

SECTION 10

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public feedback was sought throughout the entire open space and recreation planning process. A Public Forum was held on November 4, 2010 to receive input on the Wendell Open Space and Recreation Plan's Seven-Year Action Plan. In addition, draft copies of the plan were available on the Town website and at the Town Offices, Country Store, and the Wendell Free Library for review by the general public. In December 2010, the Wendell Open Space and Recreation Planning Committee sought comments from the Selectboard, Planning Board, Open Space Committee, the Conservation Commission, the Agricultural Commission, the Historical Commission, the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, the Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, and the Massachusetts Audubon Society, as well as from the Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services (DCS). Letters of comment from these Town Boards and other organizations are included in this section of the Plan. Most of the public feedback provided during the entire planning process is difficult to document due to the fact that the plan constantly incorporated these changes and enhancements. The letters of support reflect the broad base of support that the Wendell Open Space Planning Committee has earned over the past year.

The following comments were recorded during the feedback session at the Wendell Open Space and Recreation Plan Public Forum held on November 4, 2010, at the Town Hall from 6:30 p.m. to approximately 9:00 p.m. Maps were available for review by the public and several of the comments led to discussions that resulted in revisions to the maps. Following are the public comments recorded at the Public Forum:

- The Chair of the Conservation Commission, Charles Thompson Smith, made a number of suggestions for revisions to Section 4: Environmental Inventory and Analysis. These included the use of the word “drumlin” to replace “plateau” in the description of the location of Wendell Center, the addition of information on Town wells and public water supplies, the addition of the Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) to the list of invasive species, and the addition of several scenic water resources. Mary Thomas of the Conservation Commission also mentioned that the Mile-a-Minute Vine (*Persicaria perfoliata*) is another invasive species of concern.
- Kristina Stinson of the Wendell Forest Conservation Alliance (WFCA) presented a statement proposing the conversion of Wendell State Forest Lands to “Reserve” status, recommending that the discussion of the management of private forest lands in Section 4 be revised to reflect the opinion that forest cutting does not promote biodiversity, and suggesting that forestry activity be discontinued in the Phelps Tracts. (See Appendix D for the text of the WFCA statement.) The Public Forum

participants discussed these issues, pointing out that the 19th century conveyance of the Phelps tracts stipulated that logging be done to benefit the schools and any change to that management plan would result in the property reverting back to the descendants of the original owners. It was also noted that the 2008 Annual Town Meeting Warrant Article designating the Phelps lots as conservation land stated that the land would be managed for forestry. Also discussed were the positive and negative effects of forest cutting practices on biodiversity.

- Dan Leahy of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reported that the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) and the Nature Conservancy had recently released a revised BioMap2 report in November 2010, updating the original BioMap report produced in 2001. He pointed out that the 2010 Action Plan would be in place until 2017, by which time the BioMap data would be 16 years old, and requested that the new data be included in the Plan and the accompanying maps even if the schedule had to be extended for several months. FRCOG staff reported that the GIS data layers were not yet available and that the schedule and budget were both too tight to allow for a delay.
- A resident pointed out that the Library is the only location in Town where a person in a wheelchair and with chemical sensitivities can gain access and it would be helpful if there were more such accessible locations.

At the end of the Public Forum, participants voted on the priority action items by posting colored dots on large format sheets itemizing all of the action items from Section 9: Action Plan. The highest priority action items from this process were incorporated into the list in Section 9 that had been originally generated by respondents at Wendell Old Home Day in the summer of 2010 and are included on the Action Plan Map at the end of Section 9.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Deval Patrick
GOVERNOR

Timothy Murray
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Ian Bowles
SECRETARY

Tel: (617) 626-1000
Fax: (617) 626-1181

March 14, 2011

Patricia A. Smith
Franklin Regional Council of Governments
425 Main Street
Greenfield, MA 01301-3313

Re: Open Space and Recreation Plan

Dear Ms. Smith:

Thank you for submitting Wendell's Open Space and Recreation Plan to this office for review for compliance with the current Open Space and Recreation Plan Requirements. I am pleased to write that the plan is approved. This final approval will allow Wendell to participate in DCS grant rounds through December 2017.

Congratulations on a great job. Please call me at (617) 626-1171 if you have any questions or concerns about the plan.

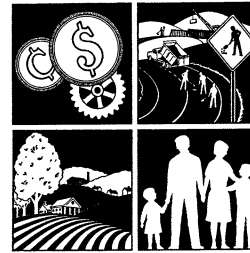
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melissa Cryan".

Melissa Cryan
Grants Manager

FRANKLIN REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

425 Main Street • Greenfield, Massachusetts 01301-3313
Telephone 413-774-3167 • Fax 413-774-3169 • www.frcog.org
Executive Director • Linda Dunlavy



December 29, 2010

Melissa Cryan, Grants Manager
Division of Conservation Services
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Ms. Cryan,

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments is extremely pleased to support the approval of the Wendell Open Space and Recreation Plan by the Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services.

