Wendell Open Space Minutes

Monday, October 21st, 2024 4:00 PM

40 Gate Lane, Wendell MA, 01379

**Attending:** Daniel Leahy, Raymond DiDonato, Adam Porter

**Guests:** Grace Adler, Don Cloutier, Dave Richards

**Clerk:** Ashley Penna

*Meeting called to order at 4:05 PM by Daniel Leahy*

**Approval Minutes:** No minutes were reviewed during this meeting. Minutes from the September 23rd, 2024 meeting will be reviewed at the next Open Space Committee meeting.

**New Business:**

*Continue the discussion from the OSC Meeting on 9/23/24 regarding 40 Gate Lane. Examine the Town owned property and the surrounding conservation lands.*

* Wendell Open Space Committee members have met at the end of Gate Lane where it meets New Salem Road. Members are met by two residents of Gate Lane, Grace Adler and Don Cloutier. Adler explains the past road maintenance her and Cloutier have done as Gate Lane is currently a discontinued road not maintained by the town. Residents shared their concerns about scratching their cars pulling onto the road and finding someone who is willing to plow the road. Residents are concerned about the potential effects of large machinery traveling on the road to demolish the building on the property as well as others traveling on the road if a parking area was created.
* Members explain their role as the Open Space Committee and how they aim to protect the five acres and keep the land in its natural habitat. No decisions have been made over the small parking area.
* Residents discuss their continued concern with their responsibility to maintain a discontinued road. Committee members summarize that it is the role of the Open Space Committee to present the land that they wish to conserve to the Selectboard. The issue of maintenance and public access is to be discussed with the Conservation Commission and the Selectboard.
* 4:32 PM: Members and residents begin to walk the property at 40 Gate Lane. The property was acquired by the town via tax taking. Members of the Committee contacted the Tax Collector highlighting that this could be a good area of land to protect. The process was stalled due to the US Supreme Court decision on the equity theft case. Members walk around the building and discuss the structure while beginning to identify boundaries. Members identify a brook at the toe of the property that feeds into Sibley Swamp. At the edge of the property members are met by Dave Richards who gives clarification about the boundary lines and continues to walk to the property with members. A collapsed dwelling was found on the property, including windows, broken glass and exposed nails, that will need to be cleaned up.
* Pending cleanup, this property is ideal for conservation as there is conserved land by the Department of Conservation and Recreation Watershed Protection and other abutting land from Massachusetts Audubon.

**Next meeting:**  Monday, November 25th, 2024 at 3:30 PM. This meeting will be a site visit on Davis Road to walk the Lyons Brook property.

* Dan Leahy will have the new member of the Open Space Committee appointed prior to the next meeting.

**Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made by Adam Porter and seconded by Ray DiDonato at 5:35 PM.