

DOVER OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

MINUTES

January 5, 2016

Attendance: Members: Amey Moot (Chair), Tim Holiner, Henry Faulkner, Boynton Glidden, Justine Kent-Uritam, Tara Nolan and Paul Wood. **Non-Voting Liaisons:** Jerry Arnold (Long Range Planning) and Candace McCann (Board of Selectmen). **Absent:** Eric Loeffler, Mark Bush, and Dick Wood.

Amey called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

I. Approval of the Minutes

Upon a motion by Henry, seconded by Tim, the Minutes of November 3, 2015 were unanimously approved.

II. Welcome of Tim Holiner (Conservation Commission) and New Members

Tim Holiner from the Conservation Commission, in attendance at the meeting, has agreed to serve on the Open Space Committee.

There was continued discussion about potential candidates to fill the remaining open seat in general. In particular, there is interest in finding someone with liaisons to Dover youth. The Committee is comfortable with looking beyond the Board of Health given Tim Holiner's familiarity with the Lyme disease issue. Members will make contacts and invite interested people to attend the February meeting.

III. Springdale Farm Update

Candace McCann provided an update on the use recommendations from the 46 Springdale Committee and Selectmen. While the Town survey depicted overwhelming preference for open space and passive recreation, the Springdale Committee felt compelled to advise the Selectmen of the Town's vulnerability to 40B development. The Committee pointed out the option of the Town's retaining the property to partially meet 40B requirements. Given concerns about issues associated with the Town being a landlord as well as the likely need for mitigating lead paint and asbestos in home of this age, the Selectmen will be recommending that the house and appurtenant buildings be sold within a building envelop of approximately three acres. Details about the site, driveway and access to the public land will be worked out in the coming months. The next step in the process is Planning Board review of the recommendation.

The Committee discussed possible restrictions on the house and building lot sold, the impact restrictions could have on value as well as the aesthetic import of the site. There was also discussion about whether the retained portion of the property should be Town owned or held by the Conservation Commission. Tim pointed out that land can be moved from Conservation back to Town ownership for municipal needs with an act of the State legislature. Justine noted that in recent years such changes have become more difficult with the recent application of a "no net loss" test. Before Town Meeting, the Selectmen will seek input and a formal endorsement of the proposal from Open Space but no action is required at this time.

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IV. Town Report Submission

On a motion by Justine, the Town Report submission, provided by Amey and edited by Justine was unanimously approved with one minor edit.

V. Updates

A. Open Space Committee

(1) Land Acquisitions: The Pegan Hill project was to be closed by year end (2015) Amey believes that deadline was met. Natick Town Meeting Members approved the acquisition of the former Mumford property in South Natick. Justine and Amey attended that meeting on December 1. The vote was 112 in favor, 10 opposed and 2 abstained. Amey noted that while the Town Meeting Members approved up to \$1.4 million, Natick had hoped that \$400,000 of that would be supplanted by State LAND (Loan Acquisitions for Natural Diversity) grant funds. We expect that Natick will only expend \$1 million and the balance will need to be raised by TTOR or others.

(2) Public Walks: The Committee commended Amey on her efforts to schedule and publicize walks. There was discussion about ways to improve attendance in particular from Dover youth. The Committee noted the dearth of maps of Dover's open spaces. Those that are available are not centralized but rather are posted by the conserving organization such as TTOR, DLCT etc. It was noted that mapping might be a good project for Boy Scouts.

(3) Justine lead a discussion about land owner outreach. Absent clear direction from the Town regarding its appetite and budget for land acquisition and given the other focus of groups like Audubon and TTOR, no reasonable outreach that can be undertaken at this time. Most landowners that she had talked with are interested in compensation for conserving land. Candace mentioned a Chapter 61 property that had just been presented to the Selectmen for its Right of First Refusal. This property has a value of approximately \$8.6 million for the open land and another \$900,000 value is being put on the house package. There was a lack of clarity regarding the location and Candace offered to send updated information; full details will be disseminated to all relevant Committees promptly. These opportunities highlight the need for thoughtful definition of prioritized properties and planning/budgeting for acquisitions.

(4) There was discussion and a review of the Tax Taken properties the town owns. Some members of the Committee had reviewed several of these properties 10 to 15 years ago, incremental properties were reviewed in 2004, and others on the list are new. A few small properties owners would like to donate, offering linkages between open and conserved areas. The Committee decided to revisit all the properties in order to provide an updated opinion letter regarding disposition.

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(5) Justine informed the group that an open hearing on the Rail Trail will be held January 14th in the Town House.

(6) As a point of public information, Candace informed members that a Special Town Meeting will be held on February 8th to approve a new Minuteman Agreement and on the basis of that new agreement, then elect whether or not to continue participating in the Minuteman District.

(7) Tim noted that only nine deer were culled this year, a disappointing result in terms of controlling Lyme disease. The target population for deer is 10/square mile. The estimated deer population in Dover is approximately 35/square mile.

(8) Justine noted that the Upper Charles Conservation Land Trust may nominate a hydrologist to its Board. If so, she will ask that person to come, pro bono, and brief the Committee.

B. Conservation Commission: No updates. It was noted that Open Space can support Con. Comm by undertaking boundary and CR monitoring functions for them, but only at the invitation on Con. Comm.

C. Springdale Study Committee: Discussed previously during meeting (see above).

D. Planning Board: The Board will be proposing revisions to the site plan review process at the Town Meeting. A public hearing will be held on February 25th on that topic and on the topic of Dover becoming a Green Community (MGL 25A Section 10(c)) which Long Range Planning has been discussing.

E. Board of Health, Parks and Rec, Board of Selectmen: No additional updates.

Amey adjourned the meeting at 9:09 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Tara L. Nolan