



Open Space Planning Committee

Minutes - September 18, 2008

Meeting at Town Hall convened at 8:30. Members present: Present: Anne Anable, Bill Barker, Ed Germain, Betsey Harris, Henry James, Jack Lewis, Bruce Simpson, Sue Yarger.

Betsey spoke of the need to look ahead, now that the tasks of the first year are complete. The OSPC has a Dublin Open Space Plan that has been accepted by the Board of Selectmen, the Conservation Commission and the Planning Board. The response at Dublin Day to the OSPC booth was large, providing a map full of dots representing areas citizens thought should be protected.

She asked if the committee felt these areas should be prioritized, and should this be public information. Jack suggested that while the committee should be aware of important parcels essential to the Open Space Plan, there should be no published list. The committee agreed, members noting that what was important was reaching out to specific land owners, and continuing the committee's efforts to educate the community about the benefits and methods of land preservation.

Betsey reported that the Community Conservation Partnership, a collaborative initiative of the Monadnock Conservancy, the Center for Land Conservation Assistance, Antioch New England Institute, and the Southwest Region Planning Commission, is sponsoring a Land Conservation Leadership Training Program. This is a six-session training. The first five sessions will take place every other Wednesday from October 8 to December 3, 2008. Each of these sessions will be held in the Keene Public Library, Kay Fox Room from 6:00-9:00 pm. It is possible that two members from the OSPC may be able to attend these meetings. She read and passed around the topics to be discussed:

October 8: Making the Case for Conservation in Your Community

October 22: Intro to Land Conservation Methods and Organizations

November 5: Landowner Outreach

November 19: Conservation Planning and Project Evaluation and Selection

December 3: Stewardship: Caring for the Land You Protect

January 31, 2009: Land Conservation Funding. (This session is scheduled at 8:00 am to 3:00 pm at Keene High School)

Betsey asked each member to consider which session(s) s/he would prefer to attend.

She raised the question of the structure of the open space initiatives likely in the future. Should there be a way for individuals to contribute to a fund that would help acquire conservations easements or critical land in Dublin? Should this be a 501 C-3? What role should protecting potential future farm land have in the open space plan? Should the town ask voters for a conservation bond, as Marlborough has done? Considerable discussion followed, to be continued at future meetings.

It is time, Betsey said, to elect a new Chair, and to involve new members in the OSPC. The OSPC needs people with a knowledge of the town, of diverse backgrounds and skills, and who are willing to focus energy on open space initiatives.

Discussion emphasized the importance of the OSPC as a resource to the Board of Selectmen, the Planning Board, and the ZBA, and the importance of membership continuing from those committees. Members suggested names of potential new members, and agreed to cast a wide net for volunteers.

Ed noted that the Board of Selectmen has a committee appointment document that will help regularize the appointment of new members. He lauded Betsey's leadership on the OSPC, which turned into hearty applause from the assembled members.

Discussion turned to the role open space committees play in other towns, such a Swanzey.

It is time, Betsey reiterated, to elect new officers, a new chair and a new secretary. She asked the group to consider these new appointments which will be made at an upcoming meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15.

Respectfully submitted,

APPROVED

Ed Germain

Secretary