

**TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER, MASSACHUSETTS
OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE**

January 8, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Kevin Mandeville, Nicole Holmes, Eileen Hiney

Others in attendance: Michael Dutton, Town Manager

1. Introduction

A quorum was present; the meeting began at 4 pm. A copy of the agenda was handed out. Eileen agreed to take notes and draft minutes.

Michael noted that his office recommends that all town boards and committees reorganize their structure after July 1 and rotate committee chairs if possible.

Kevin asked about the need to submit a report for the Town's 2019 Annual Report. Michael said the report would be minimal as we met only once in 2019 and he would take care of it.

2. Discuss/Develop Open Space Committee (OSC) Statement of Purpose

The current OSC Statement of Purpose is found at <https://www.bridgewaterma.org/1349/Open-Space-Committee>. Eileen suggested that the Statement should include a reference to the role of open space in addressing climate change. Michael will email to the committee the Municipal Vulnerability Plan which addresses climate change.

Kevin suggested that the overall description should be more concise.

Nicole noted that in reviewing the Statement of Purpose, it would be helpful to review information concerning open space included in the new Comprehensive Master Plan, which is expected to be finalized and presented to the Planning Board in June. She has requested this from Jennifer Burke, Community and Economic Development Director. Michael will follow up with Jennifer.

It was agreed that Kevin will draft a revised Statement of Purpose and circulate the draft for review prior to the next meeting.

3. Review the 2017 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OS&RP) and discuss key recommendations

The five goals and actions related to the goals identified in the 2017 OS&RP were discussed briefly. The OSC should review the OS&RP to identify actions where the OSC is identified as a "responsible party." It should also review which goals and actions may be included in the Master Plan.

4. Review the 2016 Parklands Assessment Report

This report https://www.bridgewaterma.org/DocumentCenter/View/1005/Bridgewater-Rec-Needs-Assess_FINAL_04-11-16, provided an inventory of recreation resources prior to development of the 2017 OS&RP. Section 3 evaluates 13 public recreation facilities or areas according to a number of criteria, include the level of protection as open space for each parcel. Michael suggested that one area the OSC might look into is the protected status of recreation and other open space parcels to insure that that status is not in question.

Michael provided an update on the status of the Rainbow's end property, which has been mentioned as the possible site for a dog park. There are a number of pending issues related to ownership, lease status, and cleanup of this property.

5. Update on Murray Farm and Stiles and Hart grants

The Stiles and Hart project has been ongoing for a number of years. The next steps to create parking and other improvements at that site are underway. The Town Manager's office is overseeing this.

Michael discussed the Murray Farm as an example of protecting property through acquisition of development rights. The committee decided that it will meet at the Murray Farm for a site visit at 3 pm on February 8th, before its next regular meeting. Michael will make the background information and documentation concerning the Murray Farm transaction available for committee review. He recommended that the committee consider as one of its priorities identifying open space parcels that warrant protection and research creative ways to finance acquisition and protection of such parcels.

6. Update on Comprehensive Master Plan.

As noted in paragraph 2, the OSC will discuss the Master Plan, which is not yet finalized, after it has the opportunity to review it, particularly with respect to public feedback pertaining to open space and conservation.

7. Meeting adjourned at 5:50 pm.

Upcoming Meetings:

February 12 – meet at Murray Farm (North St) at 3 pm (weather permitting) for site visit followed by the meeting at Town Hall at 4 pm:

March 11 – regular meeting at Town Hall at 4 pm; a site visit may be set up prior to this meeting.

Submitted by Eileen Hiney