

March 4, 2024, Meeting Minutes
West Boylston Open Space Implementation Committee (OSIC)
West Boylston Town Hall, 140 Worcester St. Meeting Room

Members Present: Brenda Bowman, Ray DeSanti, Mike Peckar, Bill Chase, Ginny Rose Pellegrini, Vin Vignaly

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Greer Jarvis, Will Talbot, Trish Settles (all from CMRPC), Jennifer Warren-Dymont, Andrew Perna, Jason Vitko, Neil Peterson, Marybeth O'Day, Lauren Daloy

The meeting was called to order by Chair Vignaly at 6:30 pm at the WB Town Hall.

Mixer Field Reconstruction Status

Following up on the concerns raised at the December OSIC meeting, Mr. Vignaly reviewed decisions of the Parks Facilities Committee, but there were no recent minutes posted, so he invited Jim Pedone to attend the meeting. Mr. Pedone, chair of the Parks Facilities Committee, explained that the project is proceeding and being bid. The committee has authorized him to make decisions to keep the project moving forward more swiftly. The Open Space and Recreation Plan Action Item was to improve and expand the multi-use field. Mr. Pedone explained the needs from the softball users in town that currently only have one dedicated field, at Crescent and Goodale Streets. He was asked about the need for a permanent right field softball fence and he explained that the consultant reviewed the situation and said that it would not reduce the uses that could occur at the field. There was discussion about court use at Goodale Park, and Mr. Pedone explained that pickleball can use 2 of the 3 courts if tennis players ask. And the courts are not limited to use by town residents, though residents "get preference". Mr. Pedone then had to leave to attend the Parks Commission meeting at 7.

Additional discussion ensued about the proposed fence locations and a general desire to have the available area be as large as possible to allow greater usefulness of the fields for baseball, soccer and lacrosse. Even if a regulation U12 soccer field is not possible, a larger field would allow for U12 soccer teams to practice at Mixer. Field space for spring sports is very limited in town. Mr. Vitco, of the town baseball association, said there are over 120 baseball users, and they have 2 fields. He questioned why the current proposal is to designate Mixer as a second softball field and their program only has about 40 users. Mr. Peterson also had concerns with the use limitations and fence for the soccer program in town. The Parks Commission was meeting next door and they were encouraged to attend and raise their concerns there. The OSIC voiced some frustrations about working to produce the action items in the last Open Space and Recreation Plan, but then have them not get implemented.

Open Space and Recreation Plan Update (OSRP)

Greer Jarvis explained the major requirements for the update. Much of the existing plan can be used, but special attention to the unique and scenic features, environmental challenges, lands of conservation and recreation interest, ADA self-assessment, and community goals/objectives will need to be evaluated and confirmed or revised.

CMRPC has done many community surveys and provided an example that Ms. Pellegrini incorporated into the draft survey. This will be reviewed at the next meeting, but it is hoped to be put out to the public in April.

The timeline for the survey was discussed to be in April, with a public workshop before summer with outreach events including Town Election and cooperating with the end of school celebration. OSIC meetings should be held monthly to keep on track so that the update can be submitted before the existing plan expires.

Blueberry Hill Property - 353 Goodale St Property Discussion of the kiosk was raised with Mr. Chase who volunteered to get the kiosk constructed with the assistance of Mr. Peckar. Mr. Vignaly offered to provide a kiosk design from the town of Northborough. Mr. Peckar is working with Greater Worcester Land Trust (GWLT) to fabricate the “Blueberry Hill” sign, and to update the map available on the OSIC and the GWLT websites.

18 Malden Street Acquisition:

Mr. Vignaly explained that the owners have put two lots up for sale off Newton Street, and submitted a plan to divide the remaining land into three lots. No contact has been made with the OSIC or GWLT.

Open Space Properties of Interest

Mr. DeSanti asked about the mandatory MBTA zoning district. Mr. Vignaly explained that the state’s definition of an MBTA Community includes towns that have NO MBTA services, but abut towns that do. Therefore the new law applies to West Boylston even though the nearest MBTA service is more than 3.5 miles away. The Planning Board is considering a site abutting Worcester off Shrewsbury Street. There will be a public hearing and it needs to be approved at Town Meeting as well.

Motion by Ms. Bowman, seconded by Mr. Chase to approve the minutes of the December 21, 2023, meeting. Members approved the motion.

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for April 11, 2024. Upon motion by Mr. Peckar, second by Mr. Chase; the committee unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Vincent Vignaly