

*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

Press Release

For Immediate Release – March 19, 2018

Town seeks volunteers for new Open Space Committee

Contact(s): Robert Hedlund, Mayor
constituentservices@weymouth.ma.us, 781-340-5012

Weymouth, MA – Mayor Robert Hedlund announced today his intention to appoint a new advisory committee to assist the Office of the Mayor in preserving, protecting, and maintaining Weymouth’s open space and recreation lands. **The Town seeks volunteers to serve on the committee as citizens at-large.** The Town anticipates a seven-member body, with potential staff representatives from Weymouth’s Conservation, Planning, and Recreation Offices.

The new Open Space Committee will fulfill an outstanding goal of the Town’s 2014 Open Space and Recreation Plan, which is to establish an “oversight committee or some similar entity” to monitor progress toward the Town’s long-range vision for its open space infrastructure. Goals of the Open Space Committee will include the following:

- Provide and maintain a diversity of conservation and recreation lands with opportunities for both passive and active recreation.
- Promote development and maintenance of trails and trail linkages.
- Promote continued renovation and enhancement of the community’s neighborhood parks.
- Promote continued progress towards the goals of Weymouth’s OSRP.
- Increase awareness of the range of open space and recreational resources available to residents.
- Explore and evaluate opportunities for the acquisition of additional open space and recreational lands.

- Facilitate stewardship of Weymouth’s open space infrastructure through new partnerships with local civic and volunteer groups.

“The Town has acquired a number of properties for open space in the last two decades, but very little has been done to enhance public access to these sites. If we are serious about expanding and protecting our open spaces, we need a committee dedicated to that mission,” **said Mayor Robert Hedlund**. “We’ve made huge strides in improving the quality of our parks in recent years. I see this Open Space Committee as a vehicle to provide continued momentum and stewardship around this important work.”

Since 1999, the Town of Weymouth has acquired approximately 33 acres of public open space. 29 of these acres were acquired with local Community Preservation funds, with the largest swath of land encompassing 23 acres at the summit of King Oak Hill. Other parcels of land include four acres of wetland and woodland located off Sea Street, two acres adjacent to Bradford Hawes Park, three acres along Whitman’s Pond via Woodbine Road, and one acre known as the Kibby Property adjacent to Abigail Adams State Park.

In addition, as part of permitting for new developments, the Town has acquired real property interests to protect natural resources and public access in more than 60 acres of land through conservation restrictions. These parcels include approximately 51 acres associated with the Tirrell Woods Development off Font Street and 17 acres associated with the Alexan at Arbor Hill Development. It will be the responsibility of the Open Space Committee to consider and advocate for the future stewardship of these properties as well as other protected open spaces in Weymouth.

Another responsibility of the Open Space Committee will be to implement and update the Town’s local Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). An updated OSRP is a requirement for municipalities to apply for grants administered by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs’ Division of Conservation Services (DCS). Weymouth’s current OSRP was approved by the DCS in April 2014 and is valid through January 2020. Since approval of its OSRP, the Town has benefited from \$775,000 in state and federal grant awards. Renovations to Bradford Hawes Park (2015), Osprey Overlook Park (2017), and King Oak Hill Park (2018) are among the projects financed with DCS-approved grants.

Residents interested in serving on the Open Space Committee are invited to submit an [application](#) and cover letter to the Office of the Mayor at 75 Middle Street, Weymouth, Massachusetts 02189. Documents will also be accepted via email at constituentservices@weymouth.ma.us. The Town seeks residents with a range of interests and knowledge related to open space and recreational planning.

###