

Committee Members

Tina Wright, Co-Chair
Denise Legee, Co-Chair
Charlie Ross, Clerk
Andrea Burke, Member
Laura Connolly, Member
Mike Francis, Member
Tara Rice, Member
Jim Wickis, Member
Joanne Williams, Member



TOWN OF MEDWAY

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

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November 1, 2022, 7:00 PM
Medway Senior Center

Attendance	Tina Wright	Denise Legee	Charlie Ross	Andrea Burke	Laura Connolly	Mike Francis	Tara Rice	Jim Wickis	Joanne Williams
Present	x	x	X	x	x	x	x	x	x

Denise called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

Quick Status Update

- Massachusetts Trails Conference (Denise): Jim, Andrea and Denise are attending.
Action: Anyone else interested should let Denise know asap.
- Master Plan (Denise): Completed and posted. A motion will be made for acceptance at Fall Town Meeting.
- Deerfield Property and Trail Creation (Denise): According to Jerry Boyce, whose son built the original trail on the property as a scout project, the pond trail never crossed the western-most point of the pond, as this tiny tip of land was on private property. Hikers, especially neighbors, have used it as a trail anyway, but we should post the trail around the pond on any map without that very small section. The second trail through the woods can be brought back from the assumed property line slightly to fit within Town open space but we will not show it on the map at this time.
- Salmon Property (Denise): Denise confirms that the grounds managers have cleaned up the property considerably, improving the condition of the trail along the river to the canoe launch, especially on the west side, to the right as one enters the property. The extension to the presumed trolley crossing still needs work. The pavers at the parking lot are incomplete and a tripping hazard. Denise thinks Bridget is looking into this but will also follow up with manager.
Action: Denise will contact grounds manager, Jeff Robinson, to discuss the section needing more work and installation of Open Space signage.

- Regular Meeting with Conservation Agent (Denise): Denise has confirmed 2nd Wednesday of every month at 3:30 as a regular meeting time by phone with the conservation agent.

Action: Denise will attend the first meeting this month and will include a discussion about the Willows property.

- Williamsburg Way Open Space (Jim): Jim had sent out information on this property, including two proposed names, Hopping Brook Meadow or Hopping Brook Conservation Lands, for consideration by Open Space Committee members, so that we could choose a name at this meeting. Laura preferred Hopping Brook Meadow. After some discussion that the land is part meadow, part woods, the name “Hopping Brook Conservation Land” (singular, not plural) was chosen. Jim distributed maps of the property. It is private land for which public access has been negotiated. As such, The ToM sets the guidelines for maintenance of the property. Property managers will be responsible to do the work. Jim attended a site walk with Steve Carew of ToM DPW and the property manager to review work to be done, including regular mowing (possibly clearing) of the walking path, periodic mowing according to a set schedule (probably May, after hard frost) for the meadow sections. A location for a bench has been chosen on the loop trail, and Jim will be donating a picnic table.

We discussed potential easements/purchase of contiguous land parcels, especially directly on Hopping Brook, to increase the value of the resource. Jim is the abutter and would be willing to discuss a possible easement on his property to continue to the trail to Hopping Brook. Properties beyond his include Wheelers, Parellas, and the power company Edison (which owns considerable parcels that could otherwise be interesting for development; it was suggested we should keep these in mind as possible purchases with conservation funds). Parties uninterested in the past could be favorable in the future, once an attractive plan is established.

It was suggested that the Medway Trail Club could host an outdoor winter event on the property to increase awareness by the residents on the property, and to introduce the new trails to Town residents. Another suggestion was made to have a Town-wide “Open Space Passport” event to encourage ToM residents to visit open space properties, including this new one, across town.

Action: Joanne will discuss possible such activities with the Medway Trail Club.

