

Meeting Minutes – January 10, 2017  
West Boylston Open Space Implementation Committee (OSIC)  
Town Hall, 140 Worcester St., West Boylston, MA

Members Present: Brenda Bowman, Gary Flynn, Mike Peckar, Vin Vignaly

Members Absent: John Hadley, Ray DeSanti, Barbara Wyatt

Others Present: Justin Howard, Robert Dunne and Steve Blake-WB Parks Commission, Michelle Brown-Dog Park Subcommittee, Patricia Halpin-Affordable Housing Trust,

The meeting was called to order by Chair Vignaly at 6:05 pm. On a motion by Mr. Peckar, seconded by Ms. Bowman, the minutes of the 11/22/16 meeting were unanimously approved.

**Open Space and Recreation Plan Update (OSRP):**

The committee just received the 1/9/17 draft version of the OSRP from CMRPC and did not have time to review it in detail. Hard copies were distributed and comments were requested to be submitted to the Chair. Mr. Vignaly noted that only a cursory review had been completed by a couple of the members. He would like to include all edits and comments into a draft to be made public on or before February 14, 2017, to provide time for residents and town officials to review it before a Public Forum, to be held on February 28, 2017 at 6:00. Members suggested that the Public Forum draft should be posted on the Town Website with hard copies available for review at the library and town hall; and letters/notices to the Banner to encourage participation should be sent.

The following comments were noted as needing to be checked or additions made to the current OSRP draft before the Public Hearing:

- a. Include an updated discussion and Action Items relative to the Dog Park initiative.
- b. Include a discussion (draft wording to be submitted by the Parks Commission after their 2/8/17 meeting) and Action Items for the Parks Commission relative to the Goodale Park Master Plan implementation, including phasing, costs, and prioritization of facilities based on current needs. Mr. Vignaly to email a request for this from Chair Pedone. Mr. Dunne offered to draft the background and begin discussion at the Parks Commission meeting.
- c. Mr. Howard reviewed his work to assess and update the reports to review Town Park facilities' compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Changes to the reports are needed to update them to current conditions. His major concerns were with the Goodale Park facilities.
- d. Mr. Vignaly suggested that the narrative and Action Items should include information regarding Gates Brook being a naturally self-sustaining trout and salmon spawning habitat, with suggestions to enhance and protect these rare cold water fisheries.
- e. Mr. Peckar noted that the dam on the Quinapoxet River, south of the Rail Trail, is scheduled to be removed within the next 7 years and this should be noted and evaluated for recreational or historical creation/preservation.
- f. Ms. Halpin, as chair of the Affordable Housing Trust, asked to include a narrative and Action Item to encourage local land owners to donate land or portions of their land to the Land Trust. The town can be protected from unfriendly 40B development if it has more than 1.4% of its developable land area in subsidized housing programs. Currently the calculations indicate that the town has 1.6%, but additional protected lands will provide a cushion if conditions change. Ms. Halpin will provide wording for how a property owner can initiate this.
- g. Updates and clarifications are needed to the Sidewalk Plan. Ms. Bowman noted that she is aware that small-front-wheeled wheel chairs have difficulty negotiating the bumpy nubs part of the new handicapped ramps.

### **Dog Park Discussions**

Michelle Brown reported that she has spoken with Anita Scheipers, town administrator, who suggested that the committee should get approval from the Selectmen before Ms. Scheipers speaks to the Stanton Foundation. Ms. Brown is on the agenda for the Board of Selectmen's January 18 meeting. Ms. Brown said that she is aware that the Stanton Foundation is considering restructuring their funding, and with 7 dog parks being proposed in Worcester, there may not be as much money available for West Boylston. Ms. Bowman reported that as of January 1, 2017, West Boylston has 567 registered dogs and Boylston has 575. Mr. Peckar has not yet determined if CPA funding can be used for the town's 10% portion of the dog park construction costs, but will confirm it with the CPC.

The next meeting and Public Forum was suggested as Tuesday, February 28, 2017 at 6 pm to review the final draft and conduct the Public Forum.

Upon a motion by Mr. Peckar, and seconded by Mr. Flynn, the committee unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Vincent Vignaly