

MINUTES OF THE OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 23, 2004

MEMBERS PRESENT: Robert J. Tashjian, Barbara Wyatt, Betsy DeMallie, Thomas Halpin, Mike Peckar, and Karen Pare.

GUEST SPEAKER: James M. French, Land Acquisition Coordinator, The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Watershed Management, Field Headquarters, 180 Beaman Street, West Boylston, MA. 01583.

The Chairman, Dr. Tashjian, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

Minutes: In accordance with the minutes of the March 17, 2004 meeting, Dr. Tashjian has prepared the minutes of this meeting as Secretary Pro Tem.

Officers of the Open Space Advisory Committee: Dr. Robert J. Tashjian was unanimously elected Chairman and Mr. Mike Peckar was unanimously elected Vice Chairman. The third position of Secretary was not filled since there were no volunteers for the position, and as a result the required minutes are prepared by volunteers from the committee as Secretary Pro Tem.

Recording of minutes: The Open Space Advisory Committee is a recognized official committee of West Boylston. It does not report to the Town Wide Planning Committee as did the Open Space Committee for the West Boylston Master Plan. The committee reports directly to the Selectman through the Town Administrator. As a Municipal Committee, minutes of meetings are required. The following suggested protocol was prepared by Karen Pare similar to the protocol of the Planning Board:

1. Minutes are taken at meeting "A". They are written up and circulated to the members of the board before the next meeting ("B")
2. At meeting "B", the minutes are amended if necessary. Then a motion is made to either "accept the minutes of the meeting of...as amended" or "accept the minutes of the meeting of ...as written". The motion is seconded and voted on by the board.
3. The final copy of the minutes is published on letterhead. This copy is signed by the Clerk on the board – usually at meeting "C". A copy of the signed final minutes is given to the Town Clerk.

Presentation by Mr. James French:

Mr. French is a highly competent and dedicated conservationist and environmentalist. He is extremely knowledgeable on wetlands and the justification of protection of public water supplies.

Jim opened with an overview of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs statewide land and protection plan – produced the map of the state showing priority areas as determined by “stacking” the various criteria adopted by state agencies and land trusts (both local and regional). The map makes clear by a glance that West Boylston is on the western fringe of the most menacing Greater Boston suburban sprawl. Our part of the state is clearly a priority - particularly due to the needs to maintain an aggressive land protection program for the Wachusett Reservoir watershed. A second map, *Living Waters*, was shown illustrating a statewide effort to identify critical wetland and riverine habitats worthy of special attention vis-à-vis land protection. And a publication entitled *Preserving Our Quality of Life: A Conservation Vision for Massachusetts* was handed out to members present.

It was explained that we are a 5 million acre state with a population of 6 million people (the population of the 12 colonies in 1778). The increasing strain on our land base and resources is taxing our ability to maintain a quality lifestyle which can only be secured by our success in providing for, and adequately protecting, our natural ecosystems. Each town must do what it can to protect its land base – by working in consort with the commonwealth, with land trusts, with local boards, and with individual landowners.

There was some discussion regarding the history of MDC land acquisition within the town and watershed, and the differences between fee acquisition and conservation restrictions. Some brainstorming on land protection strategies and varying funding sources took place. Jim related some Sterling Land Trust (he is current president of SLT) stories of survival and woe.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned about 9:15 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Date accepted: _____

By: _____

Robert J. Tashjian, V.M.D., Secretary Pro Tem

West Boylston Open Space Advisory Committee Meeting

Town of West Boylston
120 Prescott Street
West Boylston, MA 01583

Joint meeting with
Sterling Open Space Implementation Committee
Town of Sterling

Agenda

Thursday, July 22nd, 2004
Selectman's Room 7:00pm
Mixer Municipal Building, West Boylston

1. Secretary Pro Tem for this meeting: Ms. Kristina Vickstrom
2. Call to Order: 7:20 pm
3. Welcome
4. Members of West Boylston Open Space Advisory Committee:
 - a.) Robert Tashjian, V.M.D., Chairman (present)
 - b.) Mike Peckar, Vice Chairman (present)
 - c.) Betsy DeMallie (present)
 - d.) Tom Halpin, M.D. (absent)
 - e.) Karen Pare (absent)
 - f.) Val Pruneau (present)
 - g.) Barbara Wyatt (absent)
5. Members of Sterling Open Space Implementation Committee
 - a.) Robert Spencer, Chairman (present)
 - b.) Brian Cline, Vice Chairman (present)
 - c.) Marian Larson (absent), corrected email address: marian.larson@state.ma.us
 - d.) Maryanne MacLeod (present)
 - e.) Sue Valentine (absent)
 - f.) Bob Protano (absent)
6. Introduction of members of West Boylston Open Space Advisory Committee, Sterling Open Space Implementation Committee and guests attending July 22nd meeting.

Welcome: Dr. Tashjian
Others in attendance:
-Diran Apelian
-Pauline-Greenways
-Nancy Lucier- West Boylston Municipal Assistant
-Faith Maron- Landmark

- Bob Hyde
- Amanda Amery- Montachusett Regional Planning Committee
aamory@mrpc.org
guyett51@charter.net
- Tashjian**: presented the West Boylston plan to Sterling
- Brian**: will give copy of Sterling plan on CD Rom to West Boylston
- Spencer**: Amanda interested in how we (Sterling) reach out in a regional basis, and EO418 grants
- Mike**: Did some work with Montachusett before. End results were very good.
- Amanda**: one of recommendations that came out of the Sterling plan was to develop an Implementation committee
 - working on regional plan for trail ways
 - housing, economic development, open space, etc
 - \$30,000 made available to each committee, to develop plans if didn't already have them. Now move to master plans
 - how to create affordable housing while saving open space and maintaining a tax basis to support the town.
- Spencer**: town had the option to use through regional planning commissions or hire others
- Brian**: it's a data collection project. Contains other elements not directly related to Open Space
- Spencer**: had open meetings to discuss options and services, in final stages now.
- Brian**: due to limited budgets had to pick battles. From open space all the way to traffic safety.
- Mike**: is there any work/opportunities that would extend into West Boylston, other than the rail trail?
- Brian**- clear connections with Stillwater basins and wildlife corridors and a greater regional trail system.
- Amanda**: 11 town region: Wachusett Working Landscape Partnership, trying to Make connections to protect
- Spencer**: potential partners for Sterling Fair
- Betsy**: When is Sterling Fair
- Brian**: Sep 10, 11, 12
- Tashjian**: first joint meeting with Sterling demonstrated we could work together on a number of issues, Sterling Fair is the main focus
 - Also Big E- brochures included in packet. All are welcome to be there and participate at the Big E
 - Bob will now take over the meeting to discuss the Sterling Fair

7. Purpose of this meeting

Sterling Fair

- Spencer**: idea of joint meeting came from West Boylston board.
 - what we've done since the last meeting, incubating the idea of a land conservation exhibit at the Sterling Fair.
 - WB
 - Sterling

- Wachusett Greenways
- need larger than a 10 X 10
- have list of other organizations to contact if we choose
- what do we want in the display
- get our reservation, pay the fee
- July 27th there is a meeting with the Sterling Fair Committee, should be present

Pauline: Greenways get two 10 x 10's to set up

Maryanne: 10 X 20 \$50

20 X 40 is \$150

-other space available free of charge

Pauline: concerns of being stuck in the back of a tent

Maryanne: having a tent of our own with a common theme and separate area

Mike: having a 10 X 20 is out of the question

Brian: Theme: Regional Open Space Activities and Recreation, inform/educate people. Need to limit what's in the tent and be separate from others.

Bob: lets come up with a theme

Maryanne: phrase needs to be catchy

Amanda: focus on the trails, water quality aspect,

Tashjian: Regional Open Space is comprehensive covering many areas, concerned about setting out just as recreation activities.

Brain: Good to educate people that "open space" is

Faith: "Working to preserve family friendly land in your own backyard"

Mike: the word greenways should be in their as well

Besty: Headline be a question? "How Open Space Can be Conserved in Your Community"

Tashjian: Open Space means a lot of things to a lot of different people. Challenge education aspect should dovetail with the other activities. To the average person, Open space is not going to mean the same thing

Amanda: it's a public resource, want to make the public aware that they'll have access to. Wachusett Reservoir: fishing, Sterling rail trail (Leominster and sterling)

Tashjian: agree, but mission goes beyond recreation uses

Spencer: wants to sign up volunteers to participate in implementation activities.

Brian: important to go through the list to see who we want to also participate in The tent. Nashua Rivershed Association.

Mike: staffing a rotating shift of representatives who are selling items.

Amanda: fundraising may be an opportunity, new sponsor members, etc.

Pauline: Need a space because sells a lot of items . Getting people to volunteer. 3 People per 2 hours. Coverage is an issue.

Brian: -WB

-Sterling

-Montachusett Regional Planning Commission

-Nashua Rivershed Watershed Association

-Central Mass Regional Planning Commission

-Wachusett Greenways

-Sterling Recreation Committee

- Sterling Conservation Commission
- East Lake Washakum Association
- having some pamphlets may be of some interest to fair goers
- Spoke to Jim French (DCR), couldn't get a delegate from Sterling Land Trust
- DCR would be good
- Stillwater Farm
- Maryann Larson works for Mass Wildlife to increase visibility of their agency

Spencer: got form Amanda, Mass Watershed Collation, Purewater Stewardship, Clinton Greenways Conservation Trust, Clinton Open Space Committee

Amanda: creating a linkage from Mass Central Rail trail and Berlin

Tashjian: important to stay focused on Open Space of WB and Sterling, careful to have any one group takeover and the open space to get lost. Clearly put out into theme and lays a foundation to grow from there.

Amanda: sees point, suggests pursuing the Clinton linkage. Not a lot of open space left and will be pivotal.

Brian: It'll be our tent and we'll make it whatever we want it to be.

Betsy: seems Land Trust is pivotal for Open Space. Ordinary citizen doesn't know what their options are

Bob: theme is still land and open space

Mike: all these groups have separate agendas, but have a core theme of Open space.

Brian: "From Soccer to Salamanders"

Mike: "The Big Green Tent" Cover everything

Brian: Open space planning, concerned with overselling green, by not getting all the people in tent that we'd want to get in. Don't wan to scare people off.

Amanda: people advocate for Open Space because they want to four-wheel and run their snowmobile through it. Is there an Equestrian interest?

Maryanne: somehow doesn't connote the type of thing we're trying to pursue here. Snowmobiling is very noisy and destructive, automatically causes a polarization, and want to avoid that contingency.

Brian: Equestrian access point right in that region.

Mike: Don't know of any specific groups of people from this region. Other regions have great partnerships with byways dedicated to each activity and the paths do not cross. All coming out of Open Space efforts.

Maryanne: "The Land You Love, The Trails You Follow," segway that into conservation, open space, agriculture.

Tashjian: "Coalition of Regional Open Space Conservation, Recreation,....."

Diran: all the other organizations are their to support with the focus on Open Space. Have a theme that grabs people. When a fair takes place, want to attract people, what do you want them to leave with. What do we want them to think about.

Brian: appreciation for what open space planning really is. Need it to be a better word without a negative connotation.

Amanda: who are you going to capture while you're there.

Tashjian: groups we're going to invite are part of that total picture.

Spencer: next steps?

- create a subcommittee to take it to the next step. Could only be a few people
- budget, registration, sign, getting volunteers, tents, tables. Create a "cool" tent.

Tashjian: wants to stay together, since we're not too big.

Spencer: Thurs 6:30 at Municipal Building at Sterling. Sterling Fair Meeting.

Maryanne: would be in a specific area.

Brian: proposal for how to handle the fair. 20 X 40 is \$150

Wachusett secure a 10 X 20, and a Sterling/ WB 20 X 40, spaces next to one another.

Land trust will front the \$150, and then figure out how to reimburse.

Mike: split up organizations to call,

Spencer: WB land trust will contribute to the costs.

- The spaces are actually 20 X 20 and 10 X 15.
- Greenways will get a 20 X 20 and we'll get a 20 X 20
- not sure of the cost.

Brian: will get it clarified.

- discussed the possible involvement of Clinton's Open Space
- should at least invite the bordering towns of West Boylston and Sterling.
- spread the wings a little bit this year and then later involving all bordering towns.

Brian: limit it to towns that abut Sterling because it's the Sterling Fair.

- Holden
- Lancaster
- Clinton
- Leominster
- West Boylston

Spencer: Schedule a next meeting to discuss signage and more nitty gritty details.

-Bob Spencer or representative should meet at the Sterling Fair Committee meeting, July 29th at 6:30pm- Sterling Municipal Building

Next Meeting: Friday, July 30th Selectman's Room in Mixter Municipal Building in West Boylston, 7pm.

8. Big E: "Preserving America's Family Farmland and Heritage" (September 17 – October 3, 2004) 18 X 30 foot exhibit in Farm-A-Rama Building. Malden Brook Farm Heritage Center

9. Continued discussion on areas of mutual concern and collaboration and how we can share and help each other to meet the comprehensive challenges of Open Space now.

10. Other business

Spencer: open to public through landmark, to supply ideas to Maryanne McCloud (Marmacster@aol.com) for ideas for table.

-Set a deadline: August 1st deadline.

-to expand membership, to tackle ideas that are in plan

Brian: get volunteers to work on concise projects that have a start and a finish.

-trails, land acquisitions, etc.

12. Adjournment: 8:50pm

WEST BOYLSTON OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Town of West Boylston
120 Prescott Street
West Boylston, MA. 01583

Regional meeting with
STERLING OPEN SPACE IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE
Town of Sterling

Minutes

Friday, July 30th, 2004
Selectman's Room – 7:00 pm
Mixer Municipal Building, West Boylston

1. Secretary Pro Tem for this meeting: Ms. Linda Bogosian
2. Call to Order: 7:15 PM
3. Welcome
4. Members of West Boylston Open Space Advisory Committee:
 - a.) Robert Tashjian, V.M.D., Chairman (present)
 - b.) Mike Peckar, Vice Chairman (present)
 - c.) Betsy DeMallie (absent)
 - d.) Tom Halpin, M.D. (absent)
 - e.) Karen Pare (absent)
 - f.) Val Pruneau (absent)
 - g.) Barbara Wyatt (absent)
5. Members of Sterling Open Space Implementation Committee:
 - a.) Robert Spencer, Chairman (present)
 - b.) Brian Cline, Vice Chairman (absent)
 - c.) Marian Lawson (absent)
 - d.) Maryanne MacLeod (present)
 - e.) Sue Valentine (absent)
 - f.) Bob Protano (absent)
6. Discussion and approval of the minutes of the July 22nd meeting followed by an apology from Mr. Peckar in that he would have to leave the meeting at 7:45 PM as he had a prior commitment. The rest of the committee accepted the apology with understanding.

7. "Tilling the shares" by Neil D. Brett, Sunday Telegram, June 20, 2004 was again reviewed. At this time, Ms. Maryanne MacLeod stated that she had started an organic farming group in Sterling. The e-mail address for this group is chockettcoop@aol.com. The Selectmen have approved the effort and will partnership with the schools on the importance of farming and growing organic foods. Maryanne went on to inform the committee on the efforts to save the Mudgett Farm in Sterling.
8. Sterling Fair Discussion - Chaired by Robert Spencer

Mr. Robert Spencer stated lots of press coverage should be allotted to the efforts of the Open Space Committees.

Ms. Maryanne MacLeod suggested that T-shirts might be advantageous for our efforts but Mr. Robert Spencer said that there was no available money for these and if T-shirts were an option, they would be an out of pocket expense.

Dr. Robert Tashjian suggested that sponsors might be considered; namely, banks, developers, etc.

Mr. Michael Peckar stated that though this was a good idea, it might be too late to secure sponsors but that we should consider this the next time.

Participating organizations such as the Sterling Land Trust, etc., Sterling and West Boylston organizations that can be identified with the Open Space plans of Sterling and West Boylston should be invited and included if possible. Mr. Spencer suggested that interested organizations/parties need to respond by August 12th and should be invited to attend the August 12th meeting of this committee. A list of potential participants as of July 30 was provided along with the agenda for this evening's meeting. Mr. Robert Spencer has been in contact with the Princeton Open Space Committee, the Leominster Land Trust, the Lancaster Land Trust, the Clinton Greenways Trust and the South Meadow Pond and Wildlife Association. Mr. Peckar has spoken with the White Oaks Land Trust and will contact the Holden Open Space Committee as well as the Princeton Land Trust. Ms. Maryann MacLeod will speak with the Friends of the Wachusett Watershed and see if they are interested in participating. Mr. Michael Peckar will contact Worcester's Land Trust to see if they are interested in this project. All will report back to the committee on their findings.

The committee agreed that two 10x20 spaces would be needed. Sterling has already reserved space and paid the \$50 required fee. There is no electricity available at the site but the committee felt there was no need for electric power. The committee will provide its own tents.

Mr. Michael Peckar suggested that Greenways might have a tent and he will follow up on this. He also said that planning would be necessary as to how it would fit. Mr. Peckar will let Mr. Spencer know the details once he has secured the information.

Mr. Robert Spencer brought up the necessity of establishing the name of the theme for the event. It was suggested that the public be invited to offer names for the theme. Dr. Robert Tashjian stated that it was most important that the theme focused upon CONSERVATION/RECREATION/AGRICULTURE. The Regional Coalition of Open Space theme was mentioned as well. All present agreed on the main focus.

Ms. Maryanne MacLeod suggested the possibility of having a banner made for the event. The expense of a banner will be researched. Mr. Peckar said he has a large white board we might use but the concern for wind was brought up. Ms. MacLeod also brought up the subject of brochures and Dr. Tashjian said he

could help to make these but we would first have to see the various groups participating. All members of this committee were advised to think about the preparation of this brochure. It was agreed that AGRICULTURE was the major link to the Fair.

At this time Dr. Robert J. Tashjian told the committee that he had two baby deer that had been rescued from Mount Wachusett and were being cared for at his hospital. Research will be done as to the possibility of bringing the deer to the Fair. Ms. Maryanne MacLeod will speak with Marian Lawson as to whether or not this is possible considering that they are wild animals. The committee was delighted with the expectation of bringing the deer to the Fair and felt they would be a tremendous attraction for children. Mr. Spencer said that he had two daughters that are familiar with animals as they work at the Davis Farm and they would probably be happy to guard and care for the protection of the deer. Note – Since the meeting, Mr. Spencer and Doctor Tashjian has spoken to Marian Lawson and this is not possible according to state wildlife regulations.

Mr. Peckar suggested that it was important that the Division of Conservation and Recreation (MDC) be contacted and invited to participate. He also suggested that if all the various groups participate, even more space will be needed for the event.

Dr. Robert Tashjian told the committee that Pride Park, a West Boylston group had contacted him and stated that they were interested in participating. Dr. Tashjian will have brochures relating to Malden Brook Farm available.

Again, considering the amount of interest that will finally be generated and included in this event, Mr. Peckar stated that we would definitely need 2 10x20 areas or even maybe one 20x20 area. Also, if the deer are allowed to come, they would need separate provisions and an area for a pen.

Ms. MacLeod told the committee that she felt it was most important that the public be told WHY open space is so very important. She felt the committee needed to give much thought as to how this could be achieved. Dr. Robert Tashjian said the Jim French has lots of facts on this subject and would be a big help. This consideration of how to educate the public and get the word out on the importance of open space will be a separate item on the agenda at the next meeting.

Mr. Robert Spencer suggested that the committee postpone further items on the agenda until the next meeting and it was agreed by those present.

At this time, Mr. Spencer thanked Dr. Robert Tashjian for taking the lead in this entire effort and personally thanked him on behalf of the committee. Mr. Spencer also commented on how nice it was to have the agenda so well presented and how much it helped in conducting an orderly meeting. Mr. Spencer asked Dr. Tashjian to continue in his position of leadership and Dr. Tashjian thanked Mr. Spencer agreed to do so.

NEXT MEETING:

THURSDAY, AUGUST 12, 2004 - 7 PM - SELECTMAN'S ROOM - MIXTER MUNICIPAL BUILDING,
WEST BOYLSTON

Meeting Adjourned: 8:10 PM

REGIONAL OPEN SPACE ALLIANCE MEETING

Thursday, 27 January 2005
Mixer Building, West Boylston

Co-hosted By

WEST BOYLSTON OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Town of West Boylston

STERLING OPEN SPACE IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE
Town of Sterling

Towns Represented: West Boylston, Sterling, Boylston, Clinton, Holden, Princeton, and Worcester

Meeting: 7PM scheduled meeting called to order by Dr. Robert J. Tashjian, Co-Moderator at 7:10 PM

Welcome: Dr. Robert J. Tashjian, Co-Moderator, Town of West Boylston

Attendance: Approximately 25 people were in attendance at this meeting including the following people:

Host Town Representation:

West Boylston Open Space Advisory Committee:

1. Robert J. Tashjian, V.M.D., Chairman
 - Also representing the West Boylston Land Trust
2. Mike Peckar, Vice Chairman
 - Also representing the West Boylston Land Trust
3. Diran Apelian, Ph.D.
4. Larry Caron
5. Betsy DeMallee
6. Thomas Halpin, M.D

Mr. Leon Gaumond, West Boylston Town Administrator

Sterling Open Space Implementation Committee

1. Robert Spencer, Chairman
2. Brian Cline, Vice Chairman

Other Municipality representation:

1. Anthony Costello, M.D., Chairman, Holden Open Space Implementation Committee
2. Kale Kallock, Princeton Open Space Committee
3. Deb Cary, Princeton Open Space Committee
 - Also representing Massachusetts Audubon Society, Broad Meadow Brook Conservation Center and Wildlife Sanctuary
4. Gary Tuthill, Boylston
5. Katie Donovan, Land Use Specialist, City of Worcester

State of Massachusetts Government offices represented:

1. Gladys Rodriguez-Parker, District Affairs Director for Congressman James McGovern, 3rd District
2. James Kersten, Legislative Aide for Representative James Leary
3. Jim DiToulio, Chief of Staff for Representative Harold Naughton
4. Senator Harriette Chandler, First Worcester District

Other Organizations Represented:

1. Judith Haran, President, White Oak Land Trust Conservation Society
2. James French, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)
 - Also representing the Sterling Land Trust
3. Debbie Shriver, Wachusett Working Landscapes Partnership (WWLP)

Next Meeting: Thursday, April 21, 2005 at 7PM in West Boylston (Mixer Building).

- Also representing the Massachusetts Watershed Coalition
4. Frannie Hodge, President, Clinton Greenways Conservation Trust

Other Attendees:

1. Douglas Kirkpatrick, Esq. (potential pro bono support)
2. Reverend Dr. Gary Shahinian, visitor.

Meeting Agenda: A 4-page agenda including background information and a summary of expected attendees was distributed at the beginning of the meeting.

Meeting Overview:

After a brief overview of the purpose of this meeting and introductions of the members and guests present, Dr. Tashjian asked the various representatives of the committees to offer a few words as to the status of their organization. This activity generated an excellent open discussion with most, if not all, meeting attendees contributing to the discussion.

Deb Cary from Massachusetts Audubon Society (MAS) highlighted programs of the Society and had several brochures available for the taking covering the activities of the Society (See also www.massaudubon.com). Ms. Cary said that on Saturday, May 14th the MAS was planning a celebration for the 100-year anniversary of the Wachusett Reservoir. She invited others to consider coordinating activities on this day. Ms. Cary also noted the cooperation between the DCR and the Friends of Wachusett Watershed in the Stillwater Farm site protection efforts [near the intersection of Routes 140 and 62 in Sterling].

Kale Kallock from Princeton Open Space Committee related that she was a Graduate student at Antioch College pursuing a degree in environmental affairs (natural resource management).

