

Open Space Committee / Minutes of January 20, 2010 Meeting

7 p.m. Peterborough Town House

Present: Alan Bannister, Ed Henault, Debbie Kaiser, Francie Von Mertens, Alex Walker

November's minutes were approved.

New meeting time

Subject to approval by Eric Thum, future meetings of the Open Space Committee will be 6-7:30 p.m. on Wednesdays for the next few months as two members are unable to meet on Thursdays. The next meeting will be February 10.

Eastman Easement

A 40-acre parcel on High Street has been purchased and placed under easement with the Harris Center and the Harris Center is requesting some easement support funding likely to be at \$1,000-2,000 level.

The parcel does not score at the top of the Committee's criteria system and is located close to town, where residential development should be focused following the town master plan.

The Harris Center points out that the parcel is located next to an active town well and over the town's high yield aquifer, suggesting that housing and development are not appropriate despite in-town location. Harris Center further points out the parcel is a wildlife corridor between unfragmented upland and the river.

It was agreed that the Harris Center should present its case to the Conservation Commission, which manages conservation funds.

Budget

Ed Henault had no update on likely Capital Reserve funding for the upcoming fiscal year and will check with Pam Brenner to remind her of the wisdom of cutting all capital reserve funds equally if that is the means of making up the budget shortfall resulting from withdrawal of expected state funds.

Wheeler, Babine and Lowe easements

1. The Monadnock Conservancy received grant funding to support the easement the town will place on the Wheeler, Babine and Lowe parcels in the coming months. The grant also is helping to fund transaction costs for the Otter Brook Farm easements completed in December. The funds were secured by the Quabbin to Cardigan (Q2C) consortium that has identified the Temple to Crotched corridor as a high priority conservation area. In securing Selectboard approval to place the town parcels under conservation easement with the Monadnock Conservancy, OSC stated that the costs to the town are unlikely to exceed \$5,000.

2. Henault and Von Mertens will contact abutters to the Otter Brook Farm easement with news of the Otter Brook easement and plans for the town parcels easement, and report back to the committee in February.

Other

1. Henault recommended initiating meetings with neighboring towns especially where there are shared high natural resource areas.

2. A project needing attention is working with Fash in OCD on getting Committee open space data to agree with OCD's.

Tentative date for the next Open Space meeting is WEDNESDAY February 10.

/fvm