

Town of Harvard, Massachusetts

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes—May 7, 2020

Attendees:

Peter Dorward, Chair

Jim Lee

Dan Daly

Rich Maiore

Linda Dwight

JoAnne Crystoff

Chris Ryan

Paul Cohen

Liz Allard

Old Business:

The Committee unanimously approved minutes from January 29, 2020

New Business:

Peter welcomed Dan Daly to the Committee as new Park & Rec designee

Peter shared the Committee was attempting to get an Open Space Inventory from the Town Assessors Office. Liz and Peter met with Town Hall staff, who are willing to get it but the Town Hall shutdown due to COVID is preventing them. Liz said she believed they could still get it via Excel file. Chris discussed obtaining topographical maps from MRPC, who provides 8 hours of free time vs. using the Assessors office.

Peter gave a brief update of using Chapter 61 designation as an early warning system via the Assessor's Office to alert the town when property in Chapter becomes available. Peter to follow-up.

The Committee discussed the property at 35 Ayer Road that is for sale. Neither Park & Rec nor the School representatives have walked the site. Both Paul and Linda doubted it would be a suitable site for a ballfield or recreation area. Dan agreed. It was agreed that Rich would inform the Select Board that OSC has no interest in the property.

Joanne shared Ayer's approach to an evaluation tool for open space. A DLTR grant to create a map which makes it easier to keep track of properties. Ayer is unique given it's compact size. Working with MRPC they gained data of neighboring towns to see what properties are adjacent

to town owned or other open space land i.e. Chapter land. MRPC layered UMass/Audubon data to identify critical habitats onto the map.

The end result is a system and map that help prioritizes available parcels.

Chris to provide 495 MetroWest approach document.

Jim Lee shared Harvard Conservation Trust's Evaluation Tool. Through a scoring system the tool helps identify and prioritize open space of land for conservation. The Committee agreed a similar tool for recreation would be important.

Next Steps—

Peter discussed breaking the Committee into sub-groups to work on specific topics.

Rich, Linda, Paul and Dan on the recreation needs. Jim, Peter, Jared and Joanne on conservation needs.

Next Meeting: June 4th 9:00 am