Judith Haran from the White Oak Land Trust Conservation Society told the group that the organization was enjoying its 5th year of existence with 250 paid members and had just hired a part-time staff person with an office. The Society's Winter Carnival was scheduled to be held at Trout Brook Reservation on February 6th. Judy noted that the Society was cooperating with the City of Worcester and the Trust for Public Land (www.tpl.org) on watershed-related land protection efforts. A large pending state watershed protection grant was noted.

Dr. Anthony Costello from Holden Open Space Implementation Committee said an Open Space Action Committee has been established and town interest in taking action on open space matters has been on the rise. A revised open space plan for the Town of Holden was being submitted.

Gary Tuthill of the Boylston Open Space Committee stated that he was representing a new committee which completed an open space plan for the Town during the Summer of 2004.

Jim French, a Land Acquisition Coordinator for the DCR (previously MDC) Division of Watershed Protection, noted that his organization is involved with fee acquisitions and conservation restrictions intended to protect watershed for both the Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs. Land protection efforts are paid for by the 52 cities and towns that utilize the water from DCR-protected reservoirs which equates to about 42% of the population. Mr. French claimed that his organization's control over the Quabbin watershed was much more thorough with 55% of the watershed lands under DCR control. By comparison, only 26.6% of Wachusett watershed is DCR controlled. The 2005 DCR budget provides 4.5 million dollars for land acquisition for watershed protection. It was noted that it is difficult for the agency to move quickly on at-risk parcels since the acquisition process (including due diligence requirements, etc.) can take from 12-15 months to "years" to complete. [During Mr. French's initial introduction, it was noted that approximately 50% of West Boylston's land area and approximately 25% of Sterling's land area was protected by the DCR with a focus on protecting the Wachusett Reservoir watershed.]

Michael Peckar questioned Mr. French regarding how the DCR develops and reviews access-related policies. Mr. French acknowledged that balancing watershed protection and recreational interests was difficult. He pointed out that much of the DCR land is available for passive recreational activities which, in his agency's view, do not create watershed risks. Access for dogs, horses, motorized vehicles, and mountain bikes is limited on most DCR lands. This is due in part to the fact that the size of the DCR land parcels offers the potential to attract extensive use by the public. The DCR's first priority is water protection.

Katie Donovan, Land Use Specialist from the City of Worcester (DPW) spoke briefly of the Coes Reservoir and its protection and progress. She said that the Conservation Commission has first refusal on all "Tax Title" properties (cases where landowners are not keeping up with tax payments). In fact, this was the means in which the Broad Meadow Brook land was acquired.

At this point, Dr. Robert Tashjian commented on his pleasure that all the listed towns on the agenda were represented.

Gladys Rodriguez, District Affairs Director for Congressman James McGovern expressed the Mr. McGovern's apologies for his absence (due to another commitment), but emphatically reassured the support and availability of his office for any matters of concern. She said that Mr. McGovern took an immediate interest in conservation when first elected and that interest and support has only increased over his years in office. She noted Mr. McGovern's involvement in the 1996-1997 efforts related to the Land Water Conservation Act. Ms. Rodriguez assured the meeting that Mr. McGovern's hope is that he might be able to be present at one of these meetings in the future. Dr. Tashjian confirmed the support received by Mr. McGovern and thanked Ms. Rodriguez for her attendance and reassurance. [The website for Congressman McGovern's office is www.house.gov/mcgovern/. Based on information available on this site, the 3rd District of Massachusetts includes towns within Worcester County (Auburn, Boylston, Clinton, Holden, Northborough, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Shrewsbury, Southborough, Westborough, West Boylston, and Worcester) Middlesex County (Ashland, Holliston, Hopkinton, Marlborough) and extends southeastward in a narrow band all the way to Fall River.]

Brian Cline, Vice Chairman of the Sterling Open Space Implementation Committee reminded the meeting how very important it was for all the towns to work together for the greatest impact and success. Ms. Rodriguez appreciated this comment and assured the meeting that Mr. McGovern's office would certainly be in full support of the envisioned municipal cooperation regarding open space issues.

James Kersten from the office of James Leary said how important he felt it was to have meetings such this and assured the meeting that Mr. Leary's door was "always open" to any concerns from all the represented towns.

Jim DiToulio, Chief of Staff for Representative Harold Naughton expressed his pleasure to be present and said that he had worked with Jim French regarding the properties in the Wekepeke area of Sterling (old Clinton Reservoirs) and Wachusett Reservoir. He further noted that the office of Mr. Naughton would always maintain a major commitment to conservation concerns.

Frannie Hodge, President of Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust told the meeting that his organization was founded in 1989 as a legal trust. After the second annual meeting in 1990, the trust failed to meet again for 10 years. In the year 2000 the Trust was incorporated as a non-profit and the groups efforts were rekindled. The group attained its first parcel of land was acquired on South Meadow Pond in Clinton (donation from a member). The Trust is also involved in a land swap of 17 acres which includes a "floating island" on Mossy Pond, a pending effort supported by Representative Naughton. The Trust is also interested in support effort to develop the Mass Central Rail Trail (MCRT) through Clinton. Unfortunately, the most logical path of the MCRT lies in zones along and near the Wachusett Reservoir which are of DCR concern. Fortunately, the Berlin side of Town looks much less complicated. Presently, many more parcels are being considered by the Trust, the highest present priority being the last farm in Clinton which actually borders the envisioned MCRT pathway. The Clinton Greenway Trust is working closely with the owner of this farm (Fred Rogers) in an effort to preserve its heritage. From a Clinton municipal standpoint, Ms. Hodge noted that the Town of Clinton needs to update their open space plan.

Debbie Shriver from Massachusetts Watershed Coalition and Wachusett Working Landscapes Partnership (WWLP) said their next meeting would be in Leominster on 17 March 2005 (3-5PM, Trustees of Reservations office, <http://www.thetrustees.org/>) and encouraged all present at this meeting to attend. WWLP (pronounced "whil-op") includes 9 community members interested in fostering "Smart Growth" concepts. She reaffirmed the need for people and towns to all work together to achieve the greatest results for all organizations. She had many brochures available for the meeting attendees and encouraged all to "sign up" for the WWLP Internet List Serve, a broad scope referral for conservation coalitions. It was noted that meeting attendees Deb Cary, Jim French, and Judy Haran were all WWLP Steering Committee members.

At this time, Dr. Robert Tashjian asked Jim French to reflect on 61a status for those present at the meeting. Mr. French said DCR gets the land and decides whether to abandon the land for wildlife or maintain the land by cutting the grass and disallowing "active agriculture" of any kind.

Brian Cline asked Jim a general questions regarding how drinking water was processed after leaving the reservoir system. Mr. Cline's concern was that the DCR's approach to water protection through watershed land protection might be at risk given the increased threat of terrorism. (In a worst case, Mr. Cline questioned whether terrorism pressures might force the state to sell off DCR watershed lands to fund the construction of chemical treatment facilities.) Mr. French said that the water was disinfected on its way to the consumer but not filtered. Mr. French noted that his colleagues closely monitored abnormalities which might be noted in the water supply and immediate response is generated if any abnormality is observed. (The DCR's recent response to a benzene detection situation in Southboro was noted as an example.) Mr. French clarified his confidence that the DCR's watershed protection program offers the most effect means of watershed protection and any future sale of DCR lands was highly unlikely. Reference to Article 97 restrictions on such sale was noted.

Judy Haran noted here involvement with LandBase and its associated website at www.landbase.org. The goal of this website was to link "Conservation Buyers" interested in acquiring open space for general preservation purposes, conservation-focused housing developments, or for usage such as horse farms to unique parcels of land. Judy suggested that landowners interested in selling, but protecting, their lands should consider this website as a resource. The equine property focus of Maureen Harmonay, a Coldwell Banker real estate agent from Harvard was also noted as interesting to land preservation groups. See <http://www.maureenharmonay.com> for more information. Acton's "New View" development (<http://www.newview.org/>) was also discussed as an example of conservation-focused development.

Dr. Robert Tashjian voiced concerns about the risks presented by "Biocontainment Labs" being created within academia. Dr. Tashjian specified that laboratory fires or other damage could be deadly to humans and such labs are particularly risky in populated areas.

At this point, Senator Harriette Chandler arrived, apologizing for her tardiness having another commitment. She was graciously received by Dr. Tashjian and those present at the meeting. Dr. Tashjian asked the Senator if she had anything she wished to say and she said at this time, she would prefer to listen. She did say that she thought it was important to include towns like Berlin, Northboro, Paxton, etc. in efforts as this would enhance results.

Bob Spencer said that the Sterling Fair last year was a start and the hopes are that this effort will grow and that all are welcome. Senator Chandler said that she felt that the idea of the Sterling Fair was stellar and a great vehicle for spreading information about the various town conservation groups.

Brian Cline emphasized the importance that the envisioned alliance not compete with each other groups such as WWLP. Rather, a focus on municipal open space planning needs was recommended with an acknowledgment that these other groups are critical resources for the municipalities represented at the meeting.

Deb Cary expressed the need to educate the public so people will speak up and the state will be pressured for funding for conservation efforts.

Bob Spencer said Sterling is now moving ahead and educating their people as was demonstrated by the Sterling Fair. Bob also said that he thought all these various town groups were dynamic and dedicated to the cause of conservation.

During discussions regarding which towns should be represented, Brian Cline presented the importance of including towns cities that were proximal to the core groups such as Leominster.

Dr. Diran Apelian suggested that an alliance be formed between groups with similar passions and that this passion would serve as a "glue" for the coalition.

Dr. Costello said that there should be an alliance of open space commissions in each town and Dr. Tashjian agreed, saying that the Sterling Fair was an example of such success.

Senator Chandler informed the meeting that Senator Pam Resor from Marlborough would be very interested in the evolving coalition/alliance and that her interest should be tapped. Senator Chandler also reminded the meeting that the CPA (Community Preservation Act) is critical to achieving goals.

Dr. Apelian said that maybe this group should gather together and educate one another on "effective practices" which would benefit all attendees from the various towns.

At this time, Senator Chandler again mentioned the success of and the idea of the Sterling Fair and Jim French told the meeting that interestingly, the site of the Sterling Fair which was the Sterling Airport, was up for sale. Mr. French and others are working on a "smart growth" land protection effort for the 310 acre site in Sterling with a focus on a range of land functions including protecting the Wachusett watershed (Stillwater River) as well as possible uses including sustaining an active airport, creation of sports fields, and creation of affordable and/or elder housing facilities. The attendees seemed interested in supporting efforts such as this as an alliance/coalition.

Judith Haran from White Oak Land Trust said that she thought that financial support should be solicited from the various industries in the various towns, Nypro in Clinton being an example.

Dr. Tashjian presented the example of the tent donated for the Sterling Fair by a local business. He said that industry does like to contribute and support activities of this nature.

Next Meeting: Thursday, April 21, 2005 at 7PM in West Boylston (Mixer Building).

The hour approaching 9:30 PM, Mr. Spencer suggested that the minutes of this meeting be prepared and distributed to those in attendance and then a future meeting being scheduled in three months. The suggestion was made for a sub-committee to prepare an agenda for the next meeting.

Dr. Apelian suggested an Ad Hoc Committee might be formed.

Mr. Spencer welcomed all who might like to volunteer their services for the committee.

In preparation for the adjournment of the meeting, Dr. Tashjian thanked all those in attendance for their interest and dedication and said that he felt it was a most cohesive group. He again thanked Senator Chandler for taking time to be present.

Based on meeting discussions, the potential for alliance cooperation on the following topics was identified.

- a.) CPA: Support education of municipalities and regional townspeople about the potential benefits of the Community Preservation Act.
- b.) Regional Fairs and Events: Use Town Fairs and other outdoor events as a means to network amongst each other and educate the public about regional open space issues and related organizations. Use the upcoming 100th Anniversary of the Wachusett Reservoir as a means of educating the public and getting them out into our great open spaces.
- c.) Open Space Access: Work as a regional group to improve access (or communication related to allowable access) to regional resources including DCR lands, rail trails, and water resources.
- d.) Support Agricultural Land Use: Work with landowners, farmers, government agencies, and municipal governments to foster the continued future use of regional land for agricultural purposes.

The next meeting date for this group was set for Thursday, 21 April 2005 at 7PM at the same location.

Following adjournment of the meeting at 9:35 PM, coffee and refreshments were offered and enjoyed.

The following is a partial summary of organizations and resources represented and/or discussed during this meeting:

- Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition (<http://www.massland.org/>)
- West Boylston Land Trust (www.wblt.org)
- Sterling Land Trust (<http://shell2.shore.net/~mltc/demo/TEXT/NEARTRUST/landtrusts/sterling.html>)
- The Mass Central Rail Trail Coalition (coalition focused on maintaining the continuity of the MCRT from Northampton to Boston)
- Wachusett Working Landscapes Partnership
- Trustees for Reservations (www.thetrustees.org)
- Acton's New View Development (www.newview.org)
- White Oak Land Conservation Society (<http://www.whiteoaktrust.org/>)
- The Trust for Public Land (www.tpl.org)
- Mass Audubon (www.massaudubon.org)
- Massachusetts Community Capital Fund (http://www.mass.gov/dhcd/publications/fact_sheets/mccf.pdf and <http://www.mass.gov/dhcd/components/cs/1PrgApps/MCCF/default.HTM>)
- Congressman McGovern's office is www.house.gov/mcgovern/
- Representative Leary's office (<http://www.mass.gov/legis/member/jbl1.htm>)
- Senator Harriette Chandler (<http://www.mass.gov/legis/member/hlc0.htm>)
- Representative Harold Naughton (<http://www.mass.gov/legis/member/hpn1.htm>)
- LandBase (www.landbase.org)
- Maureen Harmonay, equine property sales <http://www.maureenharmonay.com>
- The DCR's (MDC's) 2003 Wachusett Watershed Access Plan (<http://www.mass.gov/mdc/wachaccess.htm>)
- Nashua River Watershed Association, noted as digital mapping source for Sterling open space plan (<http://www.nashuariverwatershed.org/>)
- Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (<http://www.mrpc.org/>)
- Central Mass Regional Planning Commission (<http://www.cmrpc.org/>)

Minutes Compiled By: Brian Cline and Linda Bogosian. (Any important corrections can be emailed to Brian Cline at brian@clineinnovations.com)

Minutes Review for Distribution on 3/16/05 By: Brian Cline, Robert Spencer, Mike Peckar, and Dr. Robert Tashjian

Next Meeting: Thursday, April 21, 2005 at 7PM in West Boylston (Mixer Building).

WEST BOYLSTON OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Town of West Boylston
Mixer Municipal Building
120 Prescott Street
West Boylston, MA 01583**

**Meeting Minutes
Thursday, August 18, 2005 at 7:00 - 7:30 PM
* Selectman's Room ***

1. Call to Order

**2. Attending Members: Dr. Robert Tashjian, Betsy Demallie, Kristina Vickstrom
(Secretary)**

3. Item's Discussed:

- **7 1/2 Acres of Land on Prospect Street**
 - **Demallie: get talks together with Land Trust, Open Space Committees, and others, then get a Lawyer to do necessary work before approaching developer to negotiate the sale of land.**
 - **Tashjian: costs involved with getting talks together, etc.?**
 - **Demallie: a Lawyer from a similar land preservation required a \$5,000 retainer before doing any work.**
 - **Possible compromise option: reduce the number of houses allowed on the street and protect the land behind it. (cost effective)**
 - **Tashjian: if can't raise the money, then not worth stirring it up. Look to grants, trust, etc.**
 - **Demallie: need to get all the different groups together to discuss the issue and fundraising options.**
 - **Tashjian: land should be studied but some people don't want to hear about it because of economic concerns.**
 - **Demallie: Question a developer might ask: "Is the situation on this parcel unique from the surrounding areas of land?"**
 - **Tashjian: Botulism spores are in the soil and the incidence of it and how dangerous it is (toxin producing) should be assessed in the aquifer.**

- **Demallie: its a problem whether or not anything happens on that land because its part of the recharge area.**
- **Tashjian: if certain conditions will activate those spores it would be serious problem. Takes funding to study the problem. Serious mistake to ignore the problem.**
- **Demallie: Problems on the site and the delays in developing the land may be an incentive in the sale. What is reasonable to expect him to do? He owns it. Significant potential profit?**

4. Meeting Adjourned: 7:30 pm

WEST BOYLSTON OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Town of West Boylston
Mixer Municipal Building
120 Prescott Street
West Boylston, MA 01583**

**Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 20th, 2005 at 7:30 PM
* Selectman's Room ***

1. Call to Order: 7:40pm

2. Attending Members: Dr. Robert Tashjian, Betsy Demaille, Mike Peckar

3. Others in Attendance: Jim Kirsten (Aide to Jim Leary), Charlie Witkus, Sue Olsen (West Boylston Town Administrator), John Scannell (DCR), Val Pruneau (Water Department)

4. Item's Discussed:

- **Several handouts given out**
- **Potential Contamination of Water and Soils in Surrounding Area (Dr. Robert Tashjian)**
 - **Federally funded laboratories (NIAID) exist throughout the country, predominantly on the East Coast.**
 - **2 exist in MA: Tufts University and Boston University**
 - **As representatives of towns and communities, we have a responsibility to protect our communities**
 - **Area politicians are informed about this meeting**
 - **Should plan for potential problems**
 - **In the contamination of soils of water, must consider vectors that are also effected: fleas, ticks, mites, rodents, other small animals, and bacterial spores.**
 - **I support National Institute of Health (NIH), only brings points up to raise awareness and not to criticize.**
 - **I spent time at Fort Detrick where research facilities were located underground to protect soil and water quality and control spread through unintended vectors.**
 - **Much more desirable as opposed to facilities constructed above ground.**
 - **Only 2 Biocontainment Facilities in the U.S.**
 - **one in TX**
 - **one in Boston University**
 - **breakout concerns for this area**
 - **Tularemia outbreak already occurred in this facility**

- locating Biosafety Level 2 and 3 labs on university campuses in undesirable due to possible contamination of student body, faculty, and surrounding communities.
- Recent anthrax outbreak in Mid West, killed 100s of cows. Under the correct conditions, anthrax spores can cause serious consequences and an outbreak.
 - Can also effect humans
 - Concerns over whether to allow farm animals near a water supply
 - But these animals can serve as indicators to warn us of possible water contamination in specific area.
- Even though anthrax is a naturally occurring bacteria, the bio researchers can modify the organisms, for example making them airborne or waterborne, makes them an significantly increased contamination risk.
- In an N.J. regional biocontainment lab, they lost three mice infected with bubonic plague. Never recovered these mice. This could have posed a vector risk: flea. A flea could have been infected and the disease could be brought into the home through domestic animals.
- Fort Detrick, a fine researching facility, is under Military Control/Security.
- The location of a similar facility in a community is concerning for towns.
- They are not properly equipped with adequate police/fire response, for an effective response to a possible outbreak.
- Who takes control? Local, state, Federal?? At which level? Who's to blame for mistakes?
- Good movies that model: Outbreak, On the Beach
- Anti-serum is a better solution to disease control, rather than a vaccine research.
 - Organisms can mutate and attenuate so quickly, a vaccine is useless.
 - Once people are infected, a vaccine will not help them, its too late. Only hope is anti-serum.
- I am interested in Tufts research grant in botulism, because was interested himself in botulism research.
 - Attempted to get information under the Freedom of Information Act but was denied due to National Defense Act.
 - The public will never know what exactly is being researched and how its being researched.
 - Dangerous for outbreak concerns.
- My interest went back to the construction of I-190.
 - He was opposed because it cut right through the wetlands in Sterling and West Boylston.
 - Currently they're "cleaning up" that are surrounding I-190 with federal funds.
 - But they're actually eliminating natural filtration areas, allowing surface contaminants to run right into Malden Brook, into the West Boylston Well Fields, and then in turn into the Reservoir.

- Water quality issues
- Botulism and Anthrax are spore producers.
 - Can live in the soil for a long time and not become toxic until the right conditions are present.
 - When I-190 was constructed, 100 cows died, due to botulism contamination from the blasting, resulting in contaminated surface water that the animals drank.
 - Similar to the anthrax outbreak that occurred recently out west.
 - Botulism spores are present in the well area and reservoir areas.
 - Needs to be dealt with.
- Iraq war: Weapons of Mass Destruction
 - One of the items that was believed to be present was large amounts of botulism
 - Only takes one gram of toxin to kill 1 million people
 - UMASS Dartmouth is currently researching with toxin amounts much greater than one gram
- We need to be adequately informed of what is being researched, have control protocols in place, and a master plan of response on the local, state, and federal level in case of an outbreak.
- Others Comments
 - Charlie Witkus: What does this have to do with Open Space?
 - Dr. Tashjian: To protect our Open Space.
 - Further development/construction projects such as 40B developments, need to be assessed for protection of water supplies and community.
 - Charlie Witkus: right now, there are no controls on land development/construction
 - Dr. Tashjian: this is why this is a problem
 - Betsy Demaille: The Prospect Street land is at issue, do you have a plan for the developer that paid 1/2 million dollars for that land?
 - Dr. Tashjian: DCR land next to it is being successfully farmed at this point. (no-till)
 - Have taken soil samples of the proposed 40B land and it does contain botulism spores.
 - DCR lands serve as barrier between it and the rest of general area.
 - Need to figure out a way to buy it
 - Betsy Demaille: how can it be open space at this point? Need to compromise with him. He already invested 1/2 million dollars and he currently owns this land. How can we expect him to walk away from his investment.
 - Dr. Tashjian: need to find a way to purchase that land.
 - Betsy Demaille: but it isn't for sale.
 - Dr. Tashjian: if does need to build on this land, then research needs to be done in the botulism contamination.

