

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



TOWN OF MEDWAY

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

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April 4, 2023 – 7:00 PM

Remote Meeting

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, which extends certain COVID-19 measures adopted during the COVID State of Emergency, and under which public bodies retain the option of holding open meetings and hearings remotely and in accordance with the Medway Select Board's remote participation policy as amended at its July 2, 2021 meeting, the Open Space Committee will be participating remotely for this meeting.

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

Also in Attendance: Becky and Paul Atwood

Denise called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm. Denise, Charlie, Mike, Tina, Tara, Laura, Jim, and Andrea all stated aye they were present for the meeting.

• Joanne Williams Recognition

Denise stated there were a lot of people at the celebration of life for Joanne and the Select Board proclaimed March 20, 2023, as Joanne Williams day in Medway in recognition of all the work she has done with the Open Space Committee and the Trail Club.

• Announcements and upcoming meetings (Denise)

• Conflict of Interest updates

Denise asked that everyone complete the Conflict-of-Interest training and send the acknowledgment to Allison Potter, Assistant Town Manager as soon as possible.

• Medway Clean Sweep (Saturday, April 29th)

Denise stated Medway Clean Sweep will be held at Choate Park and the Cub Scouts will be helping us this year. We will meet them at the pavilion and train them on how to pull the garlic mustard. Tara stated she is the treasurer of the

Cub Scouts and she thinks they would like to start at 10 am. **Action: Denise to confirm the time with Chris McKearney, the Scout Leader.**

• **Discussion with Becky Atwood about sculpture along trail system**

Becky and Paul Atwood were present for the meeting. Becky stated Grace Hoag had left funds to go towards an outdoor sculpture. Becky stated they would like something that is appropriate for the environment, like a realistic stone sculpture of a log with frogs and turtles on it, low to the ground. Becky asked the committee for suggestions. Tina suggested a bench or sculpture at the open area at the edge of the meadow. Mike suggested something kid friendly that kids could play or sit on. Becky would like it to be made from stone to discourage theft. The next step is to find a sculptor to get some designs. Please contact her if you have any questions or concerns. Andrea suggested Becky check out the Franklin Sculpture Park or the Bird Park in Walpole to get some good ideas. Paul suggested the area near the Adams Street parking lot might be a good location for a sculpture. He also likes the idea of an interactive station with oversized frogs and turtles that kids could climb up on.

• **Action Item Follow-Ups**

• **Changes made to town website (including contact link)**

Charlie made the previously discussed changes, including:

- Jim's Invasive Species Plan has been posted.
- The contact us link currently sends an email to Susy Affleck- Childs, Planning & Economic Development Coordinator. This being changed to send to Tina, Denise, and Barbara St. Andre Director, Community Economic Development.
- The email address to report a trail blockage is now listed on the website and has been tested.
- The "Open Space & Conservation Organizations" section was restructured, and new links added.
- Other miscellaneous changes as previously discussed.

• **Question on Salmon Willows Trail**

Denise stated the trail is fine from the Gazebo all the way to the trolley crossing and can be mapped. If you come back there is a jut out and you back track and go all the way to the canoe launch but this area is very wet. You'll have to wait until summer to map it. Charlie stated it was almost impossible when he tried to walk it and wondered about bog bridges. Tina thinks they would work and suggested looking into this when it gets closer to summer.

Tina stated the Historical Society said that area across the Charles in Franklin was called the Woodlands and it was an amusement park with a dance hall. The trolley crossing (where the bridge abutments still exist) provided a connection from Medway. She is waiting for more information, but would like to put a sign up at some point.

Charlie stated the original plans were to have a lot of trails throughout the Willows property. Denise stated she spoke to the maintenance person over there and they were planning to do another trail on the east side along the river but they are doing so much

construction right now that they will wait until that is finished. There is also a wooded area in the back near the water that looks nice for another trail.

