

# **Town of Westminster**

MASSACHUSETTS 01473  
FROM THE OFFICE OF THE  
**Open Space Committee**  
Phone: (978) 874-7414

## **Minutes of Meeting – September, 21 2021 – Selectmen’s Meeting Room**

Attended: Jodi Snyder, Amy Tisdale Tetrault, Sue Millman, Isiah Grigos, Marie Auger, special guest Sheri Bean – Trails Coordinator for the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC), and Town Planner Stephen Wallace.

Absent: Heather Billings

The meeting started with approval of the meeting minutes for August 31, 2021.

The first order of business was hearing a presentation from Jassy Bratko, Director of Land Protection - North County Land Trust. Jassy gave the Committee an overview of the Land Trust’s recent land acquisition projects, previous projects in Westminster and provided an overview of the Trust’s outreach and education efforts. Jassy offered to help the Committee organize an estate-planning workshop for large parcel Westminster landowners. The Committee agreed this was a good idea to pursue next spring.

From there, the Committee discussed its municipal entity outreach assignments. Sue gave us the details of her meeting with the Planning Board earlier this month. Sue also said the Agricultural Commission was willing to write a letter of support for our open space stabilization fund idea. Amy said that the Hager Park Committee was willing to do the same. Isiah said he would meet again with the Crocker Pond Committee and ask them for a similar letter of support. Committees left to visit: Conservation Commission (Jodi and Sue) and Parks & Recreation Commission (Stephen). Once we have our letters of support, we will set up meetings with the Advisory Board, Capital Planning Committee and lastly the Select Board. Marie mentioned the possibility of the Planning Board sponsoring the Town Meeting warrant article to set up the fund.

The Committee then discussed how much money we should request for the open space stabilization fund and agreed on an initial request of \$200,000 per year. The Committee discussed what types of uses would be appropriate for the fund. The Committee agreed upon open space preservation (50%) and recreation, both passive and active (50%).

The Town Planner provided an update on two open space-related matters: the Town Planner has prepared a draft policy on how to handle Chapter land withdrawal requests that is currently under review by Town Counsel. Lastly, the Town was approached by the owner of 49 Bragg Hill Road about donating a portion of her backland to the Town for conservation purposes. Her land abuts a large parcel of Town-owned conservation land and contains a segment of the Mid-State Trail. Town Counsel has reviewed the deeds for this property and discovered two outstanding liens totaling approximately \$280,000. The landowner indicated that the liens would be paid off when the estate was settled after her death and that her will would include a land gift to the Town.

The Committee will meet next on Tuesday night November 2, 2021 at 7:00 PM. Our special guest will be Emma Elsworth, Executive Director of the Mount Grace Land Trust.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.