- **Betsy Demaille: is there a higher incident there then compared to the rest of the soil contamination.**
- **John Scannell: What makes this parcel different from others in the area.**
- **Dr. Tashjian: the unique factor on this land is that pigs and raw garbage existed on these lands for long periods of time.**
- **Betsy Demaille: In other areas, do former pig farms have problems with future construction? Doesn't see at this point that there is any way to keep it Open Space.**
 - **Doesn't think**
- **Jim Kirsten: Does DCR have regulations for abutting land of aquifers?**
- **John Scannell: not that he knows of, would have to look to be certain, but probably not because the border of the property is more than 400 feet from the stream.**
- **Betsy Demaille: what if it was a high or medium research area?**
- **John Scannell : certainly something to be concerned about, but DCR regulations do not cover it.**
- **Jim Kirsten: if you're going to invest the amount of money the developer has, he's apparently done his research.**
- **Betsy Demaille: the 40B did not necessarily alarm the people, it was the amount of surface area that would be paved. Believes compromise is best at this point: Five single family houses with clear areas in the back.**
- **Dr. Tashjian: the botulism issue needs to be considered. What if somebody dies? We then knew of the risk and approved it anyways.**
- **Jim Kirsten: Is there a way to do both? Approve 5 single family house and analyze the botulism.**
- **Dr. Tashjian: should do a complete botulism analysis then make a decision.**
- **John Scannell: nay sayers are going to point to the houses that were already built on the land that originally belonged to that farm, and**
- **Jim Kirsten: are there any legal precedences on botulism spores and controlling development?**
- **Val Pruneau: thought pigs were kept more on the DCR land not the land in question.**
- **Betsy Demaille: still concerned with the levels that are naturally occurring in town.**
- **Dr. Tashjian: do we say nothing and negotiate?**
- **Betsy Demaille: what's the negotiation.**
- **John Scannell: The nay sayers are going to look for a specific regulation controlling the ability to build on botulism contaminated land. There is no regs or precedence to base this argument on.**
- **Jim Kirsten: if you anger them, loose negotiation skills.**
- **Val Pruneau: if you devalue the land from causing a stir, could face a lawsuit for the devaluing the land.**

- **John Scannell : zoning by-laws can control for required frontage and the max number of houses to build.**
- **Val Pruneau: developers were accommodated in Hillside.**
- **John Scannell: watershed protection act and other state environmental regulations are still fully intact with any 40B proposal. The only thing you can get around is local zoning ordinances.**
- **Betsy Demaille: can't see that there's any bargaining chip for possible negotiations and its not for sale.**
- **John Scannell: if he was to sell it, it would be for a premium because it he's not going give up his potential financial profits.**
- **Val Pruneau: the current proposals might need to be completed or underway before his 40B proposal are put in.**
- **Betsy Demaille: this land owner doesn't even know that we're talking about it. He tore down the barn because it was a hazard.**
- **Jim Kirsten: a way to start would be to invite him to an open space meeting. Explain to him what your goals are, that you understand his position as a private landowner and his desire for a profitable situation.**
- **Betsy Demaille: Dr. T feels strongly that nothing be built there.**
- **Jim Kirsten: Everyone feels strongly about it, but without the regs to back it up....**
- **Dr. Tashjian: does feel strong about it. DCR ran out of funding?**
- **John Scannell: don't remember that being the case. He owned the land where the stream existed. He was willing to only draw the line where he did.**
- **Val Pruneau: from the time he bought the land, the value of the land has doubled. If you look at the subdivisions, the house lots are going for \$225,000 to \$325,000.**
- **Betsy Demaille: are there any restrictions on zoning?**
- **John Scannell: only commercial restrictions and frontage/backage requirements.**
- **Dr. Tashjian: would your feeling be that if it came up in front of ZBA, that there would be no participation from the water board?**
- **John Scannell: its speculative depending on what's proposed on the property. Issues of greatest concern are: septic density, proximity to recharge areas, issues related to slope. Find it hard to believe that they would be in a position to raise too much of a stink to raise an issue.**
- **Val Pruneau: saturation may raise a problem, but a proposal for single family housing there might not be a solution.**
- **Betsy Demaille: he can build 5 houses, wants a variance, to build 6 houses.**
- **Val Pruneau: but he could come back with only 5 houses being built.**
- **Jim Kirsten: negotiation is key.**
- **Mike Peckar: as a town board, one of the concerns is the liability issue that exists, what is the responsibility of the board/town, if problems exist during construction.**

- **John Scannell: if he goes and digs a hole and finds something horrible, he is liable and responsible to report the issue.**
- **Betsy Demaille: could be suggest that to protect himself he perform these tests.**
- **Val Pruneau: on this piece of land, no one knows where everything was buried.**
- **Betsy Demaille: what was buried?**
- **Val Pruneau: cattle died, they were buried on the premises. But nobody knows where.**
- **Jim Kirsten: can you require them to test the area**
- **John Scannell: only entity is the health board, but probably not enough to point to a regulation to require mandatory testing.**
- **Mike Peckar: a friendly letter might be proper: trying to protect town and him from liability.**
- **John Scannell: why would town have any liability? If it meets town code, how can they be held liable?**
- **Jim Kirsten: wouldn't start with a letter.**
- **Mike Peckar: Board of health has no role in a person buying a parcel and developing it, unless there are known problems. If we start making noise about this, could be liable for defaming his property and bringing land values down.**
- **Val Pruneau: need to find out what his current intentions are, before we can do anything. At that point, then can go back and look to see the activities that did happen on the land and discuss with state agencies and see if there is an avenue to further look into this. Possibly open a door for mandatory testing.**
- **Dr. Tashjian: that's what concerning and bothering me. Cows and pigs were dying. It was a sloppy operation. Garbage was dumped.**
- **Jim Kirsten: the new owner is probably a typical business man. Good to develop a relationship and dialogue for future developments, etc.**
- **Dr. Tashjian: this issue laid dormant for awhile until the barn was taken down.**
- **Betsy Demaille: he was angry at the town at one point for denying his variance.**
- **Val Pruneau: things have changed drastically at this point. Town is looking for a high yield of taxable income without a high cost.**
- **Betsy Demaille: best thing to hope for is that he doesn't build that large structure.**
- **Val Pruneau: need to get a general feel to see what his intentions are. Open to dialogue without showing your whole hand.**
- **John Scannell: if it's a massive dense development, there could be concern about the amount of impervious land that's occurring on this property. The nay sayer will ask why the town didn't enact aquifer protection regs.**

- **Sue Olsen:** if the Mater Plan has been approved by the state and you are actively working towards goals that were presented, can get out of 40B requirements.
 - **Jim Kirsten:** If you think there is anything that Rep Leary or myself can do, please call. Not sure what can do.
 - **Val Pruneau:** saturation issues seem to be the key card, but need to know what his intentions are.
 - **Betsy Demaille:** should we contact him and see if he is amenable to an informational meeting to feel out what his intentions are.
 - **Val Pruneau:** yes, but he doesn't have to answer.
 - **Dr. Tashjian:** its bigger than open space, it's a water quality concern.
 - **John Scannell :** everybody's hands are tied by the limitations of their regulations. Need to base it on known quantities of dangerous substances. The levels don't matter because its not on a chart of known contaminants.
 - **Mike Peckar:** biocontaminants are not heavily regulated at this point.
 - **Charlie Witkus:** do have a Master Plan that is ok'd by the state.
 - **Sue Olsen:** is there a planned production plan because it would help with controlling 40B development.
 - **Betsy Demaille:** that's not an appropriate place to build a 40B.
 - **John Scannell:** good to discuss your mission with him, and see if is interested in talking with the committee.
 - **Betsy Demaille:** was this designated as a site of scenic beauty?
 - **John Scannell:** yes, but it doesn't hold any regulation teeth. Its intended to bring the idea that the area is of importance to the community. Then have to think about how to protect it, but need \$\$\$.
 - **Sue Olsen:** who is the planner?
 - **Betsy Demaille:** Brossi from Framingham. His last plan was huge building with over 200 units and most of the acreage is paved.
 - **Jim Kirsten:** could have taken it down for
 - **Dr. Tashjian:** used the botulism approach out of frustration of what can be done about the situation. Will have impacts.
 - **Val Pruneau:** only speculation at this point, need to see what he plans before we go any further.
 - **Dr. Tashjian:** need to protect the water and run-off in this area.
- **Meeting adjourned: 9:05 pm**

February 2, 2006
Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Space Advisory Committee
Town of West Boylston, Massachusetts

ATTENDANCE: President/Chair: Robert Tashjian, V.M.D.
 Cheryl Lekstrom, MDOA
 George Beaman, Land Trust
 Thomas Halpin, M.D.
 Barbara Wyatt
 Betsy Demallie
 Robert Shover, Full Time Farmer
 Maryellen Brown, Acting Secretary

AGENDA: Community Preservation Act / Agricultural Commission

Commencing at 7:04 P.M.

Dr. Tashjian welcomes all attendees.

Cheryl Lekstrom reviews all the aspects of the formation of an Agricultural Commission and how this may be a benefit to the Town of West Boylston. Key points made were that the formation of such a commission will:

- Provide town representation of the farming community;
- Create agricultural awareness within the Town;
- Encourage agricultural endeavors;
- Encourage the preservation of land for agricultural purposes;
- Promote economic support to the farming community;
- Education/conflict resolution re: farming activities;
- Assist in the reduction of complaints connected to farming activities, i.e., smells, sounds, tractors, etc., HOWEVER, this does not provide free legal support in those matters resulting from poor or unacceptable farming practices;
- Incentives include: municipal grants (Smart Growth), "AgCom101" encouraging a diversity in farming activities.

Examples given include Dartmouth which established an Ag Comm. in 1988, and Amherst

An Ag Comm. would be ad-hoc/steering primarily comprised of farmers. The process would include the obtaining of a warrant from the Town, promoting support for an Ag Comm. within the community, including a citizens' petition, and other such publicity. Its budget would be determined by vote.

RT noted that it is also important that open space be included in the Ag Comm.'s agenda along with farming issues, since this would provide more opportunity for the Land Trust to become involved.

CL mentions community gardens as an offshoot of Ag Comms, since farming can have many definitions, and this is one of them. The definition of “farming” must be kept loose to embrace a variety of activities connected to agriculture, i.e., beekeeping, nurseries, etc.

GB stated that an Ag Comm. would attract apartment dwellers who do not usually consider themselves a part of the agricultural community. He also mentions the fact that many farms are sold as a result of the owners inability to keep them running, an Ag Comm. would be able to assist owners in keeping them or finding new owners who wish to continue farming the land. Also raises community awareness and helps the farming community to establish a liaison with the town community so that problems may be avoided or solved expeditiously.

CL stated that any group can form an Ag Comm. by way of petition or the sponsorship of the Board of Selectmen, thereby obtaining a warrant. The primary attraction for the town citizenry is this can be done and maintained at NO COST TO THE TAXPAYER. A Town may also pass a “Right to Farm” by-law. After a vote, an ad hoc committee makes recommendations, advertises positions on the commission, interviews prospective members, the selection of board appointments. Then any liaison of the Ag Comm. may make a recommendation to adopt a local “right to farm” by law, the summary of which is that farmers often are unaware of their rights, and that the community is made aware that theirs is a town which values agriculture, and that prospective community members are made aware of this fact so to decrease farming complaints. This could provide opportunity for a farmers’ market, provide conflict resolution for farming complaints, and form a collaboration with the Town Boards, promote environmental stewardship and raise money for farmland preservation. Alternatively the Commission could remind the town each year of its “Right to Farm” bylaw which would further raise community awareness.

RT raises the issue of 61AE wherein 5 or more acres is acceptable for horses, but not for farming. This would lead to too many horses in a small area, causing a ban on the animal. How can this be avoided?

CL “Right to Farm” bylaw does not fall under 61AE rules. This matter would be specified in the town warrant, indicating specific restrictions on acreage, etc. Otherwise can only be dealt with at a state level. Commissions can however enforce more restrictions, definitions, and regulations on a town level. Funding comes from Smart Growth, which assists farms due to the sharp decrease in present and future farming. The town of Amherst created incentive for an Ag Comm., since politics don’t matter in this regard, since the laws protect farms regardless of politics, and that no money from taxes is involved, but the commission is only as good as the people on it. Takes time for credibility and trust to develop. CL states that if including backyard farmers, and people with many horses, these will usually become problematic to their neighbors. More development is needed so there is more understanding of the farming community. The definition of farming must be changed so that people understand how inclusive it is.

Betsy noted that an Ag Comm. could encourage community gardening and farm stands, etc. and has potential for more. Anything to bring back farming, preserves the old town image, and maintenance of the historical roots is welcomed.

CL states that when developers pressure farmers to sell land, the land trust can lend them money and since the Ag Comm. is non regulatory, they are able to help farmers without state interference.

All members present support the formation of an Agricultural Commission. It is moved that a coalition be formed to begin the process. Just need willing people, since no one will oppose the formation of the Comm.

RT stated that a committee would be needed to get momentum in the town.

GB stated that the Land Trust could help with the organization and skills but would need the interest of farmers else be perceived as a “tree hugger.”

7:42 P.M. – Tom Halpin enters.

The above was summarized for TH so he was brought up to speed. The meeting continued:

TH asks if the Town Manager would appoint the Ag Comm.

CL stated that ad hoc farmers must draft the warrant specifying the number of members, their duties, etc.

TH suggested specifically identifying the farms in town.

CL stated that the definition of farms/farming must be fine tuned by the ad hoc committee.

GB stated an Ag Comm. would help protect open space by working together with the Land Trust. The formation of an Ag Comm. is a no brainer, cannot imagine any opposition. It is a wonderful thing to start.

Betsy stated that people who are ignorant of farming practices could become more aware through an Ag Comm. which would benefit the agricultural community.

RT stated that he believed that Mike Packer would be interested in the Ag Comm., that we must keep going in order to get momentum behind it.

8:01 P.M. – Barbara Wyatt enters.

GB commented about the Community Preservation Act handout. Stated the Land Trust supports the Act, it does not have an effect unless it is added to the ballot. Notes that we are trying to get it on the ballot for the 11/7/06 general state election so that the Town may vote on the Act. Stressed that the Town must be aware of the Act so they vote on it.

Betsy stated that there was a great presentation done in Grafton, reviewing it may be helpful to West Boylston.

GB stated that other towns do provide good examples to follow.

Betsy suggested that if the session were taped then it could be presented to the voters.

GB stated that this could be used to line up to form the committee before the 3/15/06 Board of Selectmen meeting so that a proposal could be presented at that time. Other town groups would be interested in this, but they must be cultivated. Emphasis on the fact that playing fields and such are considered open space to help get a group active. Must be proactive in setting a meeting date to decide on specifics. The Beaman Library has a room available on 02/22/06, could have a meeting there on that date at 6:30 PM, but must firm this up in the next 2 days.

Betsy stated that it is important to make the elderly community aware of the meeting and interested in it.

RT added that the Town Wide Planning Committee will be on board. Library is the best place for meeting since more centrally located than Town Hall.

GB states the meeting should be open to all individuals and organizations.

Betsy stated that the town groups should be approached prior to meeting to cultivate support.

TH stated that if it were not done expeditiously, it would not make it onto the Town Warrant for the May 2006 meeting. There should be an informational meeting on 02/21/06 and then on to the meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

GB stated that if want to accomplish by November a recommendation must be created so there is a definite plan to propose to the Board of Selectmen.

TH stated that a date certain for the second meeting would be set in the course of the meeting on 02/21/06. Suggested the 1st Tuesday of March for second meeting, or alternatively, on the 21st or 27th.

BW stated that the meeting emphasize the financial benefits to the town

It was agreed that a notice for the meeting be placed in the Banner, Cable Television or the Community Channel.

WHEREBY the meeting concluded at 8:42 PM.

Maryellen Brown, Acting Secretary

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE MEETING

Held on April 6, 2006

IN ATTENDANCE: Robert Tashjian, VMD, President/Chairman
 Barbara Wyatt
 Judy Rojewiecz
 Maryellen Brown, Acting Secretary

AGENDA: Agricultural Committee, Civil Defense

COMMENCING at 7:06 PM

- RT: Need better attendance at meetings so as to expedite the formation of an Agricultural Commission.
- BW: Open Space Committee must write to the MDC regarding the purchase of land under the Watershed Act, and get an answer on that.
- JR: Janet (?) is the attorney for MDC and urges conservation restrictions on the land.
- RT: There is a 1 year certification for inspection of the 20 acres at issue.
- BW: Moves to review minutes of last meeting and accept same into the record.
- RT: Tonight's issue is a Letter of Intent, land conservation restrictions, and proposed Agricultural Commission. Town issues are: town tax rate, future programs and plans for the Mixer Building. The water district says the pipes/plumbing are old and predate the Water Treatment facility in town. Cost of updating building would be 1 million due to the water system updates which are needed. Water is open to contamination at present, however, money is a legitimate factor here. The possibility of moving municipal buildings to land owned by the County of Worcester is there. Committees are forming to look into this. Had discussion with Leon Gaumond who was receptive to the idea. A Letter of Intent will provide a goal of life for the town buildings and would attract federal funding which would be attractive to the town's populace. MDC owns 50% of Town land, and obtaining this land would be difficult as the sewers are a hazard. Will need meetings w/Fire Chief and Safety Officer. Jim McGovern is also receptive, as is Governor Mitt Romney. Letter of Intent is important for acquisition of the Mixer building for civil defense purposes. Funding for this would come from Dept of Homeland Security and NIAID, making the Town a central core and improving the quality of life for the town. Recent Tufts problem with botulism is a good example of why this is needed. Converting the Mixer Building to a civil defense structure could prevent a similar disaster here in town. Governor Romney suggest asking the Dept of Public Health for assistance. Dana Ferguson is coordinating a meeting between RT and the Dept of Public Health for the City of Worcester who expressed interest in the project. Also suggested that there be physicians involved, as ethics are important to physicians, given the recent events at Tufts. Per the Division of Biological Weapons, 1 gram of botulism toxin can kill a person. Mixer Building could be used as a facility for biohazards or other contaminants as opposed to the UMass Med Center which may not be prepared for such a disaster. Such contaminants should not be kept on a civilian facility, especially a

school building. If a biological disaster were to occur, it affects not only humans but plant and animal life and water supplies. The USDA has no control over these matters under the Defense act. The Town must protect its underground water system and provide a model for biological preparedness. In case of such a disaster, there is concern for the continuity of town government. The feds cannot help in that situation. In the avian flu epidemic there is a question as to the effectiveness of the vaccine, cannot vaccinate everyone and then assume all will be fine, since viruses have the ability to mutate and render vaccines ineffective. So, the Town must get protection and funding via the Letter of Intent which we have drafted.

JR: In a similar situation a community hospital would not be adequately equipped to handle anything that severe, and JR has witnessed spills of experimental substances which could result in disaster. Disaster Drills are not helpful since there is insufficient space to place all the people affected unless the etiology is known. Therefore current measures are ineffective.

BW: Exits meeting at 7:35 PM

Betsy: How much money is at stake?

RT: In the multi millions. The Town understands the scope of this problem and knows it must be prepared. This project would be interdisciplinary in nature, involving the Land Trust, Board of Health and Fire/EMT/Police Departments.

Betsy: Community Preservation Act notes: the citizen's petition has 150 signatures for the November ballot, Suggest that a meeting could have education presentation for the town. George will sound out Dennis to see if he would chair the committee for the petition. There would be a meeting in mid May, and then the community groups could be invited to attend so that the proposal can get on the November ballot.

RT: The Land Trust should be involved, George is important, so this effort should continue. Would like the Agricultural Commission and Land Trust to dovetail each other. Sterling Open Space committee has been contacted (Bob Spencer) and they want to be active in this so should be encouraged.

BW: Reenters meeting at 8:14 PM

RT: Must be a strong plan to get 100 million, Jim McGovern can be a very big help here.

BW: Agrees with all of the above.

RT: If we don't make our town a strong one, we could lose it. Open Space deals not only with recreational issues, but public health and safety concerns.

BW: That is the right way to go.

WHEREBY the meeting adjourned at 8:21 P.M.

Respectfully submitted:

Maryellen A. Brown, Acting Secretary.

July 20, 2006
Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Space Advisory Committee
Town of West Boylston, Massachusetts

ATTENDANCE: Chair: Dr. Robert Tashjian
 Vice-Chair: Michael Peckar
 Secretary: Maryellen Brown
 Barbara Wyatt
 James Edmundson

Sterling Open Space Committee:

 Chair: Robert Spencer
 Vice-Chair: Brian Cline
 Secretary: Marion Larson
 Treasurer: Maryanne MacLeod
 Robert Protano
 Peder C. Pederson

AGENDA: Sterling Fair Preparation

Call to order at 7:11 P.M.

RT welcomes all attendees, especially the Sterling Open Space Committee.

BC introduces members of the Sterling Open Space Committee.

RT introduces the new members of the West Boylston Open Space Committee, Jim Edmundson and Maryellen Brown. One member Lawrence Caron is now deceased,

JE describes his 27 year career in Alaska in the Fisheries and Wildlife Department, involving research of fisheries and water resources, and is now pursuing his doctorate at the University of Victoria. Elaborates on his experience in collaboration with other agencies and writing grant applications, as well as technical reports and peer review reports for the purpose of obtaining soft money. He describes a 10 year research program for which he obtained funding of 10 million dollars. He just returned to Massachusetts in December 2005 and to West Boylston on December 25, 2005.

RT states that the mission of the WBOSAC is to have a cohesive committee to look to the future needs of the town. There is a need for a broader mission; the plan for West Boylston taken to a national level. It is a unique plan with a strong base. The vision of the WBOSAC is public health and the preservation of our land and waters. Farms are different now than many years ago, there is really little classic agriculture anymore. This brings the consideration of the OSAC to public health and the preservation of water and land. Farm animals serve as sentinels against biological and chemical terrorism which involves veterinary medicine, so a symbiotic relationship is evolved from this. Agriculture presents as a method by which to preserve small parcels of land, maintain the environment, and focus on public health. Has met with public health

officials from Worcester with positive results. There are now 74 Massachusetts communities tied into concerns of bioterrorism and open space preservation. Also, the WBOSAC must revise its plan next year, we will do so in a more creative and unique way.

7:26 P.M. – Peder C. Pederson enters

RT turns to the subject of the Sterling Fair. Time is very short, need to focus on our options. How big do we want it to be? We have a large tent which could be used to house tractors, farm equipment and possibly animals. Would like to make a big presentation, and will be able to show political support. Want to work with SOSAC, we work well together.

BC states that the initiatives re: bioterrorism taken by Dr. Tashjian, while admirable, are not something which SOSAC would be familiar with and cannot speak to that. However, he agrees with the need for participation, and states that brochures are simply not effective. Too much information confuses the public. We need active participants this year.

RT agrees and states that we need organized fair booth coverage.

BC suggests the use of a picnic table where lemonade could be served and where people can sit and talk 1 on 1 to Committee members about our mission/goals. The mission is to educate the public.

7:36 P.M. – Robert Spencer and Maryanne MacLeod

RT: Agriculture is perceived as farming, but it really impacts public health and the environment. WBOSAC is developing a focus on agriculture for the Sterling Fair and wants to preserve the bond between WBOSAC and SOSAC.

MP states that last year the tractors were a great draw, as well as the taxidermy exhibits.

MMmacL states that for joint success we must concentrate on mutual aspects. Agricultural tradition and landscaping vs. community needs. Must listen to the public and find out what is important to them so we can work accordingly for the towns' purposes. Use the revision plan as a starting point, find common ground with the public. Issues of public health will only confuse Sterling people. Focus on the revision of the plan, i.e., gather information. States there will be new maps of the towns showing the location of endangered/rare species. They are printing in early September and will be brought to the fair. Also have bio/living waters maps to cultivate interest.

PP states that the committees can do complementary things, but we need to decide on the focus. Talking may not accomplish this. Focus on what could be developed, work on unique places to bring the public interest and get public opinion.

BC states that we must convince residents that this is important. The fair is chance to educate public on the meaning of "open space", i.e. the protection and future vision of land, its historic significance, wildlife habitats. All public opinion/perspective should be catalogued.

PP believes this would be a nice exercise for the planning of future activities.

BC states that people need to know this information, it is an educational process.

MMacL states that people need to engage in an activity, to welcome and draw in the public. Also helps with traffic flow. Maybe a tractor which can be climbed on.

RT states that is why we want to use the large tents this year. All these items can be inside to draw people in. We may also have a country band to play music.

MMacL states that the committees must work together to bring the focus where we want it.

RT states that we need committee members there at all times.

RP states that there were too many brochures last year. Agriculture is important, and we need to bring this home to people. Perhaps games/activities with a prize?

BC suggests having children identify various garden plants, or saplings, for a prize.

MMacL states that children could draw pictures of their favorite wildlife, breeds of cattle. Matching games perhaps?

RP states that we only have 6 weeks. Need to keep the theme in front of the public. What are we bringing to interest people? Need a real theme. What message do we want to give, we need to be specific. There was too much confusion last year. What do we want them to take away from the booth?

BC states that all volunteers should be able to answer questions discussed in the brochure.

RP states that people are really interested in bears right now. Perhaps a video of bears? Something along those lines.

BDeM states keep it simple and attractive.

RS states that volunteers are not sufficient.

PP states that we must define what it is all about. Ask people what is of value to them, i.e., hiking, scenery, fishing, etc.

BC states that we only have limited time and don't want to give the wrong impression. We can use animals to draw in children, and parents follow the children. If too much, focus will be lost.

MP states that we must focus on ourselves and our organizations. Need to reach out to the public so they reach back and get the message, all as described in the OS plan. Need to focus on that.

RT states that the plan will be our foundation, and the mission is public outreach. Preservation of agriculture. Suggest a new brochure jointly authored by West Boylston and Sterling OSACs. We will keep “Land and Waters That We Love” as our theme.

MMacL asks what will we actually present at the fair? Suggest that people who correctly answer OSAC questions should win a prize. Give an idea what the towns have to offer in terms of open space. Can be fun and educational. Then people will have an idea of the resources located in their own town that they never knew were there.