As you know, the plan was developed by the Wendell Open Space and Recreation Planning Committee with technical assistance from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments Planning Department. It represents three years of consensus building on the most important natural, recreational, and scenic resources in Town and the most appropriate strategies for the long term conservation of Wendell. This process included significant public input. The updated Wendell Open Space and Recreation Plan meets all of the requirements of the Division of Conservation Services as laid out in the "Open Space and Recreation Planner's Workbook" (revised March 2008).

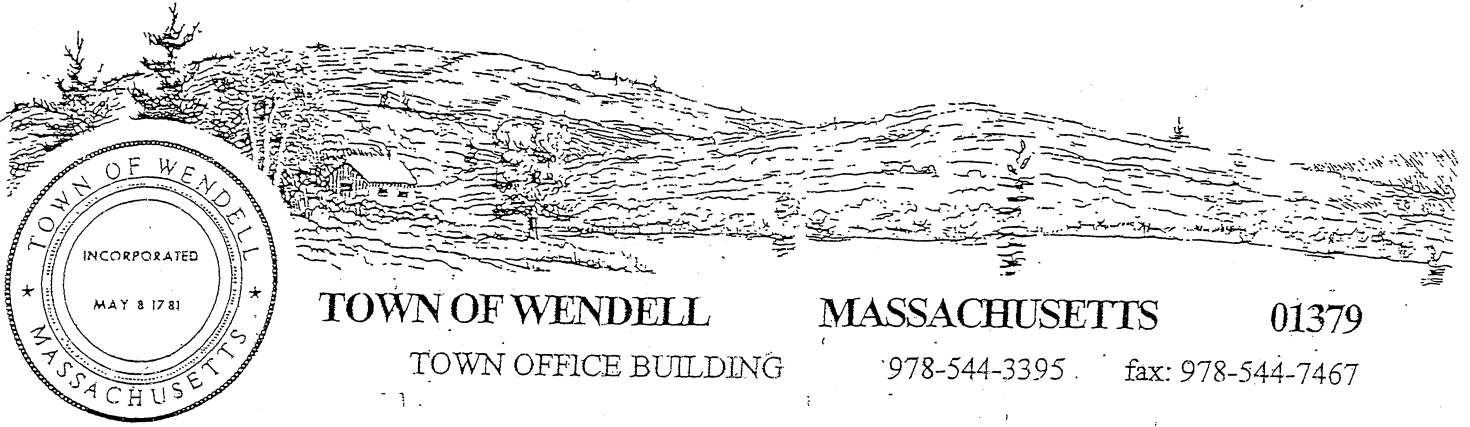
The Open Space and Recreation Plan will be used to help Town officials and other volunteers in their deliberations concerning land use and open space decisions. Once approved by the State, the Open Space and Recreation Plan will make Wendell eligible for land conservation and recreation project funding and more competitive for many other types of state grants. The Town will be better able to collaborate with neighboring towns, the Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, the Franklin Land Trust, the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, and others to protect the natural, recreational, and cultural resources of the Town.

We look forward to your positive review and approval of the Wendell Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Sincerely,

Peggy Sloan
Director of Planning and Development

cc: Nancy Aldrich, Wendell Town Coordinator
Christine Heard, Chair, Wendell Selectboard



TOWN OF WENDELL

MASSACHUSETTS

01379

TOWN OFFICE BUILDING

978-544-3395

fax: 978-544-7467

December 8, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the copy of the Town of Wendell's Open Space and Recreation Plan. Members of the Wendell Selectboard have considered the plan as presented and have voted unanimously to support it in its entirety.

Sincerely,

The Wendell Selectboard

Christine Heard, Chair

Daniel Keller

Jeffrey Pooser

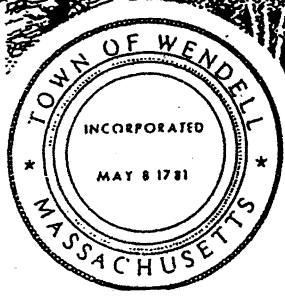
Memo

To: Open Space Committee
From: Wendell Planning Board
CC:
Date: January 5, 2011
Re: Endorsement of Open Space Plan

The Wendell Planning Board endorses the revised Wendell Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Respectfully,

Wendell Planning Board



TOWN OF WENDELL MASSACHUSETTS 01379

December 27, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

The Wendell Open Space Committee is happy to endorse the 2010 which appears well thought through and carefully executed. Our aims and objectives in coming years will be defined by this document. We appreciate the level of detail of tasks listed in the action plan and the substantial amount of community input into the planning process which this represents.