- Townwide Treatment of Invasives (Jim): Management efforts by Medway Trail Club continue, and progress has recently been made recently particularly against buckthorn and bittersweet. (No new Town measures reported.) Jim mentioned that his invasives display at the Bridges Festival generated interest among the public.
- Ohnemus Canoe Launch, Trail, Sitting Area - Parking Lot, & 4X4 Posts (Mike): This OS property is made up of two parcels, one owned by the Select Board, on which the Police Station currently sits, and a Conservation parcel that runs down to the river. Mike updated us on progress toward a 2-3 car parking space. Parking would be located on the eastern, Conservation parcel, since there may be need for expanded development next to the police station. The Conservation Agent and Town Administrator have met to discuss options and Bridget met with a surveyor, Dan Driscoll, to examine an overlay on the property. Encroachment from the

abutter to the east must be addressed before proceeding. Open Space has been requested to review the proposal with the Select Board. A draft is available, and it was decided we should try to have this on the agenda at the nearest Select Board meeting, before the holidays. Mike has reviewed the option already with safety office Lieut. Watson regarding traffic patterns and sight lines. We discussed timing and location of the Open Space sign. DPW has the posts that Mike picked up, and it was decided we should try to get a sign up before winter, preferably well visible from Village Street, whether or not the parking lot is installed that soon, due to advantages of advertising with the sign, and the fact that it can be moved if necessary.

Action: Mike will email Bridget to get the item on the Select Board agenda. A decision on the sign will depend on the timing of the meeting.

- Amphitheater Alternate Village Street Access: No update

Action: Mike will continue trying to contact neighbors and establish contact to proceed with a path.

- Rail Trail east of Oakland – research other towns’ practices: No update

Action: Mike will continue trying to contact other towns to gather information

- Trail from Senior Center to Rail Bed - private parcel permissions (Tina): Tina made contact with the two properties over which access must be granted to include them on our trail map. One party is prepared to donate the land. The other party is not willing to do a permanent easement, but possibly a conditional/revokable easement. The Town should act soon while parties are amenable. The Army Corp of Engineers is amenable to approving a trail over the portion of land in their control, upon approval by the Conservation Agent due to wetland restrictions.

It was pointed out that we still need to have the handwritten easement agreement from the Lee family formalized.

Action: Tina will contact the Town Conservation Commission to encourage action on these access agreements.

- Water Trail – site visits, initial assessment of needs (Andrea and Joanne): Notes of visits to several locations, Bresnahan, Populatic, Charles River at corner of Walker Street, Amphitheater, Ohnemus have been made. More research is needed regarding property boundaries, in particular at Populatic Lake and at Neelon Lane to determine potential access and parking, and regarding the possibility of identifying 1-2 new access locations west of Salmon. Neighbors on Massapoag seemed receptive to the Neelon property being used by the public. Assessor Chris Park and the town’s mapping specialist Martha Garley have offered help with boundary research. There may be another location to investigate closer to Millis, Rose Street?

Action: Andrea and Joanne will research the Salmon location as well as the possibility near Millis and will visit with the Town’s assessor and map specialist to study property boundaries.

- Bridges Festival Report (Joanne): The festival drew many visitors and enthusiastic comments and once again brought new visitors to Medway trails and open spaces. Music was a big draw.
- Form for Review of Volunteer Projects/Gifts on Town Land (Joanne): Assistant Town Administrator did not have the document originally prepared for consideration.

Action: Joanne has requested a meeting to discuss and get approval for the form.

- Meeting with Town Manager and DPW on Maintenance of Open Space Properties and Trails (Joanne) – to clarify the types and timing of OS property management for which DPW is responsible: This meeting will be set up after management guidelines have been approved by the Conservation Agent.

Action: Joanne will follow up with Conservation Agent about the guidelines then set up meeting with Town Manager and DPW. Open Space members are interested in seeing the guidelines as soon as possible.

New Topics for Discussion

OSC Interaction with External Groups to Assure that Our Work Meets Goals for Medway Open Spaces and Trails & Options for Changes to the Open Space Page on Town Website:

It was pointed out that we had discussed earlier the need for an email contact option on the website to invite residents' questions, suggestions.

Action: Charlie will look into getting this on the town website.

In order to maintain communication with the community about activities of OS, we need to consider what we are able to post on the website. Perhaps periodic updates about projects (new trails created, land restoration efforts). The format is fixed, but Charlie can link to informational pages.

Action: Anyone with suggestions of material to be added to the website page should send them to Charlie to be discussed at the next meeting.

Approval of Minutes from September 6, 2022: Motion by Charlie, Second by Tina, unanimous.

Meeting adjourned 8:32: Motion by Charlie, Second by Tina, unanimous.

Respectfully submitted, Joanne Williams, consolidated by Denise Legee