BC suggests having pictures of various farms and having people name them, or to identify a picture of open space in their towns, including farms, trails, streams.

PP especially areas accessible to the public, i.e., the rail trail. This could lead to productive discussion. Suggests area maps and aerial photographs to illustrate. We should be talking about what people don't already know, educate them re: open spaces in their towns. Athletic fields are all well and good, but are not our focus. Need to tell people about open space and the need for more in both towns.

RT theme is not considered a boundary of the exhibit. Will interact with other committees. Too many groups can get confusing, but we can return to that.

MMacL again states the need for activities to keep people in the tents.

RS states that they gave out tree seedlings at Earth Day this year, it was inexpensive. Could give to people for participation in activities.

RT agrees this should be enough.

RS states we have the open space maps which could be displayed.

PP as long as it engages the people in conversation. Perhaps use the maps as puzzles.

ML states that this would be a help to other towns revising their OS plans.

BC states that he has some great aerial images he could bring to display.

PP agrees and states the pictures could be used for people to identify their own homes and neighborhoods and see what open spaces are near them.

MMacL agrees that the goal is to educate the public about our mission.

MP suggests placing a mission summary on display with bulleted points for easy reading.

BC states that the aerial images are engaging and will draw people in. Teach them the 1st step, to appreciate what we have. Education will make this appreciation increase and create a cascade effect.

RT states must emphasize that mission is more than recreation/scenic beauty. Must focus on public health and environment. This vision is very important.

PP states we must have an area to draw people in and engage them in conversation. Compile notes of these conversations for future use and education.

BC agrees, human interaction is foremost.

RP has 2 picnic tables which he will bring to the fair and set up.

MM suggests displays of flora/fauna, i.e., what a tree does for you, what a field does for you, impact on emotional and physical health of public.

JE states that we know what open space is, we don't want people just like us. There are 2 camps, one is favorable and one is resistant to development of land. Must educate the value of clean air and water, i.e., the cost of lettuce from California to your table. Oil, manpower, etc. drive up costs to public. Would help people to refocus their perception of open space.

MM asks how we can convey the value of a field (land trust value)

RS states that we can demonstrate how open space pays for itself as opposed to residential development. We can bring that message out.

BC states that we need this data, it is key. People don't believe that open space costs them less than residential development.

RP states that getting them into the booth is the main objective.

BW adds that Umass did some research into this, we could use to supplement our theme "Land and Waters That We Love" and that we need.

MP states that we must also present the MDC as a friend not foe, make people understand its purpose.

MMacL agrees we must acknowledge MDC's valuable points, but reiterates that we must decide what we want to accomplish at the Sterling Fair..time of the essence.

RESOLVED:

Exhibit will be a definition of open space.

We will display maps and aerial photographs, and have games and activities.

We will have Q&A sessions/discussions

We should use seedlings for prizes, and Bob will obtain apples and apple chart also.

We must jointly work on brochure. Dr. Tashjian, Maryanne and Jim will work on this.

We will use two adjacent tents (20 x 22). Bob Spencer and Maryanne will take care of the tents. Mike, Brian and Bob will put up tents and take them down.

Maryanne will take care of fair space/rental fees.

Tables will be handled by Brian and Mike.

West Boylston OSAC through the Malden Brook Farm Heritage Center will do fundraising. Maryellen and Jim to work on that, with backup from Mike Peckar and the Land Trust, as they will help to pay the fee. Any sponsors will be entitled to tent space.

We will have another joint meeting on **Thursday, August 3, 2006.**

The agenda for this meeting will be to configure the layout of the tents, review maps and aerial photos, and the brochure draft.

WHEREBY the meeting concluded at 9:06 PM.

Maryellen Brown, Secretary

CONTACT LIST

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West Boylston Open Space Advisory Meeting
Mixer Municipal Building
Town of West Boylston, MA
Selectman's Room
Thursday, November 16, 2006
Minutes of the Meeting

ATTENDANCE:	Chair:	Dr. Robert Tashjian	(RT)
	Secretary:	Maryellen Brown	(MB)
	Member	Barbara Wyatt	(BW)
	Member	James Edmundson	(JE)
	Chief of Police	Dennis Minnich,	(DM)
	Recording Secretary	Jin Zhang	(JZ)

AGENDA Item 1:

Call to order at 7:35 P.M.

RT welcomed all attendees and noted that Jin Zhang a staff member of the American Veterinary Medical Frontiers (AVMF) will be digitally recording the meeting to supplement the written minutes.

RT introduced and thanked Chief of Police Dennis Minnich for attending the meeting and his support and understanding are integral for the OSAC plan and revision, as well as other long term goals to be addressed in tonight's meeting.

AGENDA Item 2:

Approval of minutes of last meeting October 19, 2006.

BW requested time to review the minutes.

WHEREFORE it was moved and seconded that this item will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

AGENDA Item 3:

Review and approval of Jim Edmundson's draft letter to the West Boylston Water District

RT stated JE prepared an excellent letter to the town's Water District re: the issues referenced at the October 19, 2006 meeting of the Committee.

RT reviewed the importance of the Water District as an ally.

BW indicated that we should be open to a mutual exchange of information and data between the OSAC and the Water District, would be beneficial to both.

RT agreed and indicated that representatives of the Water District will be invited to attend a future OSAC meeting.

WHEREFORE, it was unanimously agreed that language regarding the mutual exchange of information and data with the Water District be included in the letter drafted by Jim Edmundson, at which time the letter will be forwarded to the Water District.

AGENDA Item 4:

5 year OSAC plan must be completed in 1 year;

Open space representing over 500 acres on Prospect Street between Franklin & Parker Streets.

RT stated that Chief Minnich is knowledgeable with regard to the Letter of Intent which has been a work in progress, and is also very familiar with this 500 acres of open space. This land is vital to the town's health (environmental and animal) and safety. OSAC can spearhead action to bring this land to the town's attention. The land is now owned by MDC, Wachusett Country Club, the Town Water District and Malden Brook Farms. All of these groups must be unified for any effort to succeed so that land does not get splintered off. Priority must be public health and safety. If this land is developed, the town will change. It is in our hands now and we must keep on track, the OSAC plan revision must include a provision for this land. Focus on fostering a good relationship with the respective owners to reach this goal. The dam the MDC is interested in is the one on Carroll Pond, because there is a fear of flooding. These are sensitive issues. This includes possible increase in surface water flow and the dam does not have the capacity to handle it.

RT states that due to the above, the Citizens Organized for a Planned Environment (COPE) group should be activated, as it has been successful in the past.

BW: should encourage the responsible groups to take responsibility for the runoff from I-190, but due to politics and red tape this is virtually impossible.

RT emphasized that *the 500 acres represents the "final frontier" for West Boylston*. Malden Brook Farm is the foothold, and if that were lost, the town would change significantly, it is vital to the town's future. But we cannot do it alone, we need citizens' action, therefore, reestablish COPE.

DM: politicians do not want to step up to the plate and admit their errors, but 500+ contiguous acres is ripe for protection. COPE is a known "loud voice", there should be a meeting between COPE and congressmen, senators, etc. so as to assure project funding.

JE agrees this is a key element.

DM: negative publicity can sometimes help.

RT: Since few outside of West Boylston care about the town, we must use the land to draw attention here. About 135 acres is owned by the country club, the family does not seem inclined to sell off. Need ways to raise money independent from the town taxes. The town does not have the money to fund.

AGENDA Item 5:

National Model for Emergency Preparedness and Response

As to the Letter of Intent and the corresponding project, RT has huge documented political support. We don't want controversy like Tufts and the bio-containment lab has in Grafton. West Boylston has ideal facilities to handle possible biological/chemical contamination in terms of preparedness and response. Chief Minnich is key figure for town safety, his support here is vital. We have animal sentinels as an early warning system. This enhances the town's value, i.e., increased public health and safety so as to avoid a "Katrina" type situations here. Emergency services a factor.

AGENDA Item 6:

Strategic plan, Phase 1

RT would like to implement the plan in 3 phases. I-190 borders both the farm and the access road, could be used for emergency helicopter landings, etc. Emphasis should be on preparedness and response and not research. West Boylston could become a national model, we have already made positive contacts with the University of Pennsylvania and with the University of Massachusetts. Three MDs from Umass have written letters of support for the project. West Boylston will focus on the animal aspect, Umass the human aspect. The National Institutes of Health have been supplying various items including an ambulance. Phase 1 would incorporate these items, and RT would like to implement as soon as possible, even without an available helicopter.

DM stated that as Chief of Police, the location is perfect in terms of public safety should disaster occur, as it has no negative impact on the town. Agrees that the town could serve as a national model, including all emergency services, police, fire, etc. In fact, it is as perfect as you can get. Implementation of plan is only common sense, it is the right time and place. If it were bad for the town, he would object, however, this is not the case as he cannot think of anything negative as regards plan implementation.

AGENDA Item 7:

AVMF Divisions

RT stated that the National Institutes of Health (NIH) program in which American Veterinary Medical Frontiers, Inc, (AVMF) and its divisions are involved would provide ongoing funding. Also farm can provide study into naturally occurring disasters and not be a test situation. RT suggested that COPE become another division of AVMF.

AGENDA Item 8:

Historical COPE

RT: in terms of COPE, it can be made a division of AVMF. In the past, over 100 citizens became actively involved in COPE to protect the land that MDC later purchased. There is also

concern for the 7.5 acres next to the MDC field on Prospect Street due to high levels of botulism soil spores.

AGENDA Item 9:
COPE

Discussion was held as to the positive and negative aspects of publicity with COPE. Don't want too much publicity, but need to be somewhat aggressive. Discussion also held on the timing for the implementation of COPE, too soon is not good, but cannot wait too long. Issues must be defined and presented.

AGENDA Items 10 & 11:
DCR policy for 500+ acres on Prospect Street/Publicity

DM stated that publicity can be a double edged sword dependent upon the reporter, some are more trustworthy than others. But the right type of publicity would go far and fast, could be picked up by the AP. Publicity needed to proceed.

RT mentioned that the story would become exaggerated to our detriment, how to control this? Maybe start with a smaller group before implement COPE?

DM indicated that we have to be particular in how we control the media.

JE stated that the key is "Why West Boylston?" Must explain the significance of the plan and why West Boylston is unique in this regard. JE offered to draft an article explaining to the public that it will offer teaching/educational facilities, the opportunity to protect the public, explaining the initiative for the project is to protect human health, make it a friendly by using local people in support.

DM mentioned that American Airlines pilot Jim O'Loughlin, especially since he was a close friend of the deceased American Airlines pilot, John Ogonowski who was forced to fly into the Twin Towers on 9/11 would be perfect for an easy and friendly introduction to the subject.

JE stated that the article should tag the 500+ acres as a large plot vs. many small plots as a tool for public health and safety. Would like to try to draft this article. No reason to wait to get something out there, we don't want our ideas stolen, but we can get ahead of the game this way. Not too early to get some positive publicity and assuage questions and suspicions. See what stakeholders come to the plate. Can use Jim O'Loughlin as a prime example.

MB suggested a periodic newsletter be sent to the stakeholders to keep them up to speed.

JE agreed, can send progress reports to stakeholders. Should it come from OSAC or from the Town?

RT: OSAC should be the originator.

DM stated that if we can get citizen support, this would offset any potential conflict of interest on the part of RT as a stakeholder. Must be in the form of an article to be sent to newspapers and reporters which are trusted to incorporate the article properly, must tell them our requirements. Should be sent to the Banner, and if that gets positive feedback, then the T&G would run it.

RT stated that the Banner has been good for the group, and they are owned by the T&G, who in turn is owned by the NY Times.

WHEREFORE it was moved and seconded that Jim Edmundson will draft the above described article for the Committee's approval at the next meeting.

AGENDA Item 12:

Not specifically addressed.

AGENDA Item 13:

The next meeting of the Open Space Advisory Committee will be on **Thursday, December 14, 2006 at 7:30 PM.**

AGENDA Item 14:

Other business

BW stated that the DCR scheduled a meeting on 11/17/06 regarding the issue of the construction of rental housing units at Franklin Street and Route 12. Could JE attend it?

JE said he will try to attend this meeting

WHEREBY the meeting was adjourned at 9:17 PM.

Maryellen Brown, Secretary

West Boylston Open Space Advisory Meeting
Mixer Municipal Building
Town of West Boylston, MA
Selectman's Room
Thursday, December 14, 2006
Minutes of the Meeting

ATTENDANCE:	Chair:	Dr. Robert Tashjian	(RT)
	Secretary:	Maryellen Brown	(MB)
	Member	Barbara Wyatt	(BW)
	Member	James Edmundson	(JE)
	Chief of Police	Dennis Minnich	(DM)
	West Boylston Land Trust	George Bernardin,	
		President	(GB)
		Judy Rociewicz	(JR)
		Walter Rociewicz	(WR)

AGENDA Item 1:

Call to order at 7:32 P.M.

RT welcomed all attendees, and introduced George Bernardin, President of the West Boylston Land Trust, as well as Joyce Rociewicz and Walter Rociewicz..

RT again thanked Chief of Police Dennis Minnich for attending these meetings and for his support.

AGENDA Item 2:

Approval of minutes of last meeting October 19, 2006.

BW moved that the minutes be approved. RT seconded.

WHEREFORE it was moved and seconded that the minutes of the October 19, 2006 meeting be approved.

AGENDA Item 3:

Approval of minutes of last meeting November 16, 2006.

BW moved that the minutes be approved. RT seconded.

WHEREFORE it was moved and seconded that the minutes of the November 16, 2006 meeting be approved.

AGENDA Item 4:

Welcome to George Bernardin, President of West Boylston Land Trust.

RT welcomes GB and recognizes the significance of his joining tonight's meeting, he has had good relationships with the family over the years.

GB stated he has good contacts with the Land Trust Coalition regarding land preservation and protection, funding, etc. The 500 acres identified by the OSAC is a key target for the Land Trust. A task force may be formed consisting of a group focused on the issue, can help tap into other resources. The acreage is held between 5 different owners, and the town citizenry may have resources which are helpful. It's important to get people involved and we can work together to accomplish that.

RT noted that the issue is of public and environmental health. There is a 40b coming up re: the Estrada land. The Land Trust may be able to help with smaller parcels, but should be more than a few shrubs and trees. This must be monitored. Land Trust can be an ally. The Open Space plan is part of the Town Master Plan. OSAC plan is 5 years old and needs an update, the Master plan is only 1 year old, there are big differences between the two plans.

AGENDA Item 5:

Report on the letter of November 16, 2006, prepared by Jim Edmundson, submitted to the West Boylston Water District

JE stated there has been no response to date from the Water District, will follow up on this.

AGENDA Item 6:

Communication with Jennifer Sopher, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Affairs
Not specifically addressed.

AGENDA Item 7:

Mr. Leon Gaumond on goals of West Boylston, "working with the Open Space Committee to update the Open Space Plan; and creating a policy for 'new growth' money, or money the town is allowed to tax above Proposition 2½ based on new construction."

RT: The general feeling is that a buildout of the town will help it to grow economically. This has not been thought out properly. (See further discussion of this under Agenda Item 11.)

AGENDA Item 8:

Tour of Malden Brook Farm and review of American Veterinary Medical Frontiers (AVMF) projects with West Boylston by political leaders

RT met with Leon Gaumond over 1 year ago, was very receptive and gave his support. Have had meetings with the selectmen and are working with town Fire and Police Departments. Chief Dennis Minnich has been an active participant in this process. Open space must have programs and goals, it impacts the quality of life in West Boylston. We have a combination of West Boylston citizens and other interested parties are very interested in the model program. Potential problems with I-190 could affect many towns, including Sterling. In working with the Sterling Open Space Committee, we must keep this in mind. We can only do our own promotion, and cannot count on any politicians, although we have good relationships there. When Harriette Chandler toured the farm, she said to keep an eye on the I-190 ramp on the Holden line. She stated it has been problematic before.

BW asked how Senator Chandler suggested we react.

RT said Sen. Chandler advised to watch for new governor's meetings, and to get Sterling and Holden involved in the I-190 issues. Assessors indicate this property is buildable. It is important property, but is certainly not buildable as the swamps must be maintained. 40b is important here as regards public health issues.

RT: All meetings have been good so far. The Prospect Street land containing botulism spores was viewed. RT asked Sen. Chandler what could be done if spores were indeed present, she stated that she did not know, it would depend on how serious it was. This is something that the OSAC should do, and attack them on a scientific basis with hard evidence. Need the facts and figures. We need more data, but can begin to organize the material. This issue can cause people to become upset and distressed. This, and other health factors, argue against a build out of the town. This is our dilemma. The physicians from Umass said our first responsibility in town should be public safety, without this, public health is affected. OSAC will be an important link to the plan, and must coordinate with other town committees, however, we don't want to alarm the community. Other suggestions from visitors and supporters are that we make sure to follow Governor Patrick's meetings and get active participation from the town. Chief Dennis Minnich is the strongest voice we have here in West Boylston. Open space encompasses more than scenic beauty and recreation, and we should have more outside support from people who want to work with the OSAC.

BW: Towns need new growth in order to pay for increased costs, forcing towns to build out. The state does not reward towns for keeping open space.

GB: Many state-funded programs are available to help preserve open space, however West Boylston has not requested or participated in these programs. There are millions of dollars which are distributed statewide, so there is money, but West Boylston is not plugged in, and we need to do this and close the gap.

WR stated that Attorney Janet Morrison of Fitchburg obtained 9 million from the state for land preservation.

BW: We need to find out why West Boylston never did anything there. If we want to preserve the Prospect Street property, it must be specifically identified. If the state gives money under a program, who requests the funding?

JE: How do we connect?

GB stated he would find out about the process, it is vital that we determine proper procedures, time frames, etc. and get the whole story.

RT agrees

JE agrees, the property must be placed on an inventory, described and our reasons for preserving it should be delineated. If we don't have this, there is no point in OSAC Plan revision, it would simply be a clone of the old plan, which only contains boilerplate language. We must be very specific and detailed regarding numbers, square footage, and justification for preservation.

GB: Even now, if there is a danger to public health from the botulism spores, we don't have the parameters to create and mark a zone as fragile public health area, and do not build on this property. The easiest way to do this is to include it a "hit list" of properties targeted for open space protection.

RT: The DCR is a good agency, but very slow...it never moves. We have the scientific evidence, however, the state should fund us more.

DM: Repeated that he was told by Tyke that if soil samples prove the presence of botulism, the impact is huge. The land cannot be touched since building would release the botulism spores into the air, and then the aquifers become an issue. Then the town's resources are already reduced, the police department alone lost 2-3 million from its last budget. West Boylston does not have any money.

BW: Need new ways of obtaining funding.

DM: For the OSAC, the #1 goal must be the one (1) page document to apply for funding to test for botulism spores. Go from there to the I-190 runoff issue. Governor Patrick is holding a lot of meetings with a lot of people. Forget about money from the town until the samples come back positive.

RT: We would be looking for \$50,000.00 in funding for this purpose.

DM: It would stop the 40b project on Prospect Street cold.

GB: Cannot believe that Senator Chandler would be unable to assist us in funding the testing, surely some state agency could pry the money loose. It's important to public health.

RT: We must stop going in circles covering the same material. Our mission is to make a new OSAC plan which factors in all of these projects and goals. Must delegate responsibilities and try to get as much outside help as possible. Need to devote time and attention to the project.

JE: The revised Plan should briefly summarize the old plan in a few pages, and then cut to the chase. We don't need to update the old plan, just to cite it. Need to focus on this.

GB: The key is targeting certain pieces of land and making a "hit list," then go after the state or other agencies/programs for funding and assistance.

JE: Need data on the botulism spores to go into the revised plan. As previously stated, still waiting for a response on the written request for aquifer statistics from the Water District. Once we bring in this data, we can designate how many acres of open space are at issue. Dr. Tashjian's plan and the revised OSAC Plan should dovetail each other.

AGENDA Item 9:

Publicity

JE will prepare a summary article for possible distribution to local news outlets so the citizens are made aware of these issues, including biological and chemical terrorism, as chemicals would definitely affect the aquifers, also mentioning the I-190 problems, and can be segued into the topic of potential chemical spills.

DM: We will need a spokesperson for most newspaper consideration. The papers will contact the DCR and want interviews with them. Must therefore be careful, watch for misquotes, misrepresentations, etc.

WHEREFORE it was moved and seconded that the draft newspaper article would be collectively reviewed by the OSAC before any submission to the media.

AGENDA Item 10:

Report on West Boylston Town-Wide Planning Committee meeting on December 7, 2006.

RT: Was disappointed at this Town Wide Planning Committee meeting, the idea is for a full build out of West Boylston, and does not take into account wetlands and other issues. It is not a well thought out plan. (See Agenda Item 11, below).

AGENDA Item 11:

Economic development, full build out in West Boylston

At the Town-Wide Planning Committee meeting, RT pointed out that there are four (4) major areas for real estate tax purposes. One is general real estate taxes from businesses and residents;

there are two (2) factors to be considered with this type of tax, 1) capital vs. operational expenses, and 2) sewers which were supposed to handle growth in the town cannot handle the load. This has been an environmental disaster and will continue to be one. There are huge potential contamination problems, the cost of which could be astronomical. 3) The water department is very good, however, the pipes are old (circa 1939) and in terrible shape, and will become a huge expense in the future. 4) The municipal light department will also require major capital for construction costs. A build out will raise the cost of living in the town, the larger the population, the more money must be spent.

RT asked BW if the Economic Committee is addressing these issues.

BW indicated that they have begun some work on this but have not come to any conclusions yet. Leon provided figures which reflect 85% of tax income is residential. The committee is looking into ways to get more money from businesses.

JE: As far as OSAC, if we want input, we must get beyond the present perception of open space. We must demonstrate the financial benefits of open space, along the lines of the chart we used in the booth at the Sterling Fair. If land is developed, then the town must provide services. Emphasize "Sensible and Smart Growth." Need to keep up front the fact that open space makes economic sense. We will be on firmer ground then. Open space offsets other costs.

AGENDA Item 12:

Not specifically addressed

AGENDA Item 13:

Other business

There was no other business before the Committee.

AGENDA Item 14:

The next meeting of the Open Space Advisory Committee will be on **Thursday, January 18, 2007 at 7:30 PM.**

WHEREBY the meeting was adjourned at 9:02 P.M.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Maryellen Brown, Secretary

**Town of West Boylston
Open Space Advisory Committee
Mixer Municipal Building
120 Prescott Street
West Boylston, MA 01583**

Minutes: Thursday, 10 May 2007 at 7:00 p.m.

Advisory Committee Members present: Dr. Robert Tashjian (Chair), Barbara Wyatt, Brenda Bowman, Jim Edmundson. Absent were Mike Peckar and Carol Cotter.

Others present: as per sign-in sheet (14 in attendance).

Call to Order and Opening Comments: The meeting was called to order by Dr. Robert Tashjian at 7:20 p.m., with a 4 member quorum present. Dr. Tashjian began the meeting by introducing the committee members and distributing copies of the meeting agenda to the attendees. He indicated the committee would not be discussing item #4 on the agenda because there was no new information to discuss regarding the proposed 40B project at 19 Crescent Street.

Approval of Minutes of last meeting 23 April 2007: At this point, Dr. Tashjian explained that the minutes of the last committee meeting were not yet finalized because committee member Maryellen Brown (note taker) had recently resigned as committee secretary. Dr. Tashjian then asked if a motion to approve the minutes of the April meeting be postponed until the next (June) meeting. The committee unanimously agreed.

AVMF Strategic Master Plan and relationship to the revised West Boylston Open Space and Recreation Plan: Dr. Tashjian began by stating that West Boylston is now facing a critical crossroads of implementing the town's Master Plan which embraces full build-out potential of available lands and the need for preservation of open space to ensure public health. He said that "our town's future and destiny is open space" and that failure to protect adequate open space lands will negatively affect the quality of life and the future the town. Dr. Tashjian also stated that the need for open space goes far beyond scenic beauty and providing for recreational opportunities, and that open space is essential to ensure public safety, public health, animal health and environmental health.

