

**Town of Shelburne**  
**Open Space Committee**  
**2021 Annual Report**

The Open Space Committee continues to value the efforts of our many citizens who support the goals of encouraging recreational access and protecting and preserving open space in the Town of Shelburne.

Open space is defined as, "land that is undeveloped, generally without paved roads or permanent structures, which includes, but is not be limited to, land to protect existing and future well fields, aquifers and recharge areas, watershed land, agricultural land, grasslands, fields, forest land, fresh water marshes and other wetlands, river, stream, lake and pond frontage, lands to protect scenic vistas, land for wildlife or nature preserve and land for active or passive recreational use such as the use of land for community gardens, trails, and noncommercial youth and adult sports, and the use of land as a park, playground or athletic field."

The major project this year has been continued work with the Recreation Committee on the Shelburne Trail system. Committee members and volunteers worked to clear brush, refresh blazes, remove invasive species, maintain trails, install bridging, and install trail signs and interpretive panels on trails on Massaemett Mountain, Wilcox Hollow, and the Wooded Loop.

The Committee continued to work on developing a route for a safe and legal way for the public to access and enjoy land gifted to the Town by Lillian Davenport on the riverfront. The Committee completed a detailed survey of wetlands and invasive species delineation, with topographical and property line surveys from Deerfield Avenue to the end of the Davenport lot including potential easements required.

Using grant funds from the Mohawk Trail Woodland Partnership and the Shelburne Cultural Council, the Committee designed and produced trail maps and educational, interpretive panels for the trails regarding forest health, sustainable forest management, invasive species control, and the relationship of forests and climate change.

Committee members met with representatives of the schools to work on developing educational modules with field trips identifying invasive species and conservation issues.

The Committee represented the Town on the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Board to work on strategies to advance sustainable and productive woodlands, land conservation, and economic development in the region.

The Committee reviewed priorities for the coming year, and has the following goals:

- Update the Shelburne Open Space and Recreation Plan;
- Identify and advance the top priority action items in the OSRP and continue work on action plans with interested citizens and town boards;
- Continue to assess the feasibility of access to the (former) Lillian Davenport property along the riverfront and take next steps to acquire easements over private property;
- In conjunction with the Recreation Committee, continue to identify landowners willing to open their land to the public, and identify, map and blaze such trails including posting trail signs;
- Work with the schools to promote trail use and advance education on invasive species;
- Advance approval of the Community Preservation Act for Shelburne; and,
- Promote the Open Space Donation Account as a means to fund open space acquisition with private dollars.

Through the efforts of many citizens using techniques such as conservation restrictions, Agricultural Preservation Restrictions and tax incentives (such as Chapter 61), residents of Shelburne have identified over 5,600 acres of agricultural land, woodlands and open space in the Town with some level of protection from development. (37.1% of the Town's land area.)

It is the privilege of the Open Space Committee to work with landowners as stewards of open space, and we are grateful for the support of many townspeople committed to preserving open space, agriculture and the rural character of the Town, and to the individuals who have contributed to the Open Space Donation Account this year. Account totals include: Open Space Donation Account:

\$ 16,094; Land Preservation Account: \$ 32,729; APR Local Match Account: \$ 1,250; Open Space Revolving Fund: \$ 489.

At-large Members:

Joel Dwight  
Larry Flaccus  
Joan Greenfield  
Thor Holbek  
Garth LaPointe  
Jim Perry  
David Schochet

Board Representatives:

Recreation Committee, Norman Beebe  
Agricultural Commission, vacant  
Conservation Commission, Norm Davenport  
Planning Board, John Wheeler