- **Ohnemus DPW discussions re: parking lot**

Mike stated he did a site visit three weeks ago with Denise, Bridget Graziano, Conservation Agent, Dave Travalini, Conservation Commission Chairman and Lt. Watson, Medway Police. They looked at the parking area and the Conservation Commission Chair was concerned if we didn't put parking south of the railroad they might lose that as an option in the future. Lt. Watson made it clear that the other location with the curb cut across from Cottage Street is really not a safe location because of the sight line. The next step would be to meet with the Select Board for the final approval process because the grassy area is under the Select Board's jurisdiction. We should meet with Michael Boynton, Town Manager first to go over everything and the preferred plan.

Action: Mike and Bridget will set up a meeting with Michael Boynton, Town Manager • **Legal guidance on an easement vs. access on private property (four cases: two near Oakland, Amphitheater, and Boardwalk trail)**

Oakland: Tina stated we need to get that area surveyed. She did speak to one resident and needs to speak with the other one.

Amphitheater: The residents were not willing to give an easement because the parking lot exacerbated the water in the parking area. The goal is to look at the parking area after a rain and maybe regrade the area. If we can address this, they may be open to it.

Boardwalk: Jim asked if the easement gets approved how long is it valid for. Tina stated it depends when the house sells it could end or it could be permanent depending on how it's written. **Action: Denise will check with Charlotte Lee when she walks by her home.**

- **Speak with Select Board representative regarding trail maintenance**

Tina stated she had a 2.5 hour discussion with Mary Jane White and they are going to set up a meeting with the DPW to see what needs to get done and get it permanently added to their maintenance list. **Action: Tina will set-up the meeting.**

- **Water trail**

Andrea stated she does not have an update at this time. Tina said we should meet with Bridget and look at what needs to be done and get specifics. **Action: Tina will coordinate a meeting with Bridget and Andrea.**

- **Volunteer Project Form for approval**

Denise stated she changed a few things on the form and sent it to the committee for review.

She asked if anyone had any comments. Charlie asked if this will be required for routine work parties. Denise stated it's for coordinating work between several committees for new projects like bat houses or bridges. Tina mentioned that the Eagle Scouts once did a project but did not consult with the Conservation Commission. Hopefully this form will eliminate that type of problem.

Denise stated this should be put on the town's website when it's complete.

Mike stated he thinks the form looks great but suggested the name and organization be moved above section A rather than being repeated in sections A and B. Laura stated it says complete either section A or B, that's why it was duplicated.

It might also be helpful to have a phone number or email below each staff contact that has to sign off on the form. Tara asked if a boy scout would have to go to each department for sign off. Denise thought the requester would bring it to each department. Tina stated there could be times that they will need to talk to several groups. Mike suggested each committee has a yes/ no section that they circle. Tina stated they can't go in order of the form because some groups might not be applicable. Laura stated section C states it's the applicant's responsibility to get the approval. It was suggested that the applicant could scan the form and email it to each department.

Jim asked if Betty Atwood would need to fill this out. The committee agreed that she should. **Action: Denise will discuss the form with Allison Potter, Assistant Town Administrator.**

• Projects that Require Funding (Denise)

Denise stated the committee discussed projects that need funding at our January meeting and noted they had \$10K in the budget to use or will lose it. The committee has only spent about \$1,600 dollars so far on signposts and the bridges festival. There is another \$8,400 that must be spent before July 1st. The committee reviewed the list of projects that need funding and came up with rough cost estimates.

- Handmade signs need to be replaced – \$ 500
- Putting down stone dust at the amphitheater – can use CPC funds for that
- Interpretive Signage - Jim will look into that. Jim also suggested 3 educational signs about the meadow, pamphlets on invasive plants – maybe \$1000. Jim will look into the cost.
- Parcel at Massapoag below the Charles River Tennis Club Clearing and Parking – May be able to use CPC funds if we do a new trail.
- More dogs on leash signs (depending on bylaws) \$200-300
- Brochures will not be ready to print by July 1st
- Advertising for Open Space/Trail activities less than \$1,000
- Andrea suggested using the money for a grant writer
- Denise mentioned that they discussed a shed for storing tools, used for trail maintenance for volunteers She looked into premade sheds, an 8 by 10 is about \$5000.
- Denise wants to ask the town if they can get \$5,000 each year. Tina stated the next few years will be tight budget years. **Action: Denise will reach out to Glenn Trindade, Select Board Member or Mary Jane White about the funding that has to be used by July 1, 2023**