That said, Dr. Tashjian recapped the history of the Open Space Sub-Committee and writing of the town's current Master Plan. During this process, he said he felt that there might be an alternative to the town's Master Plan that would enhance the town's infrastructure, provide additional revenue to the town to help decrease the property tax burden, boost public safety, and protect our town's drinking water supply. Dr. Tashjian then introduced his *Preliminary Strategic Master Plan: A Comprehensive National Model for Community Civil Defense: Including Biological Contamination, Preparedness and Response*. He pointed out that the Strategic Master Plan has been endorsed by several local officials, Board of Selectmen, state representatives, and Harvard University Medical School. In light of recent articles printed in the Worcester Telegram

and Gazette criticizing the Plan, Dr. Tashjian went on to explain that the newspaper misrepresented the purpose and benefits of the Strategic Master Plan. However, he did praise the Town Administrator for his supportive position in the same article stating that the town of West Boylston needs to be creative in terms of funding community services. Dr. Tashjian said that the Strategic Master Plan could help in such a creative manner.

Jim Edmundson added "What is the harm of having another plan being developed along with the current plan and have it available for the community to review?" He further stated that there were several elements of the plan that were directly relevant to the mission of the Open Space Advisory Committee. In particular, he underscored the part of the plan that deals with water quality protection in town, namely Malden Brook and its associated aquifer. Dr. Tashjian then explained that Interstate 190 crosses over the aquifer and thus there is a potential for truck tanker spills and subsequent release of chemicals, toxins or other contaminants into Malden Brook. Jim Edmundson went on to explain that as he understood it, the town receives more than ½ of its water supply from the Malden Brook aquifer. He said that given our current water conservation restrictions, if the Lee Street well, which taps this aquifer, becomes contaminated via some catastrophe or terrorist act, the town will face a dire environmental crisis. He further stated that the committee has identified approximately 500 acres of priority open space deemed the "final frontier" largely bordering Prospect Street that should be protected to ensure a clean and safe water supply for the town.

Jim Edmundson then explained that in addition to environmental benefits there is also an economic benefit to protect open space. He stated that many cost-benefit studies carried out in several communities in Massachusetts have shown that open space has a positive effect on nearby property values. He said that in addition to increasing local property value, thereby increasing property tax bases, open space provides tourism and recreational dollars and decreases local tax increases due to the savings of reducing the construction of new infrastructure such as schools, police, and road services. A discussion followed among the attendees about the relative value of residential, commercial and open space lands. A question was asked by Mr. _____ about the cost of community services in Massachusetts studies. He wanted to know what the revenue-to-expenditure ratio in dollars by property type was for West Boylston. Jim Edmundson responded in saying that the committee did not yet know that answer, but that we were working on generating that information as part of our revised Open Space Plan.

Ms. _____ then arrived and asked to speak briefly at the meeting regarding the upcoming Town Meeting and the Proposition 2 ½ override. She began distributing a packet of information to the attendees. Attendees were very receptive to listen to her presentation.

In keeping with the rules of order of the committee meeting, Dr. Tashjian asked the committee members if the meeting should be adjourned. The committee unanimously agreed. At this point the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:05 p.m.

Prepared: Jim A. Edmundson
06/18/2007

**Town of West Boylston
Open Space Advisory Committee
Mixer Municipal Building
120 Prescott Street
West Boylston, MA 01583**

Minutes: Thursday, 21 June 2007 at 6:30 p.m.

Advisory Committee Members present: Dr. Robert Tashjian (Chair), Barbara Wyatt, Brenda Bowman, Carol Cotter, Jim Edmundson. Absent was Mike Peckar.

Others present: Leon Gaumont (Town Administrator), Chief Minnich (Chief of West Boylston Police), Brian CLine (Chair/Sterling Open Space Advisory Committee), Dr. Gregory Ciottone (Director, International Emergency Medicine Section, Harvard Medical School).

Call to Order and Opening Comments: The meeting was called to order by Dr. Robert Tashjian at 6:35 p.m., with a 5 member quorum present. Dr. Tashjian began the meeting by introducing the committee members, town officials and guest speaker, Dr. Ciottone and suggested an agenda change: that further committee business be postponed until after a talk from guest speaker Dr. Ciottone. The committee unanimously agreed.

Significance of Open Space in West Boylston (Dr. Ciottone): Dr. Tashjian explained that Dr. Ciottone is recognized worldwide as a leading authority in the field of disaster medicine and management. Dr. Ciottone is the editor-in-chief of the brand-new reference *Disaster Medicine*. Dr. Tashjian stated that Dr. Ciottone recognizes the value of open space and that he could help the committee move forward with its mission/tasks.

Dr. Ciottone began by describing his roots in West Boylston and working relationship with Dr. Tashjian with respect to disaster medicine and disaster preparedness. He stated that West Boylston is rather unique in still having large areas of open space which can be utilized in disaster medicine training. Dr. Ciottone raised the question as to whether a small town like West Boylston should prepare for destructive natural disasters or bioterrorism. While such catastrophes might seem remote, he explained that pandemic avian flu is a real threat to communities nationwide. He gave an example of disaster statistics (pandemic flu) for Westboro, MA. In 1918, 48% of the town's population contracted the flu virus, 10% of the population died, and schools were cancelled for 10 weeks. If these statistics were applied to Boston, one million residents would be sick today and 100,000 could die. Dr. Ciottone went on to say that at that disaster level, our health care system would be overwhelmed and all services would be intensive care. While large cities like Boston could utilize colleges and dormitories for general health care, such infrastructure does not exist in towns like West Boylston. Dr. Ciottone also explained that West Boylston can create capability to accommodate primary health care (in case of disaster) in new municipal buildings and these buildings could still function primarily as general municipal buildings. He pointed out that this idea is core to Dr. Tashjian's *Strategic Plan* for West Boylston.

Dr. Ciottone further explained that West Boylston is unique because of the Wachusett Reservoir and that such a water body represents a potential threat, albeit remote, for deliberate contamination. However, he also said that pandemic flu can originate not only via waterbodies, but from commercial aircraft and migratory birds. Birds carrying the flu virus could enter the reservoir. As such, he explained that the reservoir could serve as an early detection environment. Dr. Tashjian and Jim Edmundson pointed out that monitoring of waterways and use of sentinel animals is central to the *Strategic Plan*.

Dr. Ciottone praised Dr. Tashjian for trying to keep open space and benefit the town (both in terms of services and infrastructure); however, he felt Dr. Tashjian's *Strategic Plan* would be difficult to fund because it is an unsolicited proposal. Rather, Dr. Ciottone stated that it might be possible to keep open space, but use it in a functional way that supports itself; i.e., use it in operational medicine for training in austere environments and rough terrain. This space would be used for tactical training. In addition to medical personnel, he indicated that the State Police are supportive of this idea. He went on to say that there is an acute need for training in austere medical care. In doing so, this venture would help keep the beauty of open space. Dr. Ciottone explained that Harvard Medical School could be the lead organization to obtain funding for training on open space parcels of the Malden Brook Heritage Farm and American Veterinary Medical Frontiers Inc. in West Boylston.

Dr. Tashjian stated that without this kind of disaster preparedness, it would be difficult to control the community in the face of natural disasters or bioterrorism. Barbara Wyatt said that West Boylston should be a model community for disaster preparedness. Jim Edmundson asked Dr. Ciottone how Harvard Medical School would actually protect open space. Dr. Ciottone responded by saying that they would develop a training facility on the property. Jim Edmundson told the committee that developing such a facility is essentially Phase I of the *Strategic Plan*. Chief Minnich responded by saying that by developing the disaster training facility in West Boylston along with the Harvard team, other elements of the Strategic Plan "would blossom". Leon Gaumond asked if austere training" was part of the current *Strategic Plan* and expressed his support of the training program/facility.

Dr. Ciottone indicated that Harvard would be looking for request for proposal funding opportunities in the fall to coincide with the federal fiscal cycle. He suggested that two elements, *biosurveillance* and *operational medicine* would need to be fleshed out in detail in the grant writing process. Leon Gaumond stated that "austere training" is the key element for the town and the town's cooperation and involvement. He said the town would be very supportive of this piece of the *Strategic Plan*. Barbara Wyatt asked Dr. Ciottone if the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority was currently providing water quality surveillance on the Wachusett reservoir. Dr. Ciottone said "yes" to some degree. With no further questions from the committee, Dr. Ciottone left the meeting and 7:30 PM. Leon Gaumond then told the committee that he agreed with Dr. Ciottone that our public health system is unprepared for an major catastrophe. Dr. Tashjian suggested the committee proceed with regular business.

Approval of Minutes of last meeting 10 May 2007: At this point, Dr. Tashjian asked if a motion to approve the minutes of the May meeting be postponed until the next (July) meeting. A motion was made, seconded and he committee unanimously agreed.

Recommendation for Jim Edmundson to be Vice Chairman of West Boylston Open Space Committee: Dr. Tashjian recommended Jim Edmundson to be Vice Chairman of the committee. The committee unanimously agreed.

Membership of West Boylston Open Space Committee: Dr. Tashjian established the current membership of the committee: Dr. Taashjian (Chair), Jim Edmundson (Vice Chair), Brenda Bowman, Barbary Wyatt, Carol Cotter.

Revision of Open Space Plan; Open Space and the Community Preservation Act: Leon Gaumond (Town Administrator) recommended Dr. Tashjian meet with the Planning Board about his *Strategic Plan*. Leon expressed his preference desire to have a draft revision of the town's Open Space Plan in hand by the end of September (2007), but would concede to December (2007) if necessary. He also indicated that West Boylston may establish an Agricultural Commission, which would interact with the Open Space Committee. As to the Community Preservation Act (CPA), he stated that the CPA passed by a slim margin. He went on to explain the CPA statute and that he is in the process of creating a CPA committee to recommend how funds are expended. Leon also reiterated that it is the voters at Town Meeting dictate dispersion of CPA funds. Dr. Tashjian expressed his concern about the CPA Commission becoming a grantor for special interests groups. Leon Gaumond replied that CPA efforts should be different and separated from the *Strategic Plan* and the Harvard involvement. Brian Cline explained that there is much flexibility in what CPA funds can be used for and that a town can be quite creative in its spending. Leon Gaumond recommended that the Open Space Committee submit a name to sit on the CPA Committee. He informed the committee that the deadline to request a seat on the CPA Committee is 29 June 2007 and that there were 4 seats to be filled. Brenda Bowman expressed interest in becoming a member of the CPA Committee.

Adjournment: At this point, the West Boylston Open Space Advisory Committee meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:05 p.m.

(continued below)

West Boylston & Sterling
Open Space Implementation Committee
Joint Regional Meeting

Mixer Municipal Building
120 Prescott Street
West Boylston, MA 01583

Minutes: Thursday, 21 June 2007 at 7:30 p.m.

Advisory Committee Members present: Brian Cline (Chair), Dr. Robert Tashjian (Co-Chair), Barbara Wyatt, Brenda Bowman, and Jim Edmundson

Call to Order and Opening Comments: The meeting was called to order by co-Chair Dr. Robert Tashjian at 8:10 PM, with a 5 member quorum present.

Progress Reports since the Sterling Fair 2006; Sterling Fair 2007/Other Business: Brian Cline reported the date for the upcoming Sterling Fair as 08-09 September and Dr. Tashjian asked the joint committee whether West Boylston and Sterling would join efforts at this year's fair. Brian Cline questioned whether we had the resources to do this because of funding limitations and lack of personnel to staff the fair booth. His opinion was that the Sterling Open Space Committee was not inclined to participate in the fair this year, but that the West Boylston and Sterling should stay in communication and share ideas about how to revise their respective open space plans. A discussion followed among the committee members about the real merit of having a booth at the fair. Jim Edmundson favored putting the open space efforts into getting our message out about the fiscal value of open space. Dr. Tashjian agreed, stating that the West Boylston Open Space Committee should tune its efforts toward the Harvard connection. He also reiterated the need to keep the town involved.

Dr. Tashjian explained the article at last Town Meeting about the Board of Selectmen backing a plan to operate a waste transfer facility in town as a means of generating funds. Dr. Tashjian felt that the committee should take a formal position on the proposal. Jim Edmundson suggested that the committee write a letter to the Board outlining our position and both environmental and economic reasons against the proposal.

Brenda Bowman suggested that the open space committee should promote more public access on state owned (DCR/watershed) lands within the municipality such as the Lily Ponds. Dr. Tashjian and Jim Edmundson felt that use of sensitive watershed lands like the Lily Ponds would not be in the best interest of public health and safety.

Jim Edmundson asked the joint committee if we were participating in the upcoming Sterling fair or not. Dr. Tashjian responded that we should not attend the fair. Instead, he suggested we focus our efforts on other business including implementing Phase I of the *Strategic Plan*, revising the open space plan, and documenting our positions on the waste transfer facility proposal and various Chapter 40B projects that may impact open space.

Adjournment: Dr. Tashjian adjourned the meeting at 10:05 PM.

Prepared: Jim A. Edmundson
07/24/2007

**Town of West Boylston
Open Space Advisory Committee
Mixer Municipal Building
120 Prescott Street
West Boylston, MA 01583**

Minutes: Thursday, 30 August 2007 at 7:00 p.m.

Advisory Committee Members present: Dr. Robert Tashjian (Chair), Barbara Wyatt, Brenda Bowman, Vincent Vignaly and Jim Edmundson. Absent were Mike Peckar and Carol Cotter.

Call to Order and Opening Comments: The meeting was called to order by Dr. Robert Tashjian at 7:10 p.m., with a 5 member quorum present. Dr. Tashjian announced that Jim Edmundson would be acting secretary for the meeting and began by introducing new member Vincent Vignaly. Mr. Vignaly described his background as an environmental engineer with the Department of Conservation. He also described his 13 years work/experience with the Conservation Commission and his current involvement with the Town-wide Planning Board. Dr. Tashjian stated that Mr. Vignaly's background and expertise is a great addition to the Open Space Committee.

Approval of Minutes of 10 May and 21 June 2007 meetings: After a review of the minutes, Barbara Wayatt moved that the minutes of both meetings be accepted. The motion was seconded and the minutes approved unanimously by committee. Jim Edmundson said he would file the minutes with the Town Clerk.

Review and discussion of 26 July 2007 meeting: Since a quorum was not present for the July meeting, Jim Edmundson suggested tabling discussion of the July ""meeting notes"". Dr. Tashjian agreed and the committee moved to the next agenda (#7) item.

Recommendation of a Member of the Open Space Committee to establish a WB Agricultural Commission: Jim Edmundson explained the Town Manager's response to his interest in serving on the Agricultural Commission; i.e., that Mr. Gaumont (Town Administrator) would be introducing an article at the spring (2008) town meeting asking voters to establish an Ag. Comm. If accepted, he would then solicit names for the commission. Barbara Wyatt asked what does the town gain by creating an Agricultural Commission. Dr. Tashjian responded by saying that the town still has significant Chapter 61 lands that need to remain in agricultural use, therefore a commission to help foster and protect agricultural/farm lands is warranted. Vincent Vignaly added that most Chapter 61 lands are classified for recreation (48%) compared to that for forestry (34%) and agriculture (18%). However, he acknowledged that he did not have the actual acreages at hand for the breakdown. Brenda Bowman asked how the town seeks to gain Chapter 61 designation for land parcels. Vincent responded stating that a property owner seeking to remove his/her property from one of the chapter programs, coincident with a sale or

transfer of ownership, is required by law to notify the Town of its first option to acquire the property. Under current law, the town has right of first refusal to purchase Chapter 61 lands if the property is up for sale for conversion to another use. If no money is available to purchase such lands, Chapter 61 lands are subject to be sold to developers. However, once land is designated as Chapter 61 and after 20 years, the first right of refusal by the town disappears. The committee agreed that a member of the Open Space Committee should serve as a member of the Agricultural Commission since keeping lands in Chapter 61 programs helps protect critical open space.

Significance of Open Space for the “Prospect Street Sewer Aqueduct” Flooding With or Without Aquifer and Recharge Contamination: Dr. Tashjian explained that with the new sewer connections, water/sewer/runoff from the Wachusett Country Club and the Applewood subdivision is running underground along Prospect Street. He went on to say that the Peterson Farm (on Prospect Street near the I 190 overpass) has a position that I 190 runoff is overburdening the sewer system. Vincent Vignaly questioned whether this concern should be more of an issue with the Department of Public Works. Dr. Tashjian responded by saying that it should be an issue for the Open Space Committee because if the sewer breaks it would likely contaminate Malden Brook which is a significant source of water for the town. To add to the potential problem of an overburdened sewer system, Vincent also stated that the Board of Selectmen are interested in reducing the minimum building (residential) lot size from 40,000 ft² to 10,00 ft² or 20,000ft². Brenda Bowman asked where the flooding on Prospect Street occurs. Dr. Tashjian responded that it is around the pumping station near the Peterson and Malden Brook Farms. At this point in the discussion, Vincent and Brenda asked if there is a moa motion to do something about the issue. Dr. Tashjian suggested we should draft a letter to the Board of Selectmen about our concerns about flooding and contamination of our water supply.

AVMF Strategic Plan and the Relationship to the Revised West Boylston Open Space and Recreation Plan: Dr. Tashjian stated that the Open Space Committee was “under the gun” to revise the Open Space Plan. He described the history and background of developing the Plan and its key elements. He also explained how many of these elements would benefit the town, both in terms of bringing new capital for our crumbling infrastructure needs as well as bringing in funds that could be used for the police and fire departments. Vincent Vignaly suggested that the best move for the committee is to incorporate these ideas into the revised Open Space Plan. Jim Edmundson then discussed his ideas for blending the revised Open Space Plan and the AVMF Strategic Plan. He said that the revised plan could be organized into 4 main sections: (1) open space for public health and safety, (2) open space for animal health, (3) open space for environmental health, and (4) open space for recreation. Vincent further recommended that the committee prepare a letter to the Planning Board in support of the AVMF Strategic Plan.

There was additional discussion about the cost of community services and the revenue-to-expenditure ratio in dollars for West Boylston. Jim Edmundson cited the statistics from several studies around the state echoing the notion that open space saves money and helps stabilize community budgets. Vincent Vignaly recommended that the revised Open Space Plan show the revenue-to-expenditure ratio for WB in comparison with other Massachusetts towns.

The discussion then shifted to local approval processes, local zoning, and other restrictions surrounding Chapter 40B affordable housing projects in the town. Vincent Vignaly explained the zoning regulations, site plan etc. for the Crescent Street Village project. He stated that the development is smaller than originally planned and would include 18 units and still leave some open space. He also recommended that the Open Space Committee prepare a position letter that recommends changing the 40B process.

Jim Edmundson then asked the committee what main issues are to be included in the revised Open Space Plan. He answered by suggesting (1) prioritizing the open space lands along Prospect Street from Crescent Street to Parker Street, (2) support and inclusion of elements of the AVMF Strategic Plans, (3) water problems and water quality protection for the town, and (4) involvement of the Open Space Committee in the Chapter 40B local approval process. Vincent then added that we also need to get the recreation plan and add that to our revised Open Space Plan. He said that the recreation plan has identified the ~7 acre parcel on Prospect Street for three soccer fields.

Town-Wide Planning Committee Meeting, 02 October 2007: Vincent Vignaly suggested that the Open Space Committee attend the 02 October meeting and ask the Town-Wide Planning Committee for assistance in preparing the revised Open Space Plan. Some of the members agreed to attend.

Adjournment: At this point, the West Boylston Open Space Advisory Committee meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:12 p.m.

Prepared: Jim A. Edmundson 10/24/2007

**Town of West Boylston
Open Space Advisory Committee
Mixer Municipal Building
120 Prescott Street
West Boylston, MA 01583**

Minutes: Thursday, 27 September 2007 at 7:00 p.m.

Advisory Committee Members present: Dr. Robert Tashjian (Chair), Barbara Wyatt, Brenda Bowman, Vincent Vignaly, Carol Cotter and Jim Edmundson. Absent was Mike Peckar.

Others present: Mr. John Ownisian (Parks Facilities Committee).

Call to Order and Opening Comments: The meeting was called to order by Dr. Robert Tashjian at 7:08 p.m., with a 6 member quorum present. Dr. Tashjian announced that Jim Edmundson would be acting secretary for the meeting.

Review and Approval of Minutes of 30 August 2007 Meeting: Dr. Tashjian asked for a review of the 30 August 2007 meeting. Jim Edmundson stated that he had not yet prepared the minutes for the last meeting. Dr. Tashjian decided to take up the issue of past minutes at the next meeting. Jim Edmundson indicated he would have the past minutes distributed to the committee in advance of the next (October) meeting.

Discussion with the Parks Facilities Committee Re: WB Parks and the Revised Open Space & Recreation Plan: Dr. Tashjian began by introducing Mr. John Ownisian of the Parks Facilities Committee. Mr. Ownisian described the composition, history and overview of the Parks Facilities Committee. Specifically, he said that the committee was formed about a year ago in response to the closure of the town pool and lack of town playing (field) facilities. He stated that the town pool is beyond repair and the town recently lost the use of the men's softball field in Oakdale (because of DCR restrictions) and the and the youth soccer field. Mr. Ownisian stated that the current playing fields are heavily used, the high school needs new fields, and that the general consensus by the Parks Facilities Committee is that all the playing fields are overused. He also said that the total budget for parks is \$17,000/yr which includes a staff of two (9 months each). In addition to the deterioration of the playing fields, Mr. Ownisian described the crumbling condition of the tennis courts, the need for relining the track, and the lack of a town skating rink.

Mr. Ownisian stated that the Parks Facilities Committee has prioritized projects for the town planning committee. He said the first priority is top demolish the town pool and replace it with a smaller outdoor pool and a zero depth pool or sprinkler water park. Mr. Ownisian also said that the committee has applied for a state grant for funding for the project. The second priority is to build a new playing field behind the high school. The Parks facilities Committee has also applied for a grant to fund this project. The third priority for the committee is to obtain an

estimate for repairs to the tennis courts and associated drainage issues. There was discussion about what, if any, playing fields might be built in conjunction with a new Town Hall proposed for the Mixter Building site. In addition, we discussed the need for new playing fields near the high school given that the proposal for building a waste facility on Tivnan Drive also includes building new fields adjacent to the proposed facility. Dr. Tashjian asked Mr. Ownisian what acreage was required for the new fields. He also asked where and how much DCR land is the Parks Facilities Committee looking at to acquire for athletic/recreational use. Mr. Ownisian said that at this time he was unsure.

Carol Cotter asked what Mr. Ownisian meant about “crumbling infrastructure”. Mr. Ownisian responded by saying that preliminary estimates are that it would cost the town \$134,000 to replace the tennis courts and basketball courts, create adequate parking and lighting. He also stated that all necessary repairs building new playing field facilities would cost less than \$200,000. Dr. Tashjian felt that new capital costs should come after funds are available to repair and maintain existing athletic facilities. He posed the question “What is our 5-year plan in light of progressive deterioration and new capital costs”. Brenda Bowman suggested that the Parks Facilities Committee lay out a 5-year plan in more detail. Dr. Tashjian expressed his concern about trading DCR land for parks and recreation. Vince Vignaly responded by saying that DCR won’t just “give land away” .

Mr. Vignaly described his background as an environmental engineer with the Department of Conservation. He also described his 13 years work/experience with the Conservation Commission and his current involvement with the Town-wide Planning Board. Dr. Tashjian stated that Mr. Vignaly’s background and expertise is a great addition to the Open Space Committee.

Approval of Minutes of 10 May and 21 June 2007 meetings: After a review of the minutes, Barbara Wayatt moved that the minutes of both meetings be accepted. The motion was seconded and the minutes approved unanimously by committee. Jim Edmundson said he would file the minutes with the Town Clerk.

