

Town of Westminster

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

Minutes of Meeting – December, 6 2021 – Selectmen’s Meeting Room

Attended: Amy Tisdale Tetrault, Isiah Grigos, Marie Auger, Sue Millman and Town Planner Stephen Wallace.

Absent: Heather Billings and Jodi Snyder.

The meeting started with approval of the meeting minutes for November 2, 2021.

The first order of business was an update on our municipal entity outreach assignments. The Town Planner noted that we received our second letter of support for our open space stabilization fund idea, from the Agricultural Commission. Jodi Snyder remotely attended the last Conservation Commission meeting, but has yet to provide an update on where they stand on the stabilization account idea. Isiah will follow up with the Crocker Pond Commission regarding their letter of support. The Town Planner will meet with the Recreation Commission in January to secure their support letter. The Committee agreed that we should round up our support letters by the end of the calendar year. Once we have our letters of support, we will set up meetings with the Advisory Board, Capital Planning Committee and lastly the Select Board.

The Committee then revisited the issue of how much money we should request for the open space stabilization fund and agreed on an initial request of \$250,000 per year as our starting point for negotiations. Marie said that the powers that be might try to steer us towards using the Town’s annual amount of leftover free cash for open space/recreation, which is a possibility. She also noted that we can go the citizen petition route if the powers that be do not support our initiative.

The Town Planner then gave an update on the Neighborhood Outreach Grant (we should know soon if we got the grant), updating the Town’s website to add a catch-all recreation page, and planning for our spring trail maintenance day. The Town Planner suggested inviting Dick O’Brien, Chair of the MRPC Trails Committee, to our next meeting. Dick should be able to help us with planning for our trail maintenance day. Town Planner suggested starting small with just a few trails: Mid-State, Crocker Pond and Hager Park. If we get a good turnout, we can expand next year’s trail maintenance day to include some of the trails created as part of the Town’s open space subdivisions.

The Committee also discussed the possibility of planning trails on abandoned road rights-of-way and had a long discussion about the difference between abandoning a road right-of-way versus discontinuing a Town road.

Amy also brought up the idea of working with the Historical Commission to prepare some pamphlets that give the history of our most significant trails, much like the Town of Lincoln does. We will consider this as a project for the future.

The Committee will meet next on Tuesday night January 18, 2022 at 7:00 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM.