

***Town of Weymouth
Massachusetts***

Robert L. Hedlund
Mayor

75 Middle Street
Weymouth, MA 02189



Office: 781.340.5012
Fax: 781.335.8184

TTY: 781.331.5124

**MINUTES
Open Space Committee
July 11th, 2018, 7:00 pm
Weymouth Town Hall
Kelly Room
75 Middle Street, 2nd Floor
Weymouth, MA 02189**

RECEIVED
TOWN OF WEYMOUTH
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
2018 AUG 31 PM 1:42

Members Present: Andrew Hultin (Chair)
Joe Haddock
David Henley
Cate Parsley

Members Absent: Kathleen Swain, Timothy Townsell, and John Faye.

Recording Secretary: Stephanie Cruz

Andrew Hultin called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

1. Approval of Minutes

- First item on the agenda is approval of the minutes from the previous meeting.
- Andrew Hultin entertains the motion to approve the minutes.

2. Review of Open Space and Recreation Plan Goals

- Second item on the agenda. Members have hard copies of these plans, which outline through 2020 the town's plans for open space and recreation areas and projects.
- The open space and recreation plan will help to guide items and activities that the mayor would like the open space committee to have input on.
- The function of the open space committee is to take things which the mayor recommends and see how they fit into the open space plan. The open space committee is a self-driven committee.

- Andrew Hultin reviews the goals and objectives that are located in the hardcopy Open Space booklet with the present committee members (there are 14 objectives in total).
- The Open Space Committee won't play a large part in areas that are sports fields and turf grounds. Open space is more concerned with natural open spaces, and passive areas.
- Reaching out to local groups, like the boy scouts, to get the community more involved in these outdoor spaces is a major goal (goal four in the open space plan).
- Quick important note; the Backriver watershed is of environmental concern, therefore making it a higher priority when it comes to creating projects and gathering funding for this area (especially when it comes to applying for grants).
- Down the line the mayor will want the Open Space Committee to look into new acquisitions and what is worth acquiring for open space in the town.
- A lot of new park projects will take in to account accessibility to the parks (ADA improvability). This will not only mean accessibility in the traditional way (access into the parks) but creating areas where certain parts of the community who would not normally have access to open space areas are able to get it.
- Committee member suggested a blinking yellow light near Legion Field in order to improve safety for the crosswalk in the area. This member had noticed the danger in crossing in between cars in this spot. Andrew Hultin made a note of this for future reference.
- Andrew Hultin will be making note of ideas from committee members to pass along to the Mayor's office for future reference.
- Parks and Recreation, Conservation, Town Waterfront Committee, and the Harbor Master are all departments and people which the Open Space committee will be working with when the committee looks into proposed projects and sites.
- A lot of playground equipment will be replaced and updated, this is part of goal 12 in the Open Space booklet.
- The Open Space committee satisfies goal 14 in the plan (there are 14 objectives in total). The committee will not follow the plan to the book but will work with the Mayor in determining what it is he wants the committee to do. The purpose of the booklet and plan is to secure state funding for projects in the town.
- The open space committee is the Mayor's advisory committee, the public outreach of not only the Mayor's plans but also for the general public. The Mayor will ask for the input from the open space committee which in turn takes in public input.
- The plan is good until 2020, the year before next will be when the open space committee objectives are re-evaluated. What has been accomplished at that point will be reviewed, and with public input recommendations will be made for future projects and objectives.