Review and discussion of 26 July 2007 meeting: Since a quorum was not present for the July meeting, Jim Edmundson suggested tabling discussion of the July “”meeting notes”. Dr. Tashjian agreed and the committed moved to the next agenda (#7) item.

Recommendation of a Member of the Open Space Committee to establish a WB Agricultural Commission: Jim Edmundson explained the Town Manager’s response to his interest in serving on the Agricultural Commission; i.e., that Mr. Gaumond (Town Administrator) would be introducing an article at the spring (2008) town meeting asking voters to establish an Ag. Comm. If accepted, he would then solicit names for the commission. Barbara Wyatt asked what does the town gain by creating an Agricultural Commission. Dr. Tashjian responded by saying that the town still has significant Chapter 61 lands that need to remain in agricultural use, therefore a commission to help foster and protect agricultural/farm lands is warranted. Vincent Vignaly added that most Chapter 61 lands are classified for recreation (48%) compared to that for

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Town-Wide Planning Committee Meeting, 02 October 2007: Vincent Vignaly suggested that the Open Space Committee attend the 02 October meeting and ask the Town-Wide Planning Committee for assistance in preparing the revised Open Space Plan. Some of the members agreed to attend.

Adjournment: At this point, the West Boylston Open Space Advisory Committee meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:12 p.m.

Prepared: Jim A. Edmundson 10/24/2007

**Town of West Boylston
Open Space Advisory Committee
Mixer Municipal Building
120 Prescott Street
West Boylston, MA 01583**

Minutes: Thursday, 15 November 2007 at 7:00 p.m.

Advisory Committee Members present: Dr. Robert Tashjian (Chair), Barbara Wyatt, Brenda Bowman, Vincent Vignaly, and Jim Edmundson. Absent were Carol Cotter and Mike Peckar.

Call to Order and Opening Comments: The meeting was called to order by Dr. Robert Tashjian at 7:15 p.m., with a 5 member quorum present. Dr. Tashjian announced that Jim Edmundson would be acting secretary for the meeting.

West Boylston is at a Crossroads: Dr. Tashjian began by reiterating the serious business facing the committee in terms of revising the open space plan given that the Town's Master Plan is very pro-development. He stated that we are up against a full build out philosophy by town planners. Dr. Tashjian went on to say that one tenets of the Master Plan is that if we have 100% build out, then the town will have sufficient funds via an expanded tax base for new municipal buildings. In addition, he said that the original town-wide planning committee was against the idea of acquiring open space and a separate open space committee; as such, the open space committee was originally just a sub-committee.

Barbara Wyatt asked where we stand now. Dr. Tashjian responded by saying that the subcommittee organized a grassroots group: Citizens Organized to Protect the Environment (COPE). In addition, he said that the subcommittee organized into a separate Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC) as it stands today. Dr. Tashjian went on to say that although the current town administrator was not involved with developing the Town Master Plan, he has been moving the plan to implementation as desired by the Board of Selectmen with projects such as the proposed waste transfer facility and advocating for additional 40B developments. Committee member Vince Vignaly stated that the waste transfer facility may not be a bad project for the town because the public will have a chance to review/comment on the details of the contract before such a facility can be built and operated. He felt that if the contract is "good", then the facility will be a good investment and revenue generator for the town. After some additional discussion about road access to the proposed waste transfer facility and what other towns may benefit from this project, Vince said that the Department of Conservation (DCR) would need to negotiate road access from other adjacent towns onto the facility. He also pointed out that one of the goals of the current open space plan is to build good working relationships and partnerships with DCR.

Brenda Bowman asked the committee if there was a way to change the direction of the Master Plan away from full build out, saying that there is very little town-owned open space remaining. Vince recommended that the OSAC become the Open Space Implementation Committee and begin by prioritizing 50-100 acres of choice open space to purchase with CPA funds. The committee was in full agreement on that point.

Additional Discussion and Progress

At this point in the meeting, Jim Edmundson suggested that we should begin discussing the nature of the new revised open space plan – “Just what are we going to put into it that differs from the current plan”. Barbara Wyatt said that we need updated water resources maps, new zoning maps, building permit statistics etc. Vince responded by saying that we need to develop the language of the new plan first which will help us determine which supplemental material such as maps etc. we need to obtain. Barbara Wyatt added that the Nashua River Watershed Association has maps we can use. Brenda Bowman suggested that the OSAC promote Chapter 61 status as a means to keep open space. Dr. Tashjian responded by saying that Jennifer Soper recommended that we should include a section in the revised plan about open space for agriculture. He also said that he has been working with U.S.D.A. and DCR developing a plan to use open space lands for agriculture, rather than letting them go fallow and overgrown. He said that DCR has been receptive to the idea of putting more open space lands into the Chapter 61 program. He also said that the OSAC should recommend no till practices and soil testing of agricultural lands since some parcels contain high levels of botulism spores.

Vince Vignaly stated that we need to develop a list of action items in our revised plan and that we should also conduct a public survey asking citizens their opinions and recommendations for acquiring, using and managing open space. He also said that this could be accomplished as part of the Town-Wide survey that the town administrator is currently preparing. Jim Edmundson asked how we coordinate revisions to the plan with Vince. Vince responded providing hard copies or MS Word Track Changes of the document of members’ comments/edits would work just fine.

Dr. Tashjian asked the committee if we should attend the Town-Wide Planning Committee (TWPC) Meeting in early December. At this point, the discussion morphed into different types of zoning. Vince Vignaly said that the TWPC may present a cluster zoning bylaw before the town within the next year. He said that this type of zoning would allow homes to be clustered so that roads, utilities, sewers etc. would be minimized and a maximum of open space could therefore be retained. Barbara Wyatt echoed that the OSAC should support good buffers with cluster zoning. Barbara/Brenda Bowman then presented a brief history of the 40B project on 19 Crescent Street.

At this point, Dr. Tashjian felt it would be premature to attend the next TWPC meeting as we were not far along yet with or revised plan. Vince Vignaly recommended that Carol Cotter be the committee’s spokesperson in promoting our revised plan. Barbara Wyatt suggested that the OSAC get the WB Land Trust involved with our new plan. Vince also recommended that the committee address open space needs on the Tivnan Drive property (35 acres). He also reiterated the point that we need to show that the value of open space is not just for aesthetic reasons, but that open space can benefit the town financially.

Vince then recapped the action items of the meeting:

1. Jim Edmundson will provide narrative of the revised plan to Vince by Thanksgiving.
2. Dr. Tashjian will send his comments to Jim.
3. Brenda Bowman will ask the Water District to update their statistics for the revised plan.

4. Barbara Wyatt will review existing maps/figures to determine what else we might need.
5. A final draft of the revised plan will be due by 31 January 2008.

Adjournment: At this point, the West Boylston Open Space Advisory Committee meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 p.m.

Prepared: Jim A. Edmundson 11/29/2007

West Boylston Open Space Advisory Committee
11/29/2007 Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Dr. Tashjian, Barbara Wyatt, Brenda Bowman, Jim Edmundson, Vincent Vignaly

Dr. Tashjian did not arrive until later, so Jim chaired the meeting and Vincent acted as clerk.

Meeting was opened at 7:10

Minutes from 11/15/07 were reviewed and accepted as amended. Barbara motioned, Brenda second. Board vote was unanimous.

Dr. T will provide meeting minutes for the 11/01/07 meeting before the next meeting for review.

Vinny said he met with Leon Gaumond who told him that no survey is going to be done in time for this update.

Committee discussed the revisions prepared by Jim and made comments for sections 1 and 2. These are a good basis to build on as we proceed with the update. Jim stated that the format is used by agencies to review for grant applications, so we will keep the existing OS&R plan format.

Jim described how Open space is not just aesthetics, but provides public health and safety benefits as well as quality of life. Vinny added that it also provides community character and this should be included in all lists of the benefits in the plan.

The committee reviewed and was impressed with section 1 and wanted to keep it to a single page. Section 2A was good with minor changes as noted, and section 2B was a good draft to reduce the details of naming specific persons who provided input to each section and make it more representative of a group effort with notes of from where the information was compiled. The committee needs to keep records of minutes and contacts/meetings where we get our information and include a footnote to the references section of the update.

Section 3.c. Vinny to add a sentence at the intro noting that the previous report information has not been updated because there is no new census data since 2000. The DCR-owned land inventory will be updated, and the old paragraph updated and relocated to follow this introduction. Brenda to contact DCR to get total ownership of land and water in West Boylston; and the locations and amounts of land purchased in WB since 2001.

Vinny to update zoning changes since 2002 on page 17.

Barbara and Brenda to update sewered area info, including percent of town sewered; percent not connected in the sewer areas; number of houses connected; average daily flow of all WB including all areas flowing to Worcester and Holden.

Jim to add paragraph regarding loss of available recharge due to sewer construction, and potential impacts to wells.

Brenda will email comments and changes recommended from the Water District and will email Vinny.

Brenda to update building permit information from 2000-2007, page 19.

Vinny to provide ANR and subdivision lots since 2000, page 21.

Barbara/Brenda to update 61, 61A, 61B information, page 36.

Barbara to update research on water quality degradation in Gates Brook, page 37.

Mike Peckar to get information regarding Rail Trail, Greenways, and Land Trust updates, page 40.

Barbara to contact Historical Commission to get their updates, page 40-41.

Jim to flesh out Section 4.G and Committee discuss his draft and made changes. Vinny will incorporate these comments in the next draft of the Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Jim to update AVMF aspects into Malden Brook Farm update, page 45.

The Committee discussed entities interested in and capable of purchasing land to maintain as open space: DCR, CPA through Town Meeting vote, the Water District, private nonprofits, and private philanthropists.

Vinny to change and update the bylaws enforcement paragraph, page 44.

Next meeting was discussed as being Thursday, December 13, at 7:00pm. The following meeting will be Thursday, January 3.

Motion to adjourn by Barbara at 9:50. Seconded by Brenda. Unanimous vote.

**Town of West Boylston
Open Space Advisory Committee
Animal Medical Center/Conference Center
29 Prospect Street
West Boylston, MA 01583**

Minutes: Thursday, 17 January 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

Advisory Committee Members present: Dr. Robert Tashjian (Chair), Brenda Bowman, Vincent Vignaly, and Jim Edmundson. Absent were Carol Cotter and Mike Peckar.

Others Present: Dr. Robin Taher, Ray Desanti, Brian Bjorklund.

Call to Order and Opening Comments: The meeting was called to order by Dr. Robert Tashjian at 7:12 p.m., with a 4 member quorum present. Dr. Tashjian announced that Jim Edmundson would be acting secretary for the meeting. He then introduced others present as interested in becoming members or associate members of the OSAC. Dr. Taher, Mr. Desanti and Mr. Bjorklund each gave a brief background and their interest in joining the OSAC. Brenda Bowman moved to recommend them as associate members. The motion was seconded by Barbara Wyatt and the committee approved the motion unanimously. Given the numerous absences of committee members Carol Cotter and Mike Peckar, Dr. Tashjian recommended, albeit reluctantly, that if members miss three consecutive meetings, members should be removed from the committee. Brenda moved the recommendation and Barbara seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Review and Approval of 20 December 2007: The minutes of the last meeting, prepared by Jim Edmundson, were discussed and reviewed. After making minor edits, a motion to approve was made by Vince. Brenda seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Report on Dr. Tashjian's Recent Communications/Meetings with Potential Impact on the Open Space Plan: Dr. Tashjian summarized his meetings and communications with the Governor's office, Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs (Ian Bowles), Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources Scott Soars), Undersecretary of Homeland Security, Executive Office of Public Safety (Juliette Kayyem), Conservation Law Foundation, Boston (Attorney Eloise Lawrence) and the Department of Conservation and Recreation. There was strong support from all individuals and agencies for integrating public health and safety issues, as exemplified in the AVMF Strategic Plan, into our revised open space plan.

Continued Work on the Revised Open Space Plan: Jim Edmundson said for the next OSAC meeting he would obtain a PC projector to facilitate work/edits on the revised plan. Jim updated members on his revisions to the open space plan. Vince recommended preparing supporting tables and figures into the text to make it more readable. Also, he suggested that we develop a table that compares potential revenue from the proposed waste transfer site with potential revenue generated by AVMF's Strategic Plan. Additionally, Vince felt that much of the revised

narrative of the OS plan, dealing with “Environmental Challenges and Problems”, is better suited to the section “Community Vision” and perhaps placed at the beginning of the Plan. The committee continued re-working various sections of the open space plan and re-prioritizing objectives and goals to reflect our concentration on the need and value of open space for public health and safety. Vince recommended that the committee review the working draft to date and provide additional comments/language for the next meeting. The next meeting was scheduled for 31 January 2008.

Adjournment: At this point, the West Boylston Open Space Advisory Committee meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:15 p.m.

Prepared: Jim A. Edmundson 01/30/2008

**Town of West Boylston
Open Space Advisory Committee
Animal Medical Center/Conference Center
29 Prospect Street
West Boylston, MA 01583**

Minutes: Thursday, 31 January 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

Advisory Committee Members present: Dr. Robert Tashjian (Chair), Brenda Bowman, Barbara Wyatt, Vincent Vignaly, and Jim Edmundson. .

Others Present: Dr. Robin Tahr, Ray Desanti, Brian Bjorklund.

Call to Order and Opening Comments: The meeting was called to order by Dr. Robert Tashjian at 7:05 p.m., with a 5 member quorum present. Dr. Tashjian announced that Jim Edmundson would be acting secretary for the meeting.

Review and Approval of 17 January 2008 & 02 February 2008 Minutes: Jim Edmundson announced that he had not yet prepared the minutes of the 31 January meeting, but would have them available at the next meeting. Vince Vignaly discussed and reviewed the minutes of the 02 February meeting. The minutes were approved unanimously with minor amendments.

Report on Harvard Medical School/University of Pennsylvania Programs in Relation to Agriculture: Dr. Tashjian summarized his meetings and communications with HMS and UPenn about the recognition of sensitive wetlands and potential botulism exposure on the Malden Brook Farm and some adjacent land parcels. He stated that agricultural experts from UPenn recommended careful farming practices and specific crops that could be sown/harvested to mitigate harmful effects of botulism. Dr. Tashjian also said that UPenn was very supportive of developing a sentinel animal program based on the Malden Brook Farm and with a diagnostic laboratory centered at the farm's 152 Prospect Street parcel.

Name Change and Mission of COPE: Dr. Tashjian brought OSAC members up to speed on the recent Citizens Organized for a Planned Environment (COPE) meeting. He reiterated that members of COPE had agreed to be a broader based organization with strong interests in developing a disaster preparedness program within regional context, ensuring public health and safety, preserving open space and agriculture and responsible growth/development. Dr. Tashjian also said that the committee changed its name to Citizens Strategic Disaster Preparedness and Response Coalition (CPR). Members of the OSAC were invited to join CPR.

Jim Edmundson then spoke about potential grant funding by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) under the request for proposal (RFP): "Strengthen and Improve the Nation's Public Health Capacity through National, Non-Profit, Professional Public Health Organizations to Increase Health Protection and Health Equity". He said that preparing the grant was beyond the capabilities and expertise of the

OSAC, but Harvard Medical School might be interested in preparing the RFP in association with American Veterinary Medical Frontiers (AVMF) and town of West Boylston. However, hw also said that the deadline for submission of the grant was extremely tight and the awards were very competitive. Vince Vignaly suggested that the Beaman Memorial library staff has staff that may help the committee with other grant opportunities in the future.

Continued Work on the Revised Open Space Plan/Discussions/Review: Barbara Wyatt asked the committee (Vince) if the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is currently buying or selling property. Vince responded that DCR has funds available for purchasing lands and is more interested in buying critical parcels as opposed to selling its property assets. There followed some general discussion of the recent media coverage about pharmaceuticals entering the nation's drinking water reservoirs and whether there was serious concern over the Wachusett Reservoir. Vince Vignaly said that the principal problem arises from people dumping unused prescriptions down the drain in places where waste water gets into the drinking water. However, he said that it is highly unlikely that pharmaceuticals were getting into Wachusett Reservoir because there are no waste treatment plants discharging upstream of the reservoir.

The committee then moved on to further review and revision of the Open Space Plan. Proceeding through the working draft section by section, Vince suggested that the plan should include a figure (graph) showing how more development has not reduced property taxes in West Boylston (e.g., tax rate or average annual tax bill versus the number of building permits). He also stressed the need to update the various maps currently in the plan. Jim Edmundson said he has the original hard-copy maps from the 2002 plan, but no the electronic files. There followed some discussion about sewer betterments assessed on conservation restriction lands and open space lands in West Boylston. The committee felt that this was unfair given that these lands are not serviced by sewer. Dr. Tashjian said that the betterments are a say for the town to increase taxes on those properties. Barbara Wyatt suggested that the plan should include a short section about property owners being penalized through taxes for maintaining open space. Jim Edmundson said he would provide necessary references/citations to Vince for inclusion into the revised plan. Vince concluded the review by asking the committee to review and comment on the section "Five Year Action Plan" for the next meeting.

Adjournment: At this point, the West Boylston Open Space Advisory Committee meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:10 p.m.

Prepared: Jim A. Edmundson 04/08/2008

MEETING MINUTES
WEST BOYLSTON OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday, February 21, 2008

Advisory Committee Members Present: Dr. Robert Tashjian (Chair), Brenda Bowman, Vincent Vignaly, and Barbara Wyatt; with Associate Members Brian Bjorklund, Ray DeSanti, and Dr. Robin Taher.

Advisory Committee Members Absent: Jim Edmundson, Carol Cotter and Mike Peckar.

Dr. Tashjian called the meeting to order at 7:08 at the Animal Medical Center, 29 Prospect Street, in the Conference Room.

Dr. Tashjian asked Vinny to be secretary for the meeting.

The January 31, 2008 minutes were not available for review and approval.

Continued Work on the Revised Open Space Plan: Vinny reviewed the sections that had been revised by Brenda, Jim and himself. These included the Plan Summary and requested input on the bulleted items and suggestions for recommendations from this to be included in Section 9.

The revisions to Section 2 were reviewed and additional work is needed to compile the citations and check references to other sections.

The Committee reviewed and discussed the sections on water, sewer, and patterns of growth and development. Brian Bjorklund was commended on obtaining a very thorough update to the Fisheries and Wildlife section.

The Committee reviewed and discussed section 4G Challenges and tried to provide clear wording and descriptions of available data to substantiate the fiscal benefits of Open Space for West Boylston. Then Section 5 was reviewed and information gathered to update these data and narratives.

Section 6 was reviewed and the need to compile short paragraphs of the benefits of Open Space on the Town Character, Agriculture, and Wildlife. The idea presented for Environmental Health was woven into the section on Public Health.

Barbara reviewed her conversations with Leon regarding the procedure for acceptance of the Open Space and Recreation Plan Update. Leon said there just needs to be a public hearing and a vote of acceptance by the Board of Selectmen. Further discussion focused on the need to be transparent and encourage public input. The OSAC would like to hold a public hearing in late March, and at least two weeks prior to that have the draft available at the Town Clerk's, the Library, and as a .pdf on the town web site. The committee would like to submit an electronic draft copy to the Conservation Commission, the Historical Committee, the Parks Committee, the Parks Facilities Committee, the Planning Board, the DPW, the Water District, the Town Assessor, and the Board of Selectmen (ANY OTHERS?) to get their final comments or questions during or in preparation for the public hearing. After the public hearing, all comments received will be

reviewed and the amendments made to the document. At a subsequent meeting of the OSAC, we will vote to submit the Update as written on that date to the Selectmen for their acceptance.

The summary of activities to be completed by members is as follows and should be submitted to Vinny Vignaly no later than February 28:

Brian Bjorklund – provide update paragraph on the Shell Phytoremediation project underway at the Shell property on Shrewsbury Street; and a paragraph on the benefits of Open Space on Wildlife.

Dr. Tashjian – provide a paragraph on the benefits of Open Space on Agriculture.

Ray DeSanti – provide a paragraph on the impacts of school children under the Master Plan build-out projections; and check on the current recommendation for support of cluster zoning if substantial perimeter buffers are provided.

Dr. Taher – provide a paragraph on the costs to taxpayers and impacts in Shrewsbury that has been seen since 1990s when their building permitting was the highest in the State and did it lower the tax rate?

Brenda Bowman – prepare a paragraph on the negative impacts of the sewer; and an itemized listing of the acreages of publicly-owned properties in town and the Town-owned properties.

Barbara Wyatt – prepare a review of the taxing policy in the Town Assessor's Office for non-profits and open spaces; compile a list of the conservation restrictions that are in place in the town; and draft a write-up for an article in the Banner for the announcement of the public hearing and to get comments on the public draft that should be ready for March 10, 2008!

Other and new business. Dr. Tashjian announced that COPE will be meeting on Thursday February 28 at 7:00 at the Animal Medical Center, and invited everyone to attend.

Dr. Tashjian established the date of the next Open Space meeting was scheduled for **MONDAY** March 3 at 7:00 at the Animal Medical Center. Please note this is a Monday, not Thursday.

Vignaly motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:30, second by Bowman, unanimous.

**Town of West Boylston
Open Space Advisory Committee
Animal Medical Center/Conference Center
29 Prospect Street
West Boylston, MA 01583**

Minutes: Monday, 10 March 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

Advisory Committee Members present: Dr. Robert Tashjian (Chair), Brenda Bowman, Barbara Wyatt, Vincent Vignaly, and Jim Edmundson. .

Others Present: Ray Desanti, Brian Bjorklund.

Call to Order and Opening Comments: The meeting was called to order by Dr. Robert Tashjian at 7:14 p.m., with a 5 member quorum present. Dr. Tashjian announced that Jim Edmundson would be acting secretary for the meeting.

Review and Approval of 31 January 2008 & 02 February 2008 Minutes: Jim Edmundson announced that he had not yet prepared the minutes of the 31 January meeting, but would have them available at the next meeting. Vince Vignaly discussed and reviewed the minutes of the 02 February meeting. The minutes were approved unanimously with minor amendments.

Report on Harvard Medical School/University of Pennsylvania Programs in Relation to Agriculture: Dr. Tashjian summarized his meetings and communications with HMS and UPenn about the recognition of sensitive wetlands and potential botulism exposure on the Malden Brook Farm and some adjacent land parcels. He stated that agricultural experts from UPenn recommended careful farming practices and specific crops that could be sown/harvested to mitigate harmful effects of botulism. Dr. Tashjian also said that UPenn was very supportive of developing a sentinel animal program based on the Malden Brook Farm and with a diagnostic laboratory centered at the farm's 152 Prospect Street parcel.

Name Change and Mission of COPE: Dr. Tashjian brought OSAC members up to speed on the recent Citizens Organized for a Planned Environment (COPE) meeting. He reiterated that members of COPE had agreed to be a broader based organization with strong interests in developing a disaster preparedness program within regional context, ensuring public health and safety, preserving open space and agriculture and responsible growth/development. Dr. Tashjian also said that the committee changed its name to Citizens Strategic Disaster Preparedness and Response Coalition (CPR). Members of the OSAC were invited to join CPR.

Jim Edmundson then spoke about potential grant funding by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) under the request for proposal (RFP): "Strengthen and Improve the Nation's Public Health Capacity through National, Non-Profit, Professional Public Health Organizations to Increase Health Protection and Health Equity". He said that preparing the grant was beyond the capabilities and expertise of the

OSAC, but Harvard Medical School might be interested in preparing the RFP in association with American Veterinary Medical Frontiers (AVMF) and town of West Boylston. However, hw also said that the deadline for submission of the grant was extremely tight and the awards were very competitive. Vince Vignaly suggested that the Beaman Memorial library staff has staff that may help the committee with other grant opportunities in the future.

