

Open Space Ad Hoc Committee

Minutes February 16, 2021

The Committee met via Zoom as scheduled with the following members present: Sarah Cammer, Brandon Kibbe, Bob Pease, Lynne Man, Paula Bertram, and Ana Flavia Lockwood.

1. **Call to Order** - Chairman opened the meeting at 6:34 p.m. and read the pandemic notice as posted on the agenda.
2. **Review/ Approve 01/19/2021 Minutes** – Bob Pease made a motion to approve the minutes, Lynne Man seconded. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.
3. **Reports from Committee members on research regarding history and additional information regarding several pieces of “General Municipal” land**
 - a. **104 Fairview Road (“Woodruff” parcel)** – Mike Toohill forwarded an overview of the MEPA process. Bob Pease is working on getting the certified vote and minutes and vote of the 1998 Town Meeting in which the citizen authorized acquisition of this parcel.
 - b. **225 Pleasant Street** - Brandon commented that the Woodruff property may have been acquired for mitigation of the Pleasant Street property. Bob Pease will investigate this parcel further.
 - c. **671 West Street** – Bob will research this parcel.
 - d. **860 Reservoir Road/725 Goodrich Street/0 Shirley Reservoir** – Paula informed the Committee that she had spoken with Doug Cameron from the DFW Fishing and Boating Access division and he was very interested in assisting with improvements to provide access to Lake Shirley. Parcels must be municipally owned. Mr. Cameron indicated he would be interested in viewing any parcels on Lake Shirley that could provide public access. Bob Pease will forward Paula list of properties. Mr. Cameron explained that if they move forward with creating public access, the Town would have to enter into a land agreement that would protect the public access use in perpetuity. They would provide engineering and fund any improvements. Paula informed the Committee that years ago there was a Title Search done on Lake Shirley and the title was cloudy, Paula will try to track down further information for the Committee. Paula explained that she was not able to find the deeds for all these parcels, Brandon suggested that Paula investigate adjacent properties.
4. **Other notes/comments/reports from members regarding “General Municipal” properties** _ Bob Pease commented that the Open Space committee may wish to pursue investigating “land of low value”. Bob also informed the Committee that he had reviewed the list of land provided by the assessors as belonging to Lunenburg, owner unknown and last known owner and identified parcels with connection to or of possible interest to the Conservation Commission. Bob has also researched the deeds for existing conservation land to determine if the deed specifies the land is to be used for conservation. According to Counsel, the deed must so state and be filed in the Registry of Deeds which is not the case for some parcels. Bob has developed a proposed action plan for lands of Conservation Interest; he provided an overview of his proposal, he noted that this plan has not yet been reviewed and adopted by Conservation Commission (he will be presenting to the Commission). Bob is in the process of finding the date of acquisition, the old votes and finding the Town Clerk’s certificate. Lynne Man will work with Bob on this project. Bob also informed the Committee that the Assessor’s use code on some parcels is not correct, several properties currently classified as conservation should not be.

5. **Conservation Commission update- Trails Grants** – Trail maps have been created for each of the 11 conservation properties which were showed to the Committee. Different trail colors identify trails by use. The trail markers that are put on the trees will coordinate with the trail colors on the map. Trail head and intersections will be identified with maps. The trail markers have been ordered. Five abutters have been contacted to determine if the trails can be identified on the map, two abutters have refused. Brandon asked about the encroachment on the North West Town Forest, nothing has been done as of yet. There has been interaction with the Zoning Agent and Conservation in Townsend. Bob commented that Mary Wilson from the Lunenburg Snowriders has been an amazing help. Bob asked Paula if the trail on Woodlands drive is used by snowmobiles, Paula asked Mel (Tom) Bertram, President of Lunenburg Snowriders, was able to provide an answer. Mel looked at the trail, and confirmed that this is a current trail.
6. **Conservation Commission update- Land Use Rules** - Bob informed the Committee that the Commission was trying to update the land use rules which has now become controversial. Some members of the Commission property that are in favor of allowing hunting on two parcels and some members that want to eliminate bow hunting on some parcels. Brandon voiced his support for allowing hunting on Conservation land. Paula said she had done a lot of research on how many communities allow hunting on conservation land and that DFW owns an enormous of land adjacent to Hickory Hills properties that allows hunting. Ana said that hunting does restrict other activities, snowmobiling is great and the members help maintain the land, but hunting requires more caution. Brandon commented that hunting is highly regulated and that there are very specific season. Mr. Kibbe also noted that there are very few hunting accidents and most are hunters hurting themselves or others of their party. Sarah commented that this discussion is a microcosm of the planned discussion at tomorrow nights Conservation. Sarah said she is glad that this is a limited roll out, Lynne said she does not particularly like it and that she walks out on conservation land every day where bow hunting is allowed; she puts on an orange vest and walks. Lynn is a little more uncomfortable with firearms but is happy to hear that it would be limited
7. **Public Comment** - no public comment.
8. **Next meeting date**- March 16, 2021, 6:30 p.m.
9. **Adjourn** – Bob Pease made a motion to adjourn at 7:34 p.m. seconded by Paula Bertram, voted unanimously by roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,
Paula Bertram