

Meeting of Open Spaces- June 4, 2020
Written Minutes

Members Present:

Peter Dorward
Paul Cohen
Dan Daly
Jim Lee
Liz Allard
Linda Dwight
Chris Ryan

Minutes approved from prior meeting on May 7th;
Jim made a motion to approve as written. All voted affirmative.

Next meeting July 2nd

Old Business; Peter reported that he has information from the assessors that was given to him from Liz. He is reviewing the data and will share it at a future meeting.

Jim asked for clarification of the information from the assessors. Peter shared that it shows property that is designated as tax exempt. Jim asked whether taxed property should also be captured. Peter will go back to the assessors and ask for parcels of land that are taxed.

Chris asked the group to sign a letter for a grant that he is seeking to create a regional partnership on a project that would map land in several towns with attention to climate resiliency. The study would include soil quality and identify action items. He already has a letter of support from the Select Board. The resulting mapping may help determine what lands are best for preservation and what are best for development. Peter wrote a draft letter. Vote taken to sign the letter – Jim Lee made the motion. Paul Cohen seconded the motion. All approved.

Evaluation Tool of open space; Peter and Jim have been working on this. They used the matrix in use already for Harvard Conservation Trust (HCT). They suggested using the tool but taking off the loss of open space due to development and the project cost. Dan asked for more of a discussion before taking these two criteria off of the matrix. Jim explained why cost should not exclude open space consideration. Peter said that the committee would not have access to the actual costs before the land is offered for sale. Chris suggested a combined consideration. Paul agreed with Peter and Jim. Jim described why lost land to development was difficult to have in the matrix because we would not have the data on whether the land would ever be developed without perk tests and soil conditions. Peter suggested having a holistic scoring metric as presented and then a more detailed one that includes another level of criteria.

Jim described why linked properties might be a priority. Peter asked if climate resiliency should be added. Chris said the information should be available when the study is finished. Peter suggested that Jim and he discuss the way to include this category off-line and then share their

thoughts with the committee. Jim suggested that when the town used the tool they not rigidly take the properties in rank order but consider the top third as the priority properties.

Active Recreation; Dan researched criteria used in other towns. The draft he included required pre-planning information such as costs, location, accessibility, soil quality, access to utilities, and maintenance. Chris asked if we would use data to determine the overall needs of the town based on population. Dan thought this information would be important but perhaps not for this committee to study. The active recreation sub-committee was tasked with putting the criteria into a matrix for the next meeting.

Peter asked if anyone had any other business and then the meeting was adjourned.