Continued Work on the Revised Open Space Plan/Discussions/Review: Barbara Wyatt asked the committee (Vince) if the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is currently buying or selling property. Vince responded that DCR has funds available for purchasing lands and is more interested in buying critical parcels as opposed to selling its property assets. There followed some general discussion of the recent media coverage about pharmaceuticals entering the nation's drinking water reservoirs and whether there was serious concern over the Wachusett Reservoir. Vince Vignaly said that the principal problem arises from people dumping unused prescriptions down the drain in places where waste water gets into the drinking water. However, he said that it is highly unlikely that pharmaceuticals were getting into Wachusett Reservoir because there are no waste treatment plants discharging upstream of the reservoir.

The committee then moved on to further review and revision of the Open Space Plan. Proceeding through the working draft section by section, Vince suggested that the plan should include a figure (graph) showing how more development has not reduced property taxes in West Boylston (e.g., tax rate or average annual tax bill versus the number of building permits). He also stressed the need to update the various maps currently in the plan. Jim Edmundson said he has the original hard-copy maps from the 2002 plan, but no the electronic files. There followed some discussion about sewer betterments assessed on conservation restriction lands and open space lands in West Boylston. The committee felt that this was unfair given that these lands are not serviced by sewer. Dr. Tashjian said that the betterments are a say for the town to increase taxes on those properties. Barbara Wyatt suggested that the plan should include a short section about property owners being penalized through taxes for maintaining open space. Jim Edmundson said he would provide necessary references/citations to Vince for inclusion into the revised plan. Vince concluded the review by asking the committee to review and comment on the section "Five Year Action Plan" for the next meeting.

Adjournment: At this point, the West Boylston Open Space Advisory Committee meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:10 p.m.

Prepared: Jim A. Edmundson 04/08/2008

**Town of West Boylston
Open Space Advisory Committee
Animal Medical Center/Conference Center
29 Prospect Street
West Boylston, MA 01583**

Minutes: Thursday, 10 April 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

Advisory Committee Members present: Dr. Robert Tashjian (Chair), Brenda Bowman, Barbara Wyatt, Vincent Vignaly, and Jim Edmundson. .

Others Present: Ray Desanti, Brian Bjorklund.

Call to Order and Opening Comments: The meeting was called to order by Dr. Robert Tashjian at 7:10 p.m., with a 5 member quorum present. Dr. Tashjian announced that Jim Edmundson would be acting secretary for the meeting.

Review and Approval of 10 March 2008 & Minutes. The minutes were approved unanimously with minor edits from Mr. Vignaly amendments.

Brief Discussion on 4.5 Acres of Land (Lee Street) For Sale Adjacent to Water District Land: The committee discussed the environmental significance of this land parcel given its proximity to the Lee Street well field. Ray Desanti provided a brief history of ownership of the land. Dr. Tashjian and Vincent Vignaly recommended that the committee write a letter to the Water District in support of the town acquiring this land to protect our existing wells and aquifers and to provide potential for new wells. Jim Edmundson agreed to draft a letter to the Water District with distribution to the Conservation Committee, Land Trust, Town-wide Planning Committee, Board of Health, Board of Selectmen and Department of Conservation (Mr. Jim French).

Continued Work on the Revised Open Space Plan/Discussions/Review: Barbara Wyatt recommended that the Open Space Committee meet with the Conservation Commission on May 07 before public review of the revised plan. Mr. Vignaly agreed to contact the commission and make arrangements for the committee to present the plan and recommended that at least three committee members should attend. Barbara also recommended that the committee attend the April 24 meeting with the Historical Commission regarding the demolition bylaw. The committee continued revising the Open Space Plan.

Adjournment: The committee planned its next meeting on 15 May. The committee planned for a public hearing of the revised plan on June 5. At this point, the West Boylston Open Space Advisory Committee meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:10 p.m.

Prepared: Jim A. Edmundson 05/15/2008

**Town of West Boylston
Open Space Advisory Committee
Animal Medical Center/Conference Center
29 Prospect Street
West Boylston, MA 01583**

Minutes: Thursday, 15 May 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

Advisory Committee Members present: Dr. Robert Tashjian (Chair), Brenda Bowman, Barbara Wyatt, Vincent Vignaly, and Jim Edmundson. .

Others Present: Ray Desanti, Brian Bjorklund.

Call to Order and Opening Comments: The meeting was called to order by Dr. Robert Tashjian at 7:15 p.m., with a 5 member quorum present. Dr. Tashjian announced that Jim Edmundson would be acting secretary for the meeting.

Review and Approval of 10 April 2008 Minutes. The minutes were approved unanimously with minor edits from Mr. Vignaly amendments. Vinny also reminded the committee those minutes from the January 17 2008 meeting had not yet been prepared. Jim Edmundson said he would prepare them for review at the next meeting..

Termination of Transfer Station and Open Space Relationship: Discussion ensued about the termination of the lease/negotiation process between the town and Bay Colony to develop the Tivnan Drive property for a waste transfer/recycling facility. The committee was relieved to hear that news. Brenda stated that surrounding towns are providing funds for a hazardous waste facility in West Boylston (on State-owned land); however, she also noted that so far West Boylston has not provided any funds. Vinny suggested that we write something about the hazardous waste facility in the revised open space plan and the committee agreed.

Sentinel Animals for the Detection of Natural or Manmade Outbreaks: Dr. Tashjian initiated discussion of using sentinel animals as part of an effective bio-defense system based in West Boylston. He articulated the crux of this plan by way of a two-page executive summary that the committee read and reviewed. In essence, the sentinel animal initiative is a grass-roots initiative designed to protect public health safety. Both wild (e.g., migratory birds) and domesticated animals (e.g., horses and cows) can serve as important sentinels in the event of biological contamination and pandemics (e.g., avian influenza). The long-range plan is to create a center for testing, maintaining and observing a variety of sentinel animals on the Malden Brook Farm. Given the farm's proximity to Wachusett Reservoir (drinking water for millions of people), West Boylston would be a strategically significant site for such a research station with a great potential for attracting grant monies that could help the town's fiscal situation, create local education opportunities, protect our dwindling open space, and safeguard human health. The committee unanimously supported this program.

Further Discussion on the Lee Street Parcel for Sale Adjacent to Water District Land: Jim Edmundson informed the committee that he still needs to write a letter from the Open Space Committee recommending that the town acquire this 4.5 acre parcel for further aquifer protection and as a good site for placing new wells for the town's drinking water supply. Vinny stated that the CPA committee has identified this parcel as a priority for purchase.

Continued Work on the Revised Open Space Plan/Discussions/Review: Vinny summarized the comments he received on the draft revised Open space plan from various committees and individuals. There was some discussion about the local debate of maintaining the Pine Grove behind the high school as open space or having it developed for athletic fields. Barbara suggested that the open space committee not address the issue in the revised plan unless the Parks Facility Committee provides the initial input. The committee agreed. Brenda then stated that she and Vinny attended the last Conservation Committee meeting and that committee was favorable to the revised plan to date. Barbara attended the Town-wide Planning Committee and she also indicated that they supported the revised plan. Because Brian and Ray were not yet appointed members of the open space committee, we discussed whether it was appropriate to include them as committee members in the revised plan (under section 2.B). The committee decided to wait until next meeting in order to await the Board of Selectmen's approval of new committee members.

Public Hearing: Vinny informed the committee that prior to a public hearing on the revised plan, a public notice must be placed in the newspaper. Barbara/Brenda suggested that we make copies of the plan available at the Beaman Library and also place a notice on WB public TV.

Adjournment: The committee agreed to meet on June 12 2008 at the Town Office for the required public hearing. At this point, the West Boylston Open Space Advisory Committee meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:10 p.m.

Prepared: Jim A. Edmundson 06/25/2008

Town of West Boylston
Open Space Advisory Committee
West Boylston Municipal Offices
127 Hartwell Street, Suite 100
West Boylston, MA 01583

PUBLIC HEARING

Minutes: Thursday, 12 June 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

Advisory Committee Members present: Dr. Robert Tashjian (Chair), Brenda Bowman, Barbara Wyatt, Vincent Vignaly, Brian Bjorklund and Jim Edmundson. .

Others Present: Tim Parslow (public attendee).

Call to Order and Opening Comments: The meeting was called to order by Dr. Robert Tashjian at 7:10 p.m., with a 6 member quorum present. Dr. Tashjian announced that Jim Edmundson would be acting secretary for the meeting. Dr. Tashjian welcomed Brian Bjorklund as the newest member of the open space committee. He then welcomed Mr. Parslow (public) to the meeting. Dr. Tashjian turned the meeting over to Vinny to present our revised open space and recreation plan to the public for comment and review.

Public Presentation of the 5-Year Revision of the West Boylston Open Space & Recreation Plan: Vinny announced that the Conservation Commission accepted the plan "as is". He also informed the committee that after compiling public comment and final edits, the committee would be ready to present the revised plan to the Board of Selectmen by July 15 2008. He then gave a brief history of the open space plan from 1992-present. Vinny highlighted the plan section by section. For the benefit of the public, Vinny and committee members expanded presentation on key components of the plan including the OS vision for the future, breakdown of cost for community services for residential, commercial and open space lands, census projections being less than expected based on the 2000 census, and the results of the recent town-wide sidewalk survey which showed most sidewalks to be in poor or fair condition.

At this point of the presentation, Dr. Tashjian gave a brief summary of a proposed sentinel animal program, which is gaining support in and around the community that helps ensure public health and safety and also keeps open space. Mr. Parslow asked whether the committee was concerned with open space connections to adjacent towns like Holden. Dr. Tashjian responded that the committee is stressing regional connections with respect to open space. Brian suggested that the committee should include a map in the revised plan that shows open spaces within West Boylston and surrounding town. Vinny said that perhaps Wachusett Greenways may be able to provide such a land-use map.

During the review, the committee agreed that, without any new data to us, the section in the plan about deformities in trout in Gates Brook should be deleted. Vinny suggested that the plan

should have an updated map based on the data presented in Table 5.4. Committee agreed. Barbara wanted to know if the town-owned property on Tivnan Drive was included in Table 5.4. Vinny indicated that it was so. Discussion ensued about the Lee Street property for sale and Vinny suggested that the committee should push for purchase of the 4.5 acre parcel with CPA funds. He then made that motion. Barbara seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. At that point, the public presentation of the revised open space plan concluded at 9:10PM.

Review and Approval of May 15, 2008 Minutes: Jim Edmundson indicated that he had not yet prepared the minutes of the last meeting, but that they would be available for review at the next meeting.

Committee Participation in the West Boylston Bicentennial Parade: Dr. Tashjian suggested that it would be important and significant to the town if the OS committee participated in the upcoming bicentennial parade. Discussion then focused on how to do that; i.e. via floats, tractor display or booth. The committee agreed that we should participate in the festivity and be visible and informative; however, the particular means to do so was not fully developed.

Summer Meeting Schedule: No specific action taken – schedule to remain as monthly meetings.

Adjournment: Dr. Tashjian announced that the next meeting would be June 26, 2008 to vote on the committee's revised plan. At this point, the West Boylston Open Space Advisory Committee meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Prepared: Jim A. Edmundson 06/25/2008

**Town of West Boylston
Open Space Advisory Committee
Animal Medical Center/Conference Center
29 Prospect Street
West Boylston, MA 01583**

Minutes: Thursday, 26 June at 7:00 p.m.

Advisory Committee Members present: Dr. Robert Tashjian (Chair), Brenda Bowman, Vincent Vignaly, Brian Bjorklund, Ray DeSanti and Jim Edmundson.

Members Absent: Barbara Wyatt.

Call to Order and Opening Comments: The meeting was called to order by Dr. Robert Tashjian at 7:10 p.m., with a 6 member quorum present. Dr. Tashjian announced that Jim Edmundson would be acting secretary for the meeting.

Review and Approval of 15 May 2008 Minutes: The minutes of the 15 May 2008 meeting were approved without change. Mr. Vignaly reminded Jim Edmundson that minutes of the 17 January 2008 meeting were still not completed. Jim agreed and will “git ‘er done”. Dr. Tashjian then suggested that we move to agenda item 7 & 8 before tackling the final review of the open space plan.

Presentations to the Board of Selectmen meeting 16 July 2008 of the Revised Open Space Plan and by the Task Force of the Sentinel Animal Project: Dr. Tashjian initiated discussion with a summary of the white paper or executive summary “*A Regional Center for Biosurveillance*”. He stated that the revised open space plan would be an integral part of the “*Sentinel Animal Project*”. That is, the project is currently in the planning stages and the task force (including the Commissioner of Public Health [Worcester], Chair of the Disaster Medicine Section [Harvard Medical School], Director of Continuing Medical Education [University of Massachusetts Medical School] and Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Health & Human Services [Worcester]) was highly supportive of the open space plan because a major goal of our plan is to protect much of the Malden Brook property in its mostly natural state. Dr. Tashjian announced that the task force would make a brief presentation at the upcoming Board of Selectmen meeting following presentation of our open space plan.

The committee agreed that a presentation of our revised plan to the Board of Selectmen should be brief (about 30 minutes) and highlight that our plan differs strategically from previous plans in that we focus more on the benefits of open space to public health and safety. Specifically, open space means more than just scenic beauty and recreation, but it is critical for maintaining high quality drinking water, clean air and good soils which is crucial to this town, and open space also helps community budgets through their reduced costs of community services. Mr. Vignaly agreed to lead the presentation before the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Vignaly suggested that prior to the committee's meeting with the Board of Selectmen, the open space advisory committee should submit an article to the newspapers Telegram & Gazette and The Banner that announces and summarizes our revised open space plan. The committee agreed that the article should include the committee's community vision, fiscal analysis, DCR's "payment in lieu of taxes", and benefits of open space, and a summary of our major goals and recommendations. Jim Edmundson agreed to draft the article for the committee's review.

Final Review of the Revised Open Space Plan: At this point, Mr. Vignaly updated the committee on the final edits to the plan section by section including figures, tables and minor changes made to the narrative. The committee agreed with the latest revisions. Mr. Vignaly also informed the committee that we will be receiving letters of support for the revised plan from the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission as well as the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen. Mr. Vignaly stated that the agency that ultimately approves these plans is the Department of Conservation Services.

Other and New Business: Dr. Tashjian recommended that the open space committee should participate in some way in the West Boylston Bicentennial Parade. He also suggested that the committee could merge efforts with the Sentinel Animal Task Force on this. The committee agreed that it should devote the bulk of the next meeting to discussing the Bicentennial Parade. Ray DeSanti recommended that the committee might be well served by meeting with town's other open space committees in the future.

Adjournment: The committee agreed to meet on 24 July 2008 at the Animal Medical Center. At this point, the West Boylston Open Space Advisory Committee meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:05 p.m.

Prepared: Jim A. Edmundson 07/23/2008

Members present: Allen R. Phillips John B. DiPietro, Sr.
Valmore H. Pruneau Kevin M. McCormick

Members absent: Christopher A. Rucho

Mr. Phillips convened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Beaman Memorial Public Library.

Read and Acceptance of Minutes From Previous Meeting:

Motion Mr. McCormick to approve the meeting minutes of June 18 and July 2, 2008 as submitted, seconded by Mr. Pruneau, all in favor.

Motion Mr. McCormick to approve the meeting minutes of July 9, 2008 as submitted, seconded by Mr. Pruneau. Vote on the motion – Messrs. Phillips, Pruneau and McCormick yes; Mr. DiPietro abstains as he was not present.

Mr. Phillips thanked the Library for their hospitality in allowing the Board of Selectmen to host its meeting in their building. This location is the first in the Board's series of change of venues to showcase the town in its Bicentennial Year.

Mr. Phillips requested a moment of silence on the passing of former Police Chief Hank Bjorklund.

Introduction of Timothy R. Charland

Police Chief Dennis Minnich and candidate for full-time police officer Timothy Charland joined the Board. Mr. Gaumond met with Mr. Charland and reported him to be an outstanding individual who was the highest scorer on the tests for the open position. He comes to West Boylston fully certified in a number of areas after previously working in Southboro, Westboro, Bolton and Nantucket. His father is a police officer and he aspired to follow in his footsteps. Chief Minnich noted that Mr. Charland's parents and extended family are in attendance this evening. His father is a 30-year veteran in Westboro. The Chief used a new process offered by the Municipal Police Institute, a company that comes in and you sign up on a web site. The processes does not cost the town anything and Mr. Charland came out as the top candidate. In his background checks, the Chief also checks financial, neighborhoods and all past employees. Mr. Charland graduated at the top of his class from the MBTA Police Academy as a self-sponsor. He has an Associates Degree in Criminal Justice and scored the highest on the oral boards. He has been interviewed by the Police Chief and the Town Administrator who is requesting the Board's concurrence on the appointment.

Motion Mr. McCormick to concur on the one-year appointment of Timothy Charland as a full-time patrol officer effective July 16, 2008 for a term to expire on July 15, 2009, seconded by Mr. Pruneau, all in favor.

Don Jacobs, Donald I. Jacobs Consulting, Inc. - Update on Wage and Classification Project

Mr. Jacobs joined the Board and distributed handouts. Mr. Gaumond explained that the process began a year and a half ago when the town appropriated funds to do the project. The town had not done a study for a dozen years. After going out to bid on two occasions we contracted with Don Jacobs who will be coming back before the Board in August to discuss the potential monetary impact to the town. Mr. Gaumond encouraged any residents viewing the meeting this evening to come forward to serve on the Personnel Board who is in need of additional members.

Mr. Jacobs explained the reason he is meeting with the Board this evening is to give them a better understanding of the process he used and to discuss how positions should be classified, not to

talk about dollars and no cents. This is not a one-time study, and it is a process which needs to be understood by the Board of Selectmen, department heads and employees. The Project Goal is to design a classification and compensation system for which the classification of positions and compensation of employees is managed in a fair and equitable manner. Employees are concerned about internal equity and you need to compensate employees in a fair and equitable manner. The process needs to be viewed by everyone as fair and equitable.

Mr. Jacobs had three Project Objectives. The first was to establish a new job description to use as a base to determine the value and net worth of the position to the organization. That was followed by the development of a Classification Plan based on standard evaluation criteria. When he asked employees what their number one concern was they said internal equity, and when he met with them no one understood how their position was compared to one another. The last objective was to conduct a salary survey of comparable communities based on operational and demographic criteria to establish external equity. All job descriptions have been re-written in a standardized format, and a uniform classification and compensation plan for all salaried and regular part-time positions has been developed. The town is currently well below in terms of competitiveness.

Mr. Jacobs noted that the writing of the job descriptions took the most amount of time. The process began with employees completing a Position Analysis Questionnaire. Draft job descriptions were prepared and distributed to employees for review. Interviews were conducted each employee to review the draft job descriptions which were revised and sent to department heads for further review.

Mr. Jacobs developed a Classification and Compensation Plan for all non-union positions and the Fire Department employees. The objective is classifying positions and the ranking needs to match exactly how positions are being managed in the department. There are seven grade levels for non-union employees and the ranking is based on 13 position evaluation criteria. He has only looked at what people do and not the money. Going forward if you have a question as to the level at which the person is we can now explain it. The next time Mr. Jacobs meets with the Board he will have a salary range that goes along with the process. The way to evaluate the change and it is more fair than has been in the past because the employees understand it. The first aspect of compensation is how it applies to the position and how employees will grow within their ranges. Mr. Jacobs feels classification is a routine process. His objective in working on compensation is to help the Board of Selectmen manage the cost of compensation more effectively than they are doing today. Whatever money is available to spend on compensation needs to be spent wisely. Mr. McCormick requested a sampling of the job descriptions – one from each level.

Mr. Phillips questioned the job description process. Mr. Jacobs explained that the employees fill out the job descriptions which are give to the department heads or supervisor who signs off. He developed a draft for comments and it is amended one more time and sent back to the employee for the second time. At that point the supervisor signs a form that says they have seen it and it is accurate. It was noted that the study did not cover contract or union employees. Mr. DiPietro asked Mr. Jacobs about his statement that there are positions which are underpaid. Mr. Jacobs stated that the overall results were the current salary ranges are below on minimum and maximum. Mr. DiPietro asked how many positions were at the maximum. Mr. Jacobs does not have that yet as the first issue is to establish salary levels and the second is how the position grows within the salary ranges. Mr. Phillips would like to invite the Personnel Board in to the meeting on August 20th when Mr. Jacobs gives his next presentation. Mr. Gaumond advised that the Personnel Board has been very involved with the process and has approved everything to date.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion relative to sewer legal costs

The other night the Board of Health met to review the status of the mandatory sewer connection orders. Some people did not respond to the letters sent to them and the Board voted to initiate Superior Court enforcement action against those property owners who did not respond. The Board of Selectmen needs to vote as to whether or not they authorize Town Counsel to initiate litigation in the name of the Town to carry out the vote of the Board of Health. Mr. McCormick would like to see an updated list of those who did not comply.

Mr. McCormick questioned whether when the ruling for mandatory connection came down it said all entities had to connect even if it is a state agency. Mr. Gaumond noted that this is the first phase of the names to be given to Town Counsel, and he anticipates a second phases. Mr. Phillips advised that connections are required by all parties unless they have a waiver from the Board of Health.

Motion Mr. McCormick to authorize Town Counsel to initiate litigation in the name of the Town of West Boylston to carry out the vote of the Board of Health for mandatory connection, seconded by Mr. Pruneau, all in favor.

2. August reappointment of election workers

Motion Mr. Rucho to reappoint the list as submitted, seconded by Mr. Pruneau, all in favor.

3. Review information on Silver Star Day and consider proclaiming May 1, 2009 Silver Star Day

Every city and town in Massachusetts received correspondence from the state asking them to designate May 1, 2009 as Silver Star Day to honor the sacrifices of the men and women in the armed forces and their families. Should the Board agree, we will send the Proclamation to the state and they will compile a list which will be maintained on their web site and other publications. The Governor has also dedicated May 1, 2009 Silver Star Day.

Motion Mr. McCormick to permanently designate May 1 as Silver Star Day in the Town of West Boylston and sign the Proclamation, seconded by Mr. Pruneau, all in favor.

The Board agreed to sign a second original which will be framed and hung in their meeting room.

4. Discuss dates to meet with the Boylston Board of Selectmen

The preference of the Board is to meet with Boylston at their meeting on July 28 or on July 31.

Public Hearing, Re: Consider Amendments to the Open Space and Recreation Plan

Mr. Phillips opened the public hearing and read the following notice. Public notice is hereby given, in conformity with the requirements of the General Bylaws of the Town of West Boylston, ARTICLE XXIII - PUBLIC HEARING AND NOTICE, that the Board of Selectmen will meet on Wednesday, July 16, 2008 at 8:00 p.m. for the purpose of considering amendments to the Open Space and Recreation Plan for the Town of West Boylston. The meeting will be held in the Beaman Memorial Public Library, 8 Newton Street, West Boylston. For additional information, or to review the proposed information, please contact the Office of the Board of Selectmen/Town Administrator at 508.835.3490. All interested persons, groups, and agencies are invited to attend. Allen R. Phillips, Chairman, advertised on July 2, 9, 2008.

Chairman of the Open Space Committee, Dr. Robert Tashjian, joined the Board with members Vincent Vignaly and Jim Edmundson. Mr. Gaumond explained that one of the responsibilities of the Town-wide Planning Committee is the development of the Master Plan, and part of that is the development of the Open Space and Recreation Plan. This was the year for the plan to be updated, and that duty falls upon the Open Space Advisory Committee. Other members of the committee who

worked on the plan include Co-Chair Barbara Wyatt, Brenda Bowman, Brian Bjorklund, Carol Cotter, Michael Peckar and Raymond DeSanti. Mr. Gaumond stated that he is very proud of the work done on the project, which is a very comprehensive document. The draft is now on the web site and comments from the public are welcome.

