

Meeting Minutes – May 17, 2016
West Boylston Open Space Implementation Committee (OSIC)
Town Hall, 140 Worcester St., West Boylston, MA

Members Present: Brenda Bowman, Ray DeSanti, Gary Flynn, Barbara Wyatt, Vin Vignaly

Members Absent: Mike Peckar, John Hadley

Others Present: Robert Dunne-WB Parks Commission, Danielle Mucciarone-CMRPC

The meeting was called to order by Chair Vignaly at 6:05 pm. On a motion by Ms. Wyatt and a second from Ms. Bowman, the minutes of the 4/6/16 meeting were unanimously approved as written.

Open Space and Recreation Plan Update (OSRP):

Ms. Mucciarone reported that there have been 157 responses to the Open Space and Recreation Survey thus far. The survey will remain available online until after the June 2 Public Forum to get as many responses from all concerned citizens. The flyer was reviewed and will be distributed to as many locations as possible to encourage public participation. Mr. DeSanti pointed out that the little Town-owned open space in West Boylston is being claimed by other municipal uses, such as the Police Station being proposed on the field on Sterling Street, and the Senior Center wanting to build at Mixer. This OSRP is important to focus the attention on the fact that town-owned open space is less than 1% of the town. Ms. Mucciarone will incorporate that information into the update. Mr. Dunne reviewed the information he provided from the Parks Commission regarding facilities use and needs. He explained the recent planning efforts from the Commission and the need to implement ideas in the next 5 years as well as plan for the longer term. Mr. Vignaly supported that thought and the cooperation the OSIC has received from the Parks Commission for this OSRP has been helpful to make this document a guiding plan for the next 7 years. Mr. Dunne suggested Mr. Vignaly contact Parks Chairman Pedone to focus some attention at their meetings on prioritizing the needs and plans for the next 5 years. These improvements to the facilities, if noted in the OSRP will be the basis for available grant applications and could save the taxpayers significant expenses. Mr. Vignaly will also contact Mr. Pedone to speak at the Public Forum on 6/2, since this is an Open Space AND Recreation Plan update. Ms. Mucciarone suggested an agenda for the Forum which includes a short introduction from Parks and from Open Space of about 5 minutes to quickly summarize the 5-year horizon projects and needs at this time. Mr. Vignaly wants to encourage all town boards involved with parks and open space, including the Parks Facilities Planning Committee, to become more involved in this OSRP work. Ms. Mucciarone reviewed the results of the survey thus far and discussed how to clearly present the information at the Public Forum on 6/2. Depending on the turnout, Ms. Mucciarone suggested considering having breakout sessions with people interested in specific subjects, such as Organized Sports, Passive Recreation, Protected Open Space, or Seniors' Concerns. She will prepare a draft of a PowerPoint presentation for review next week.

May Town Meeting Follow-up:

The Parks Facilities Committee (PFC) presented their preferred layout to Town Meeting attendees in their report. The preferred layout is a 30-year vision of what could be put at Goodale Park. Mr. Desanti noted that this looks more like an athletic stadium complex than the "park with trees and fields" that he remembers and prefers. The \$18 million cost estimate is what the cost would be if it were all done right now, but a more realistic amount of \$24 million was suggested by Mr. Dunne if the work is to be implemented over a 20-year period. Mr. Vignaly asked if the PFC made any changes to their preferred layout to accommodate expensive ledge removal in areas where the rock was about 2' deep. Mr. Dunne noted that there were no adjustments made to the design due to the high ledge encountered, but the construction estimate for the facilities reflects this information in the extensive earthwork costs. Mr. Dunne described the article that was passed to construct a new practice field where the old pool building used to be. This would be in the way of the PFC football and track facilities, but there is a serious need for another field near the school to reduce the damaging overuse

that occurs on the existing fields in the fall. Mr. Flynn reviewed the article that was passed to pay for the installation of a well at Goodale Park to reduce water costs, which are prohibitive to keep the fields in good shape. They are also investigating water supply well installation to save irrigation costs for the fields. Mr. Dunne noted that the Parks Commission is considering hiring BETA Engineering, the consultant who worked for the PFC on the Goodale Park Master Plan, to prepare and evaluate alternative configurations and facility sizings for the Parks Commission. The OSIC supported the idea of making prioritized functional improvements while maintaining a realistic budget that can be supported by Town Meeting.

Open Space Protection Acquisitions Status:

Upon a motion by Mr. Desanti, and seconded by Ms. Wyatt, the committee unanimously voted to support the following two items: 1. Acquisition of a Conservation Restriction on a 12+ acre property owned by Dennis Minnich with frontage on Goodale Street in West Boylston; and 2. Investigate options to reimburse the Greater Worcester Land Trust for expenses they incurred to acquire land owned by 263 Maple Street Realty, off Maple Street, in West Boylston. Ms. Bowman suggested the OSIC look into requesting money from the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) at the Fall Town Meeting to have money available for the OSIC to hire a consultant to complete the 'due diligence' investigations on properties that are considered for Town acquisition. Mr. Vignaly will contact Mr. Crowley of the CPC to determine if that is a legitimate use of CPA money, and if there are any limitations on when the money needs to be spent or other contract requirements.

Next meeting was suggested as Tuesday, June 2, 2016 at 7 pm for the Public Forum on the Open Space and Recreation Plan Update, then the next meeting could be a cooperative meeting with the Parks Commission at their scheduled meeting of July 11 to review the draft OSRP with all their members.

Upon a motion by Flynn, and seconded by Mr. Desanti, the committee unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Vincent Vignaly