3. Walking Trail Maps of the Town's Open Spaces

- Item three on the agenda and one of the first things which the Mayor wanted looked at by the committee. The goal here is to get committee members familiar with the maps from other towns, and to lay the groundwork for the committee members to establish what the town walking maps should look like.
- The Mayor wants a walking trail map that outlines all the walking trails available in the open spaces. He also wants updates made to certain park properties and areas that could quickly be made into accessible parks/trails.
- There are informal maps of areas in the town, such as the bird sanctuary (which needs formal parking). These are not yet considered accessible trails (no parking or trailheads). That is the goal for the future; to make these official walking trails.
- Andrew Hultin passes out examples of maps for other towns. The first map is of Braintree's cranberry pond area. The second is the town of Norwell's lot. The last one is an example Andrew Hultin drafted up as to what the town of Weymouth's maps could potentially look like.
- Ideally, maps should show parking and where trailheads are, as well as how to easily access the trails. Maps should be straight forward and legible, as well as visually appealing and welcoming.
- Norwell's map gives a little information on the area in addition to the trails; this is something that the Weymouth maps could use.
- Some of the areas are easier to map in Google Earth or using GIS. Working with GIS more detailed maps can be made for Weymouth (possibly including topography of the area).
- Basic elements that should be included on these maps: parking, paved trails, unpaved trails, access points, and trail heads. Keeping them simple keeps them legible. There should also be similar themes between the trailheads and the maps, and the maps should be accessible both in pamphlets and online.
- Having trail maps available online under a "park maps" trail would be the cheapest way to have makes accessible to the public. Weymouth does not have very many maps for trails (there are mostly maps for areas).
- Committee members made suggestions on various ways to access the maps and brought up the sophistication of Hanover's maps (such as how they geographically reference the area so that people can easily find the parks). For example, each area has a map that can be clicked on and accessed and printed.
- Existing maps from apps like "Open Street Maps" could be used to build the maps for areas around town. These maps are surprisingly sophisticated, but to use them would require special permissions and there are still areas missing (not to mention needing to validate the accuracy of these maps).
- Andrew Hultin presents the GIS application to the committee to show how mapping can be done using software like this. GIS uses layers and data from sources. These layers can be turned on and off, which means that if there were an interactive online

system people could toggle layers on and off depending on what they want to see (for example if they wanted to view only trails).

- The goal is to have some ideas for making trail maps for the next committee meeting. Currently, committee members like the branding on the example maps but think the map should have some more presence (for example, being larger with space to jot down things). They also think street names are important for spatial orientation. Lastly, having text from the trailheads that give a little information on the trail are appealing as well.
- This topic will be revisited in the next couple of meetings where it will be given a formal stage through which recommendations and ideas can be fielded.

4. Great Esker Park Day 2018

- This is an annual community event happening Saturday mid-August. The goal of this event is to bring people out into the park (Great Esker) and to get them involved with the park as well as get the familiar with it.
- This event not only highlights Great Esker, it also highlights the Backriver trails system and the open spaces associated with it.
- Andrew Hultin passes out information to the committee members on this event.
- This event is meant to bring the community together to celebrate the rich history and great natural resources that is Great Esker park, and additionally the Backriver Trail, and the Osprey Overlook park.
- Was an annual event that ran through the 1990s up into the early 2000s. At its peak there were thousands of people (15,000 attendees at its peak). Activities included things like guided hikes, music, wildlife displays, food, and annual t-shirt design for the event. There were trollie rides for the length of the park and aquarium displays as well.
- The year 2018 marks the third year since this event has been brought back. It was restarted in 2016 and the traditional format for the event was followed.
- Activities this year; kayaking, park tours, hayride through the park, wildlife displays from the New England Aquarium and Wildlife Center, food trucks, live music, and outside organizations that are related to open space and the parks (North Weymouth Civic Association, Boy Scouts, the Mayor, state representatives, and so on).
- This year the committee won't be putting input into this event, but next year there could be more opportunity for improving the event and keep it growing.
- Funding for the event comes from the revolving account which is generated from fees taken from the town programs. In the future it would be ideal for this event to be self-sustaining so that program fees can go back into their programs.
- This year grants were received for the event.

- This event is advertised on the Great Esker Nature Center Facebook page. It's interactive with lots of information on the park and has been very successful in bringing people into the parks. A large amount of attendance for the event is generated from the social media page.
- August 11th from 11am to 3pm is the event this year.

No community comments.

Questions from Members:

In regard to the Boy Scout bridge; when will it be rebuilt?

Response: The bridge was built a long time ago and had sustained other damage, therefore it wasn't able to withstand the storm and wasn't built up to par with current standards. The goal is to get in a Boy Scout troupe that is more STEM oriented. These science and mathematically inclined individuals (along with help from outside sources and volunteers with engineering backgrounds) would be able to help rebuild it. This is not set in stone and there would need to be a plan submitted to the town and permits pulled. It would need to be made to certain standards, unlike how it was previously. There would be lots of things involved (barges, cranes, and planning). Bottom line; we are working toward it but that's something in the distant future.

5. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held August 29th, 2018 at 7:00 pm in Town Hall's Kelly Room. The committee agreed to tentatively aim for a monthly meeting on the second Wednesday of each month.

6. Adjournment

Approved:



Andrew Hultin, Chair

08/29/2018

Date