Dr. Tashjian thanked Mr. Gaumond who assisted the committee in preparing the plan as well as Nancy Lucier for her help. The entire plan was completed without a budget. He thanked the members of his committee for spending many hours and attending many extensive meetings. He stressed that open space is vital to maintain our water supply. They looked at four areas, public health, public safety, animal health and environmental health, and they consider the balance and the eco systems. The focus was on an area up on Prospect Street as the last frontier for West Boylston. They looked at the inner relationship of all of this for the public health of our community. Dr. Tashjian feels the Plan can be used as a reference guide on which we can build.

Mr. Vignaly stated that the group is always looking for input and they are just finishing up on getting the plan ready to send to the Conservation Office in Boston. The group would like a letter of support from the Board of Selectmen to go along with the plan. He would like to have the document on the web site for the next five years. Things changed as they were going through the plan, which they would like to be a living document. They are looking for public and town input and received assistance from the Parks Facility Committee. Open space only costs the town 29¢ in town services, as opposed to 43¢ for commercial and \$1.13 for residential. It saves the town. In their recommendations they include getting business into town, quality development, working with the Water District on their input and supporting collaboration with private land owners and working with non-profits to do some studies. With DCR owning 40% of the town, one of their recommendations is to have our own land so we can do what we want when we want on our property. DCR does make a payment-in-lieu-of-tax payment to the town of almost \$600,000 per year and have done so since 2001. By law that figure cannot be decreased even as property values go down.

Mr. Edmundson feels the document will allow West Boylston to maintain its rural character and not become another extension of urban sprawl. It is not anti-development.

Mr. DiPietro read the April 11 draft and was disappointed that there was no mention under sewer of Lee Street never being sewerred. He feels it should be sewerred to protect the aquifer and wells. Mr. Vignaly explained that Lee Street is one of the areas of concern. They looked at if you have a functioning and compliant septic system it will protect the wells. They recommend working with the Water District, and they also recommend purchasing the four-acre parcel around the wells. Sewers are now re-directing a half a million gallons of water per day which could be going into our resource areas. He feels we need a balance. Mr. DiPietro also feels the document needs more information on the Mass Farm Bureau as should a person own one animal they can be considered a farm. He also feels Chapter 394 will replace Chapters 61A and 61B and provide for much better results for the community and people involvement. He complimented the committee on their work.

Dr. Tashjian stated that agriculture in West Boylston means maintaining open space. DCR has purchased former 61 lands. It will benefit the Town of West Boylston if we can establish an Agricultural Commission. Mr. DiPietro noted that when land comes out of Chapters, the town is supposed to have the right of first refusal and when DCR takes those properties the town loses them. Dr. Tashjian noted that they are trying as a community to establish relations with DCR and they will continue to pursue this. Mr. DiPietro stated that very shortly we are going to be able to buy that land back. Mr. Vignaly pointed out one of the action items in the Plan is to have a process set up when property comes out of 61A or 61B.

The next meeting of the Open Space Committee is scheduled for July 24 at which time they will discuss participating in the Bicentennial parade with a focus on agriculture.

Mr. Pruneau commended the committee and Dr. Tashjian on the plan. He noted that the loss of ground water versus the protection of ground water was one of the things they had to take into consideration. Mr. Vignaly advised that the committee received a lot of input from Mike Coveney, Manager of the Water District.

Mr. Phillips opened the meeting up to public comment. Judith Doherty stated that she supports the position that people will come into town and purchase real estate because it has attractive spots. With regard to payment in lieu of taxes, Mr. Gaumond pointed out that it is a one-time annual appropriate and one change in law could eliminate that as there is no guaranty that the state would not pull those funds in difficult times. Mr. Vignaly noted that previous plans dealt to a large extent on infrastructure whereas this plan involved fiscal analysis. Once the plan is completed they plan to outreach to college students for assistance on some of their recommended projects.

Motion Mr. Pruneau to close the public hearing, seconded by Mr. McCormick, all in favor.

Motion Mr. Pruneau to send a letter of support for the Open Space and Recreation Plan to the Open Space Advisory Committee, seconded by Mr. DiPietro, all in favor.

Report of the Sentinel Committee

Dr. Robert Tashjian joined the Board and introduced the members of his Sentinel Animal Project Task Force Committee. They include Leonard Morse, MD, past President Massachusetts Medical Society and Commissioner of Public Health in the City of Worcester, Gregory Ciotton, MD, Chairman of Disaster Medicine Section, Assistant Professor of Medicine Harvard Medical School, Guenter Spanknelbel, MD, past President of the Massachusetts Medical Society and Assistant Dean Continuing Medical Education University of Massachusetts Medical School, State Rep. James O'Day, Gary Rosen, Worcester City Council, Police Chief Dennis Minnich and Brenda Bowman.

Back in 2005 Dr. Tashjian came to the Board of Selectmen and asked to co-partner with the town. The Board authorized Chief Minnich and Mr. Gaumond to meet with the group and develop a proposal. Mr. DiPietro acknowledged the efforts of Dr. Morse who treated him many years ago. As a college student in Oregon he came home with trig enosis and he was paralyzed from the waist down when Dr. Morse took over his case.

Dr. Morse is very interested in communicable diseases and while in the military he contracted a virus transmitted by the bite of a tick. The virus can be used in bioterrorism. He works in Worcester in bioterrorism preparedness. He became involved with Dr. Tashjian and Malden Brook Farm. The Farm has a very diverse habitat with mixed forest, two types of flying squirrels, and deer eating with sentinel ponies. His proposal is to have the property turned into a Regional Center for bio surveillance. It can become an educational center with trails and a center for research of ecologic balance.

Dr. Tashjian is honored to have Dr. Morse involved with his property. It is a regional concept. He began discussions in 2005 and has worked with Mr. Gaumond and Chief Minnich. He also had a meeting with Congressman McGovern. Rep. O'Day has attending their meetings as well. Dr. Tashjian stated that he has prepared a strategic Master Plan which will benefit the town with significant education programs. It is regional because of the open space, unique land mass with the sentinel animals. Gary Rosen stated that it has been a pleasure to be part of the task force. He has a background in education, and one of the best things with the facility will be is the educational component. It will serve students from surrounding towns. He welcomed the Board to get involved. Worcester will participate and support West Boylston in this, and the sentinel animal approach is perfect for this.

Dr. Spanknebel stated that he is the first foreign born medical man who became the President of the Medical Society in the world. He feels it is important to teach physicians and nurses about what we can for the community and get their support. We should be pro active and have things in place with

the help of animals. Rep. O'Day stated that the group has done a terrific job in explaining what the Biosurveillance Committee can accomplish, and he believes we need to get support of the Board of Selectmen. It can do some tremendous good for the Town of West Boylston on a regional and a national level. This can be copied and expanded and the Malden Brook Farm is an excellent site. He believes it will foster and become a national model. They are scheduled to have a meeting with Congressman McGovern in the next week or so. Funding will be an issue, and they hope with the assistance of the Congressman it will be forthcoming. He is in support of the Program. Chief Minnich stated that he is in support of the project. There is nothing negative on public safety and it will only enhance our training on a beautiful site to walk around. Nothing will be brought into the town as it all occurs naturally in the environment. You study the animals and this will enhance our response.

As a realist, Mr. McCormick voiced concern that we are taking 200 acres of land off the tax rolls. We have the Reservoir and a Jail. It is a great thing but it has to be tied into some sort of payment-in-lieu-of-tax. We cannot afford to take taxes off our rolls. We are the smallest town in Worcester County and we get everything. Until he hears that some money will be coming back to the Town of West Boylston for the land then he will support this. We cannot be the good guy any more.

Dr. Tashjian noted that this is highly sensitive open space. Parts of this farm are very sensitive and to go and develop it you will have problems with the watershed. The land is not suitable to build houses. Mr. McCormick noted that everybody wants open space, but we do not have any money. If we get no money it is a burden and a potential for more police calls.

Dr. Tashjian feels with a plan like this there is a great possibility to bring in funding it is a creative way and it has the potential of bringing to the town. Mr. McCormick would like to see something in the funding plan that something is coming to West Boylston as we will have to be the first responders with police and fire and the other towns do not have to respond. Dr. Tashjian feels we are finding methods to enhance the funding to the Police and Fire Departments. Mr. McCormick would like to see that there is money coming into the town as to him we cannot take care of everybody else and get nothing back. Dr. Tashjian is thinking of ways to create money and noted that the town doesn't have many other alternatives.

Mr. DiPietro asked Dr. Tashjian if he anticipated constructing any buildings. Dr. Tashjian does not anticipate constructing buildings now, maybe in the future and the property is taxed under 61A. Dr. Tashjian does not believe this will not cost more to the town in municipal services and will improve financial costs for those two departments. Mr. Pruneau noted that it is a unique piece of land as it has two of our major tributaries. Dr. Tashjian feels the land has the potential of bringing in income as it is a visionary approach. Dr. Spanknebel appealed to the Board to help them find funding in a creative way. Mr. Phillips stated that he does not think Mr. McCormick's objection is to the project, and if it was twenty years ago he would not object because we had some money. We are not in a position to take more money off the tax rolls. Dr. Spanknebel understands and would like some innovative ideas on getting the town ready.

Mr. Phillips is not opposed to the project and is trying to see both sides. He asked how many types of things can the sentinel animals detect. Dr. Tashjian advised many kinds of diseases, air and water borne. Mr. Phillips' understanding is that nothing will be brought in and we will not be extracting anything that would be more potent. Dr. Tashjian stated that we do not know if we could be hit by a pandemic. Dr. Morse it depends on the agent and you are talking about the lab and you would take precautions. Dr. Morse feels it is conceivable that this could have interest from corporate America, and he does understand the financial concerns Mr. McCormick has. Mr. Phillips feels it would be nice to tie it in with one of the larger schools for a funding stream.

Rep. O'Day noted that we have had discussions with all the colleges in the area and that might be the fiscal piece. Mr. Phillips feels the educational component will be primary.

Dr. Tashjian explained that members of the Town-wide Planning Committee have voiced concern over the costs for a town building project. This is a creative method to bring the focus on the Police and Fire Departments. Now that he has a better understanding of the project, Mr. Phillips would be more comfortable knowing about a funding stream.

Dr. Morse feels this is a visionary thing which has the potential of attracting federal funding as the government would be very interested in a project like this. In the later 1980's Mr. DiPietro recalled interest from two biotech companies to settle in West Boylston. He suggested Dr. Morse discuss Chapter 394 with the Board of Assessors for the protection of his farm land.

The next step for the committee is a meeting with Congressman McGovern and members of the Board were invited to attend. Mr. Gaumond noted that when he began attending meetings of the Sentinel Committee his thoughts were what is in it for West Boylston. Foremost in his mind is looking or alternate ways of funding resources for the community and trying to do something for the benefit of the town. The challenge for Dr. Tashjian is to continue to work with the Police Chief and Mr. Gaumond who are both very happy to attend the meetings. Mr. Gaumond does not think there is anything the Board of Selectmen needs to do this evening. Mr. Phillips would have no problem with Mr. Gaumond, Chief Minnich and Chief Pauley attending the meetings and reporting back to the Board as things proceed.

Motion Mr. McCormick to have Gaumond, Chief Minnich and Chief Pauley attending the meetings and report back to the Board as things proceed, seconded by Mr. Pruneau, all in favor. Mr. Pruneau and Mr. McCormick indicated that they would try to attend the meetings. Dr. Tashjian will advise of meeting dates via email. Vote on the motion – all in favor.

John Westerling, Director of Public Works

1. SWAT Report

Mr. Westerling introduced the SWAT team, which is one of the most passionate groups he has ever worked with. In attendance this evening is Irene Congdon of DEP, Judith Doherty, SWAT Chairperson, and members Craig Gonyea, Elise Wellington, Julianne deRivera and Janet Vignaly.

Ms. Doherty reported on How West Boylston Can Reduce Trash, Increase Recycling and Control the Bottom Line. The charge of SWAT is to advise town meeting and the Board of Selectmen on issues regarding solid waste management and recycling, to examine various alternatives in solid waste management, to increase West Boylston's recycling rate and to decrease solid waste production and the cost to the town. The next disposal contract will have fuel costs and we are now at a 23% recycling rate far below the medium rate of 30%. Pay-as-you-Throw is SMART idea, Save Money and Reduce Trash, and SWAT is recommending giving each household 50 free 33-gallon bags. Holden has pay as you throw and it was just voted in for Shrewsbury. At least \$23,000 could be saved right off the bat. The program would cut trash output 20-30%, requires minimal extra cost to families and yields a minimum of \$23,000 savings to the town.

Mr. Phillips feels the program sounds like a partial pay-as-you-throw program. Ms. Doherty is eager to have a conversation and go forward at town meeting. Mr. Phillips suggested a mandatory recycling program. Ms. Congdon explained that they did have that discussion; however, towns with mandatory recycling bylaws are not that successful in reducing trash. With pay-as-you-throw you see a higher recycling rate. Mr. Phillips would like to see information on communities comparable in size to West Boylston.

Ms. Doherty had a conversation with Allied Waste about mandatory recycling and what they would do to help out. For the first offence they would first give a warning and should there be a second one they would not pick up their trash. Mr. Gonyea asked what happens should residents not

have any recycling that week. Ms. Doherty noted that towns that do have mandatory recycling have to hire somebody to do this and the concern is people would get angry and have a bad taste in their mouth. Originally Ms. Doherty was not in favor of pay-as-you-throw and wanted mandatory recycling. Mr. Phillips noted that the town had a \$240,000 override for trash and in his mind should we proceed with pay-as-you-throw those funds need to be turned back. Everyone agreed the program would be more sellable with giving residents the 50 bags. DEP is now recommending regional trash and recycling with two other towns. They have four plans if we were interested. They also provide hands on training to assist with pay-as-you-throw and will send somebody out to assist with recycling.

SWAT will have a public forum on September 9th on partial and full pay-as-you-throw programs. It was noted that in Holden they have single-stream recycling, a totter for their trash, and pay \$15.00 a month or \$1.86 per bag. It is paid for through their utility bill. Ms. Wellington explained the reason West Boylston is unable to go with a single stream is because the contract with Allied Waste does not allow for that. They feel chipped glass contaminates the paper. Mr. DiPietro noted that they are selling the paper overseas.

Mr. Phillips recommends taking the information under advisement and inviting the committee back when we want to make a decision. Mr. Gaumond suggested inviting the members of the Board of Selectmen to the September 9th meeting and having SWAT come before the Board after that. He also suggested allowing public comment on the proposal through The Banner. If we are interested in going to the next step there is a funding grant for the SMART Program which allows assistance from Ms. Congdon. Ms. Wellington and Ms. Congdon did a Channel 11 program which will be broadcast on Saturday and Sundays in July.

2. Discussion regarding replacement of grinder pumps

This will be carried over to a future meeting as Mr. Pruneau is awaiting a report from Mr. Westerling.

3. Mary Drive Sewer Connection

The Board received a letter from the owner of the property at 16 Mary Drive. They are looking for a temporary waiver to connect to the sewer system. Mr. Gaumond recommends forwarding the letter to the Board of Health. Mr. Westerling explained that the property owner ran into a significant amount of ledge and the home owner asked him if he could put in a grinder pump. Mr. Westerling has agreed, however, the home owner would like to know if the town would pay for it. Mr. Phillips would support this with a letter to the Board of Health. Mr. Pruneau feels this is strictly Board of Health.

Motion Mr. McCormick to send the letter to the Board of Health, seconded by Mr. Pruneau, all in favor.

Mr. Pruneau thanked Mr. Westerling and his department for cleaning up the grounds at the rear of his site.

MEETINGS INVITATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. July 25 & 26 - Circus Smirkus – Performances at 1:00 and 7:00 p.m. – tickets at JR's Crafts and Gifts and Pruneau's Barber Shop
2. July 27, 2:00 – Dedication of the Holbrook Chapel and the Mount Vernon Cemetery that have been accepted and recorded in the National Register of Historic Places. This will be followed by the dedication of the Bicentennial Bell honoring the memory of Julius Lovell, former Selectman and Town Moderator.
3. Notice that the second meeting in August will not be held at the Old Stone Church

Mr. Phillips suggested finding an alternate location.

4. Mr. Gaumond informed the Board that the suggested date for the follow-up meeting with the Commissioner of DCR and our legislators will be on July 23 at 9:00 a.m. Mr. Phillips asked if the meeting could be held more towards the evening and would like two dates to choose from.

Mr. McCormick reported that work is continuing on the Wachusett Earth Day site at Huntington Highway. At the meeting with the legislators and DCR on July 14 the Board asked for all work to cease until they had an opportunity to speak with the Commissioner. He would like a formal answer on that request.

FUTURE AGENDA REQUESTS

Mr. McCormick suggested developing a policy on the replacement of grinder pumps.

Mr. Pruneau informed the Board that he has requested a report from Mr. Westerling on how many grinder pumps we have, where they are located and which have been replaced. He would like the same information on the pump stations. Mr. Westerling is scheduled to attend the next meeting of the Board at which time he will deliver that report.

Mr. DiPietro would like to discuss constructing a veterans' memorial in town. He also would like to know if it is possible for a Selectman to serve as a member of the Parks Commission. If so, he would like to be appointed to the Parks Commission. Mr. Gaumond will research the request and report back with his findings. After listening to Mr. McCormick at the meeting on July 14th Mr. DiPietro reviewed his paperwork on the proposed Wachusett Earth Day project and he couldn't find anything about hazardous waste only be accepted four days a week.

Mr. Phillips would like to review all municipal vehicles to ensure they are properly marked with the exception of the Police Department undercover vehicles.

With no further business to come before the Board, motion Mr. McCormick at 11:00 p.m. to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Pruneau, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved: August 6, 2008

Nancy E. Lucier

Allen R. Phillips, Chairman

Valmore H. Pruneau, Vice Chairman

John B. DiPietro, Sr., Clerk

Kevin M. McCormick, Selectman

**Town of West Boylston
Open Space Advisory Committee
Animal Medical Center/Conference Center
29 Prospect Street
West Boylston, MA 01583**

Minutes: Thursday, 07 August 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

Advisory Committee Members present: Dr. Robert Tashjian (Chair), Brenda Bowman, Barbara Wyatt, Vincent Vignaly, Ray Desanti, and Brian Bjorklund.

Others Present: Dr. Tashjian's sister, Steve Quist, Larry Salate (Planning Board), Robin Taher, Tom Ahearn and Rick Simmons (Ahearn Electrical).

Call to Order and Opening Comments: The meeting was called to order by Dr. Robert Tashjian at 7:08 p.m., with a 6 member quorum present. Dr. Tashjian announced that Brian Bjorklund would be acting secretary for the meeting. Dr. Tashjian introduced and welcomed all present.

5-Year Open Space and Recreation Plan: The Plan was presented in front of the Board of Selectmen (BOS) on July 16, 2008 and was unanimously approved. Vinny mentioned he would conduct some research on House Bill 394, and 61a and 61b are well-known by Assessors. Questions were raised during the BOS meeting wondering why there were no sewers on Lee Street. Dr. Tashjian brought up that we have a need to protect "overground and underground. The vitality of open space is very important." He also mentioned the presence of botulism spores on the 4.5 acre Lee Street parcel that, if disturbed, may lead to some serious problems. If we leave the area as is, maybe the botulism threats would be minimized. Dr. T. also said the Open Space Plan is necessary in order for the Town to get grants.

A new Agricultural Commission was discussed and would include Open Space Committee members as well as new members. Public Education and Advertisements were talked about and there is a need for an article in the Banner before the October Town Meeting. A motion by Vinny that the Open Space Advisory Committee request that a warrant article be prepared for the October Town Meeting to create an Agricultural Commission was seconded by Brenda and Ray, and was approved by all.

The change of the name of the Open Space Advisory Committee to the Open Space Implementation Committee was discussed. There was a motion by Ray to request that the Board of Selectmen change the name as noted and to grant the Committee authority to implement the recommendations that was seconded by Brenda, and approved by all.

Vinny brought to attention a few parts of the Plan that have not yet been finished. Two maps still need to be updated (Zoning Map and Existing Open Space). These maps can not be provided by the Town Assessors (Nancy Lucier has been very helpful to try to coordinate this) but CMRPC or a private cartographer (Cartographic Associates) can possibly do it. The

Planning Board will be asked to have CMRPC to produce these two maps (They get 10 hours of free services from CMRPC versus possibly thousands of dollars through a private business). Letters of support from the BOS and CMRPC are needed before we send the 2008 Update to the Division of Conservation Services. Once comments from Division of Conservation Services are received the Plan will be completed! Vinny will call Division of Conservation Services and inform them that our Plan is complete pending acquisition of two maps.

Brief background of Inter-relationships between Committees: Dr. T. mentioned that Open Space Committee meetings began at the Animal Hospital after the Mixter building was condemned. Dr. T. gave a background of the Committee as well as the Sentinel Animal Task Force. Representative O'Day will be going on an in-depth tour of Malden Brook Farm to get a better idea of the Regional Center for Biosurveillance. Barbara suggested removing "Regional" from the title, but it is a regional unit, so even with the recent bad press articles, the name should remain. At the 7/16/08 BOS meeting, the Selectmen and the Town Administrator unanimously voted that they would participate in the Biosurveillance Program.

Bicentennial Parade (September 21, 2008): The Parade is to show the heritage and background of West Boylston. Brenda mentioned that the Governor was invited, but is unable to attend due to prior obligations. Representative O'Day, Congressman McGovern, and State Senator Chandler will all be walking in the Parade. The State Police Mounted Unit will not be able to attend the Parade. The DCR Mounted Unit is still new; the horses are ok for the woods, but are not ready for road-use(Funny, but I think it is more that all the activity during a parade would be too much).

Larry Salate and Dr. T. may enter their Model Ts into the Parade. Dr. T.'s father's Model T pickup needs to have motor and tire work in order to get it running. Larry Salate volunteered to help to try to get all these vehicles running. There's a possibility of Al (?) and Paul Cavanaugh riding in the back of the Model Ts.

The Parade route starts at Wachusett Plaza, through the Center, and ends at Goodale Park. There will be viewing stands in front of the Manor Restaurant as well as at the Animal Hospital. Dr. Taher offered her parking lot for our parking.

Ray offered to help with the tractors, but indicated there is a need for drivers.

Previous float ideas were great but were far too expensive and time-consuming.

Dr. T.'s old Army farm truck (M-37) would be great to have in the parade; Princess the miniature horse could be in the back as long as wooden sides were constructed. The truck also needs to be detailed.

There has been trouble finding driving horses for the Parade; we need 1-3 of these horses. Fay Brothers uses horses occasionally, as well as the Wayside Inn. Inquiries will be made to these places. Dr. Taher mentioned a local FedEx driver might have some and will investigate that.

Barbara thought someone should call the Banner to tell people to “look for these in the Parade.” Photos and information about Parade entries could be shown in the article. Mike Kane, Banner editor, will be called and will be invited to the next meeting.

The Parade is anticipated to be at least 2.5 hours long.

Fundraising: Dr. Taher said she would be happy to sponsor and would organize a raffle for free cleaning/filling/root canal/cap/etc. with proceeds going to the Open Space Committee.

Raffle House: Tom Ahearn and Rick Simmons from Ahearn Electrical talked with the Committee about raffling off a house on Columbus Day. Twenty percent of the profit goes to the Non-Profit (What is the official name?), as sponsor, through 501c3 (non-profit). All taxes and raffle fees will be paid for on the house, so the winner will walk right in. Raffle tickets will sell for \$100. 3,000 tickets need to be sold to break even, then profits accrue after that. The house is located at 633 Plantation St. in Worcester. They will be selling tickets at the Big E in Springfield and through radio ads that will be available because of the Non-Profit.

Adjournment: The committee planned its next meeting on 21 August. At this point, the West Boylston Open Space Advisory Committee meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:49 p.m.

Prepared: Brian M. Bjorklund 08/08/2008