recreation space, and for improvements to existing facilities. Mr. Sheehan said that he would like to see lighting and artificial turf added to the lower Thurston fields to expand practice opportunities. Mr. Gorman spoke to the opportunity for Boy Scout involvement in trail maintenance. Ms. Kane added the need for some discussion of climate change and severe weather events. Mr. Sheered said that he would like the plan update to address invasive species control, water resource maintenance, and dam reconstruction.

Next Meeting: The Committee selected Thursday, January 4th at 7:00 pm at the Champagne Meeting room at 50 Carby Street for the next OSRPC meeting date.

The Committee adjourned at 8:49 pm.

List of Exhibits:

2000 Open Space & Recreation Plan
Westwood Open Space and Recreation Survey: Summary of Results, produced by J M Goldson, dated 12/4/17
Count-Down to Your Community Workshop – An Outreach Checklist, prepared by JM Goldson