Tina mentioned that Cormier Woods has signs with maps that say "you are here." She would like to have this type of signs on some of our trails. Denise stated maybe we could make more crude maps just so people can see what is around them. Charlie can work with the new GIS Coordinator when he comes onboard but he does not have the time to do this now. Capturing the trails is not hard but a GIS person has to put on the base layer. For example, Charlie stated the Choate trail maps have 30-40 layers. Tina stated the you are here signs could be more rudimentary- lines with circles etc. Mike

stated you need some detail, it's a matter of finding the right balance. Laura stated someone should reach out to Tri- County High School to see if a student could do this as a project. Mike suggested asking Susy if this can be one of the first projects for the new GIS Coordinator.

Tina suggested asking Bridget about bog bridges and then they could spend some money on the wood. Mike asked for another Open Space sign at Bresnahan's Landing.

There was a suggestion about an interpretive panel at the amphitheater similar to the style and quality at the bridges.

Mike mentioned that there is not a directional sign directing you to other trails.

Andrea asked about using funds for legal assistance if the trail club becomes a nonprofit. Tina and Charlie stated the town could not cover the legal costs for a private organization.

- **BioMap3 from Mass Wildlife (Jim)**

Jim stated he sent everyone a copy of the four slides that Charlie put on the screen. Jim explained that over 20 years ago, people from Mass Wildlife were concerned about the development in the state and wanted to start protecting natural areas. In order to decide what is important they came up with the Bio Map for each town which identifies ecological valuable parcels. Then they came up with Bio Map 2. Some areas are more resilient and can stand up against climate change. The new Bio Map 3 just came out which includes core habitats, natural landscapes, and areas for rare species of plant and wildlife. The Nature Conservancy and Mass Wildlife came up with a tool to identify these areas and breaks them down into smaller categories. There is a list of rare species - fish, reptile and plants that they want to protect, Jim doubts any of them are still in this area. We might have wood turtles in town. The Open Space Committee has used the Bio Map 2 for the last 10-12 years. The Army Core of Engineers looks after some of the areas. Jim stated these Bio Maps are advisory, not regulatory, and they should be used as a tool to choose the best lands to protect.

Jim further explained The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species program has regulatory authority and they designated parcels of land throughout the state that can't be developed without their approval. Medway has only one spot that is outlined in yellow where Route 126 meets Bellingham at the edge of town. Jim stated there are a lot of changes between Bio Map 2 and 3 – for example, there were two green spots on Bio Map 2 and now they are gone and he is not sure why. There have also been additions in the center section near the Timber Crest housing development that is listed as core habitat. Mass Wildlife says this area is important. Charlie mentioned that, because Timber Crest is a 40B, they were able to get around local bylaws. Further to the west through the Chicken Brook area there is some land that is considered critical natural landscape. Jim wondered if the wetland laws protect this or if they need more protection. Jim stated at the bottom of the map near the Salmon Willows project, this area is considered core habitat or critical natural landscape. Jim stated you can go the website to find more information. Tina asked if Bridget is aware of this. Jim stated he will talk to her about it.

• **Approval of Minutes: • March 07, 2023**

Mike stated on page 3 under DPW discussion it states the town administrator was hesitant about the parking area, but it should be changed to say it was the Chair of the Conservation Commission that was hesitant.

Charlie made a motion to approve the March 7, 2023 Meeting Minutes as amended. Andrea seconded the motion and Denise, Charlie, Jim, Tina, Mike, Laura, Tara, and Andrea all stated aye they were in favor and the meeting minutes were approved.

• **Other items that may come before the committee**

There were no other items.

• **Adjourn**

Charlie made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:48.pm. Denise seconded the motion and Denise, Charlie, Tina, Jim, Mike, Laura, Tara and Andrea all stated aye they were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Tracy Rozak