

MINUTES

Adhoc Open Space and Recreation Planning Committee

July 10, 2019

OPENING: The scheduled meeting of the Adhoc Open Space and Recreation Planning Committee opened at 7:00 p.m. The following members were in attendance:

Dennis Clark, Chairman	Present
Russ Fox, Vice Chairman	Absent
Dave DeiDolori	Present
John Stadnicki	Present
Craig Samuelson	Present
David Spina	Present
Bob Horacek	Absent

Minutes

Mr. Stadnicki made a motion to accept the minutes of 06/15/19. Mr. Samuelson seconded the motion. None opposed, the motion passed unanimously.

Attendance

Mr. Scott Snyder-Perusse and Ms. Kelly Parker attended the meeting to observe the proceedings. Mr. Snyder-Perusse expressed interest in participating on the SOSRPC.

Discussion

Chairman Clark attended a brown bag meeting on Open Space and Recreational planning on June 26, 2019 with the Massachusetts Society of Municipal Conservation professionals. The attendees ranged from consulting firms to municipal planners. Melissa Cryan, reviewer for OSRP's did not attend as planned due to illness. Mr. Robert O'Conner, Director of the Division of Conservation Services, gave an overview and answered questions.

The Massachusetts Open Space and Recreation Handbook has not been updated since 1990 so there is abundant confusion regarding the current requirements. Mr. O'Conner stated that generally they are telling applicants that there needs to be more of a public outreach to successfully gauge the needs of the public for the OSRP. Mr. O'Conner reviews applications for grant funding looking for Article 97 properties which are protected in perpetuity. Some Towns have done the deed research that is required to identify properties protected under Article 97. Mr. Clark related that subdivision Flexible Residential Development plans must include open space that is available to all but do not require it to be protected from development under Article 97. It was stated that an important feature of an Open Space Plan would be to identify all Article 97 properties. And having a comprehensive ADA document for all open space and recreational properties is mandatory.

Mr. Clark noted that there were other Towns similar in size to Southwick that did not have the personnel or resources to create or update their OSRP's. The going rate to update an OSRP is

around thirty thousand dollars. Professional Consultants at the meeting noted that they submitted updated OSRP's that have been returned to them for revision because they omitted that actual site visit inspection of all of the individual properties had been conducted. Once a updated plan is submitted, it is rare that it will receive approval the first time, and after several revisions it will only receive conditional approval. Town's may apply for grants with conditional approval, but not receive the grant until final approval is given.

It was also stated that an inclusion of Environmental Justice which is a community based organization that will work with low income, minority, tribal and/or indigenous residents to address environmental and health concerns are mandatory.

Mr. O'Conner reminded the group several times that The Commonwealth of Mass is one of the only states that provide grant funding for open space and recreational projects.

Chairman Clark noted that Planning Board member Dave Spina had provided updated demographics for the plan that was very helpful.

Dave DeiDolori will forward the updated ADA sheets from the Park & Rec for their inclusion in the plan. Once a several more inadequacies are addressed, the Open Space Plan will be sent to the Commonwealth for review. After the comments are received the SOSRPC will employ the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission to address any comments that cannot be resolved by the Committee. Once the document is complete, it will be sent to all the Boards and Committees for review and comments with a request for a letter of approval from them.

Chairman Clark gave a brief update on the progress of the newly acquired North Pond property.

Mr. Clark also noted that the gate to the North Pond property will be moved for easier access. There will also be signs installed in the near future.

Mr. Clark hopes to have the draft OSRP submitted for comments by the next scheduled meeting on August 7th.

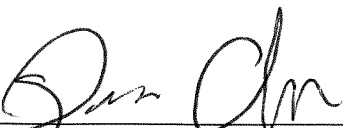
Mr. Stadnicki made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m. Mr. Samuelson seconded the motion. None opposed, the motion passed unanimously.

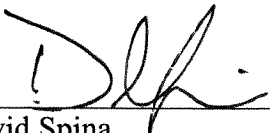
The next scheduled meeting is August 7, 2019.

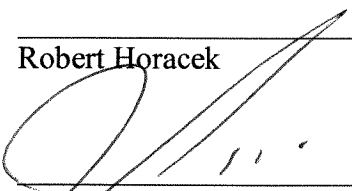
Respectfully submitted,

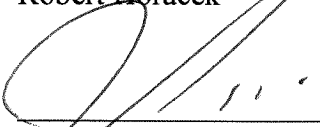
Jean Nilsson, Secretary

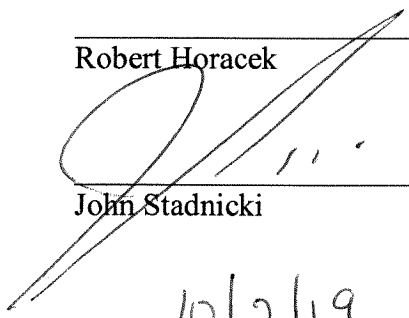
cc:
Select Board
Town Clerk


Dennis Clark, Chairman

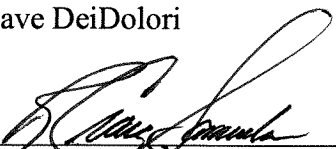

David Spina

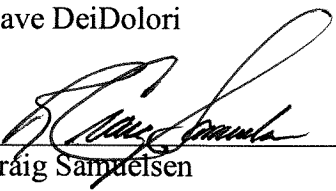

Robert Horacek


John Stadnicki


10/2/19
Date


Russ Fox, Vice Chairman


Dave DeiDolori


Craig Samuelsen