

DRAFT

Shelburne Open Space Committee Meeting

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April 25, 2022

**Members present** Norm Beebe, Joel Dwight, Larry Flaccus, Joan Greenfield, Garth Lapointe, Jim Perry, David Schochet, John Wheeler

**Guests** - Kimberly MacPhee, Andrea Donelan from FRCOG; Laurie Wheeler from Arms Library

Larry called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

**Kimberly spoke about Shelburne Open Space and Recreation Plan update.** FRCOG has \$7,000 from the state of Massachusetts dedicated to use on our plan. An additional \$14,000 or \$15,000 will be needed to complete the plan. **Kimberly spoke with Peggy Sloan of FRCOG about a grant program** they are starting that might be used to cover our update. She has submitted a proposal to Mass Audubon and will probably know the result this fall. **It would cover the entire plan.**

**Related OSRP issues:**

-Kimberly **has woven aspects of climate resiliency into the grant;**

-She suggests doing the public service portion and an interactive portion on the Town website that residents can access.

**-Funding--**If the Audubon funding doesn't come through we will have to work around it. Norm said the ReComm is working on a grant application to fund a skating rink. Kimberly suggested talking with the fellow in charge of the Audubon grant to see if there were any crossovers between our grant and the Recreation Committee grant. Larry said the Woodlands Partnership Implementation Grant has a possibility of making \$25,000 available to each town in the partnership. David said he had gotten a call from Samantha Smith (MASSAudubon) and wondered if she might be involved with the grant program that could be used for our Plan update..

David wondered about which sections within the Plan need to be rewritten. Regarding the body of the Plan, Kimberly thought that some of the text some could stay the same but much would need to be updated.

**The group agreed we should start the process with the public survey.** Kim thought we could use much of the old survey and make a few additions to include climate. Kimberly thinks FRCOG has a copy of our previous survey. If not, Larry will send it to them. FRCOG will start working on the survey, and then we can go on to maps in parts 3 and 4 of the Plan update. Kimberley will check with Peggy Sloan to see if FRCOG can write a Letter of Support for the skating rink grant application Norm and the RecComm is working on. Kimberly would also like pictures that could be used showing some of the projects we have worked on.

## **OSC Collaboration with Arms Library**

**Laurie Wheeler came to discuss an OSC and Arms Library collaboration** re: encouraging Town residents to utilize walking/hiking routes—in town or nearby-- that the OSC and /or private citizens have created and made available to the public. The Library is doing a summer reading program called "Off the Beaten Path" to inspire people to get out into the natural world. Adults will read a book about a unique Appalachian Trail hiker and meet to discuss it. There will also be theme-related books for young people to read and optys to discuss them. Laurie said the program starts at the beginning of June and will include walks at least once or twice a month.

Jim Perry said he would be willing to lead hikes. Jim will select hikes targeted for different groups. Joan volunteered to work with Jim and Laurie on the project. Jim has given Laurie a selection of brochures and maps of the various trails in Shelburne. Laurie will send a emails to Jim and Joan to get the project started.

**Minutes from our March 28th meeting** were reviewed and accepted as presented. Moved by Jim Perry, seconded y Norm Beebe. Minutes approved unanimously.

## **Trail status updates –**

Larry recently spoke with the Selectboard, where Andrew Baker noted he had walked **the Tower Trail** and really enjoyed it.

**Wooded Loop Trail update** - Jim and Garth rewalked a possible future trail going out from the Wooded Loop Trail towards Summit Drive. Garth said it was a fairly easy hike after you have completed the steep climb up from Summit Drive. The fairly sizable loop crosses a brook, abuts cliffs, travels a ridge, and goes by several vernal pools. **Jim spoke with an abutting landowner**, Art, on the hill above the proposed trail and he was quite supportive of the project. Jim also spoke with Donna West (resident in the house on Summit Drive below the trail); she wasn't opposed, but wasn't as strongly enthusiastic as Art.

**Jim and Garth have pretty well laid out a viable route.** The trail would connect the furthest loop of the Orange Loop Trail to Summit Drive. It would need one simple plank bridge across a brook and some proper blazing and signage. They found a way around the logging debris but encountered a lot of thorn bushes colonizing the recently-logged areas abutting the Summit Drive end.

Larry asked if the color of the new trail could be changed on the map or labeled with "trail starts here" so that the new portions are easy to distinguish. He would then send it on to the Paynes for their input.

**Jim will send Larry a PDF of the map that he can use.**

**David gave a membership update.** Thor, sadly, tendered his resignation from the OSC, to relocate to the Newberryport area, leaving another vacant seat on the Committee. He will be missed by the group: hopefully a replacement can be found.

David reviewed the structure of the OSC's membership:

the Committee has 15 membership slots:

11 are filled by "**At Large**" **volunteers** who serve 3 year renewable terms (we currently have 6 active members –Larry, Joan, Garth, David, Jim, Joel and 5 vacancies—in this category).

4 remaining slots are filled by representatives from other relevant Town committees ---Planning Board (currently John Wheeler); Conservation Commission (Norm Davenport); Recreation Committee (Norm Beebe); Agricultural Commission-(status unclear)--whose purview overlaps with the work of the OSC. They are selected --or volunteer--by each committee.

Of our At-Large membership--Larry, Joan, and Garth's memberships expire this year. Joel and Jim expire next year. David's was just renewed till 2024. Norman is the liaison for the Recreation Committee, John Wheeler has been acting as the liaison for the Planning Board. The Conservation Commission and the Ag Committee have sent no representatives for some time and have not responded to outreach attempts.

#### **Ideas for attracting new members :**

**Garth** thought we might add to our membership by attracting volunteers to work on the trails and put the word out using Andrew Baker's new newsletter.

**John** said the Ag Committee currently consists of Carolyn Wheeler, Courtney from Apex Orchards, Jonathan Graves, and Ernie Kelly. **Norm** will post something on his Recreation Committee communication to try and attract members for the OSC and volunteers to work on the trails.

**Jim will put up notices** at the trailheads.

Joan wondered about the deadline for a trail article that could be put into the newsletter.

Larry thought we might benefit from finding out how Ashfield organizes trail volunteers.

#### **Member Committees' Reports –**

John Wheeler reported that the **Planning Board** has 5 warrant articles prepared for Town Meeting. 1 - Ag Green Houses, 2 -Retail in Residential area, 3 - Marijuana, 4 - Clarification of Signage laws, 5 - Special Permits that the Zoning Board deals with . John also said Patricia Piaggie was appointed to fill out a one year term last year and is running for a four year position. There is also a five year position open that no one is running for. This will be John's last year on the Planning Board, as he will not running again when his term expires.

**Recreation Committee Report** - Norm is applying for a grant to level the ball field in preparation for installing a skating rink and also working on the Open Space and Recreation Plan update. He would like Larry to write a letter of support for the Recreation Comm'grant application.

David reported that there was no correspondence.

No visitor or guest comments.

Joan remarked about the unwelcoming No Trespassing sign at the end of Cosby's road across from the the Wooded Loop Trailhead, and its threatening tone. Was it having a negative impact on folks who wanted to hike the Wooded Loop trails? Norm thought that the bigger issue is more about exploring access to that land for more trails, and the that signage is secondary.

**Our next meeting will be May 23, 2022.**

Motion to adjourn made by Joan Greenfield, seconded by Jim Perry. Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.