

OSC Meeting Minutes 9/26/16

David called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm.

Members present Linda Herrera, David Schochet, Larry Flaccus, Norm Beebe, John Wheeler, Jim Perry, Norm Davenport, Joel Dwight, and guest Arlene Patenaude.

Arlene is thinking of joining the OSC and came to observe the meeting.

The minutes from 8/22/16 meeting were reviewed and accepted with reference to the Wooded Loop Trail capitalized.

David told us about the recent meeting where people interested in the trees in the village took a walk together to observe and learn about those trees. Linda, Jim, and Norm Beebe were there as well as David. Linda told us Jim Richardson pointed out the different species. Some people were approaching it from a recreational viewpoint and some from an educational viewpoint. Jim Richardson also explained the work that had been done with trees on Mechanic Street and how that might be used as a model for other streets. Norm Beebe told us Ken Gooch from Berkshire County had guided them through the Mechanic Street project when that was done some years ago. Jim Richardson had then just come on as tree warden and supported the project. Norm and another fellow had gone up and down the street and raised money by people agreeing to sponsor trees. Jim Richardson pointed out that a wise choice had been made in only planting 3 or 4 trees of the same species so if there was a problem with one species, such as ash is going through now, it would not take out the entire collection. David suggested some signage to indicate what the trees are and a bit about them. A walking map could then be built around that. Larry thought the Greater Shelburne Falls Area Business Association should take the lead on the project. David said the Business Association had indicated they didn't want to take the lead but he could ask them how they might support the project there. Larry suggested we could get some costs together on signage and mapping and then talk with them about the project. Jim Perry told the group there is an inventory of village trees done by a forester about 4 years ago and Terry has the report. Larry wondered if we might want to work with Buckland. David noted they had done some good work in Buckland. Linda asked John if when the Planning Board was walking about looking at frontages and setbacks if they had considered the trees. John said they did not do much about considering the trees but did notice how nicely the trees had worked out on the Mechanic Street project. David will talk with the Business Association and Mary Prouse from FRCOG. Linda said we need to focus on what we are going to do and David pointed out that we could start with which trees to identify and perhaps pick out 15 species. We will find the tree inventory and look at it with Jim Richardson and get his input. Larry suggested we could approach the Selectboard to see where it would be most desirable to plant trees. Jim Perry thought Jim Richardson would know where they are most needed. Norm Beebe thinks we should identify the trees and perhaps push towards forming a tree committee. Larry thought there may still be a village beautification fund that might be used to help with the project. He also pointed out that you could combine the trees with the mosaics in the village and historic houses as a brochure for a self guided walk. David will speak with Andrea Llamas and he will speak with Terry and try to find out about the beautification fund. He also thought invasive species might be pointed out. Linda will ask Jim Richardson about what trees to identify for a brochure. Joel will look into tree signs. John spoke about the signage used at Longwood Gardens and how those seemed to work out very well.

Norm Beebe asked how things are going on the Wooded Loop Trail. Jim said he and David had walked the trail and found there were some trees down and there is a need for some new blazes. They are going

to meet with John Payne on Wednesday morning at 11 am. Larry wondered if they could speak with him about extending the trail to come out on Route 2 near his place. They might then form a trail on Larry and Sue Flaccus' property that would follow down along Allen Brook.

David asked about the map project. Joel will contact Rita and we will work on that at our next meeting. David will bring in his maps and leave them.

Planning Board update:

John told us about the Planning Boards walk around the village looking at setbacks, frontages, and lot sizes. John said perhaps 77% of the houses in the village are nonconforming. There have been questions about if the bylaws make sense if they don't match what is already present. Some of the interest was brought about by the need for parking. They were also considering the accessory dwelling bylaw and affordable housing. The walk was mostly for information gathering. Proposed construction at the Swan block and the Singley building are being affected by the parking regulations.

John then reported he had gone to a grazing conference at Harvard Forest. They have recently bought a farm and golf course and they are going to be doing some grazing research there.

Norm Davenport reported the Conservation Commission doesn't have a great deal going on right now. They meet the first Tuesday of each month but might have a couple of months off during the winter. Their most recent project has been the drainage at the junction of Colrain-Shelburne Road and Route 2.

Norm Beebe reported for the Recreation Commission that the tennis courts are now paved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:32 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joel Dwight
Secretary Pro Tem