Sincerely,

Marianne Sundell, Chair

Charles Smith

Mason Phelps



TOWN OF WENDELL MASSACHUSETTS 01379

Box 41

WENDELL CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Open Space Planning Committee

To Marianne Sundell
*38 Locke's Village Rd.

Wendell, Mass. 01379

12.19.'10

Dear Committee Members:

The Conservation Commission is pleased to recommend the latest Open Space & Recreation Plan which was prepared by the Wendell Open Space Planning Committee, & the Franklin Regional Council of Govts. Planning Dept. The Conservation Commission will be guided by the goals & objectives set forth in this plan, especially as regards the 448 acres of permanently protected open space, 442.29 of which is under the jurisdiction of the Commission. The plan provides a contextual analysis of the recent development of the Town since 1970, as population growth impinged on the Town & the surrounding region. The Town must balance this population growth with the need to preserve its rural character. This calls for careful planning for our shared future & that of posterity. This plan is an important step on this path.

Sincerely,
Charles Thompson Smith

December 7, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

We, the members of the Wendell Agricultural Commission, are pleased with the latest update of the Town of Wendell Open Space and Recreation Plan (2010) to which we have had some input. We wish to thank Pat Smith of FRCOG, in particular, and Marianne Sundell and the Open Space and Recreation Planning Committee for the many hours of work they have put into the writing of this document.

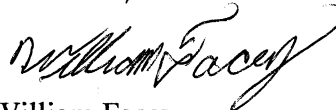
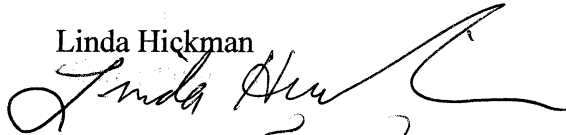
We now have, in the Town of Wendell, a Right-to-Farm Bylaw. With the support of action steps in the 2010 Plan, we hope to have signage to let citizens, prospective buyers and others know that this is a Right-to-Farm community.

There is much interest in growing our own food, growing crops organically, and educating townfolk in new and different ways of farming. Programs such as the film series and food-focused gatherings which the Agricultural Commission has initiated have been highlighted in this new document.

Overall, we see the Seven-Year Action Plan as a positive set of guidelines by which to measure our future efforts, and we applaud those who have worked to create the 2010 Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Sincerely,

Linda Hickman



William Facey

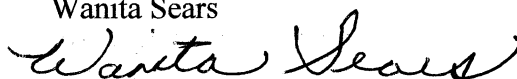


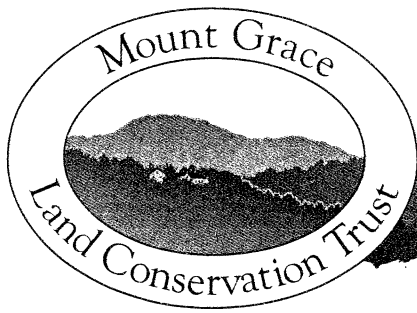
Laurel Facey

Jenny Caron



Wanita Sears





1461 Old Keene Road, Athol, MA 01331-9734

Phone: (978)248-2043 Fax: (978)248-2053

landtrust@mountgrace.org

www.mountgrace.org

Protecting land and encouraging land stewardship in North Central and Western Massachusetts

22 December 2010

Melissa Cryan
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Division of Conservation Services
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Ms. Cryan:

Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust has reviewed the *Town of Wendell Open Space and Recreation Plan 2010* (Plan) and provides the following comments about the Plan.

- The Town with technical assistance from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments has provided ample opportunity for public involvement by distributing an Open Space and Recreation Survey in 2008. The Town followed up the survey by holding a series of 12 public meetings to develop the Plan. Moreover, the Town provided opportunities for public involvement at the 2009 and 2010 Earth Day Celebrations, the 2010 Old Home Day event, and during the regular meetings of the various town boards.
- The Plan provides an account of the Town's natural resources and acknowledges how the Town values those resources.
- The Seven Year Action Plan establishes a road map to implement the public goals by incorporating a clear list of objectives, actions, time frames, responsible officials, and importantly, potential funding sources.
- The Town has demonstrated its commitment to implementing the Plan's land conservation objectives. In September the Conservation Commission agreed partner with a Mount Grace Forest Legacy grant application by taking the necessary steps to hold the fee interest in a Mount Grace land parcel. (Per Section 9, Objective A4 of the Plan).

Mount Grace wholeheartedly supports the work of the Town and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments in developing the Plan and is eager to partner with the Town to pursue its implementation.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Plan.

Yours truly,

Leigh Youngblood
Executive Director

ly/pd

c Patricia A. Smith, Franklin Regional Council of Governments
Christine Heard, Town of Wendell
Marianne Sundell, Town of Wendell