

MINUTES OF THE HOLLISTON OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

August 19, 2020

Committee Members Present: Lixy Carey, PJ Kilkelly, Matt Hodgdon, Ann Marie Pilch

Other Attendees: Emmanuelle (Manu) Schwarz

Absent: John Vosburg

Ms. Carey, Chair, opened the meeting at 6:36pm.

Ms. Carey read the following into the record:

Pursuant to the Governor's Order Suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c 30A paragraph 20, as well as the Select Board's Emergency Order dated 3/16/2020 the Holliston Open Space Committee will be using remote participation for this meeting. The audio of this meeting is being recorded and will be posted to the Town's webpage within 24 hours in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Action requirement of keeping the public informed of actions during this meeting. I would ask that all participants remotely attending this meeting please state your name for identification purposes each time you speak throughout the meeting.

At this time, a roll call attendance vote will be taken.

Ms. Carey:	Present
Mr. Kilkelly:	Present
Mr. Hodgdon:	Present
Ms. Pilch:	Present

Mr. Kilkelly made a motion to approve the minutes of January 27, 2020; Mr. Hodgdon seconded. A roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Carey	Aye
Mr. Kilkelly	Aye
Mr. Hodgdon	Aye
Ms. Pilch	Aye

147 N. Mill Street

Ms. Carey and Mr. Kilkelly were contacted in late July by Stephen Edward Burns, co-owner of this 7-acre property, which consists of a circa 1890 house and farmland. Mr. Burns has obtained a license to grow and process hemp and has plans for 2021 to be his first growing season. However, his co-owners wish to sell. He was hoping that the Open Space Committee could facilitate a buyout of his co-owners so that the property could remain in agriculture.

Ms. Pilch noted that the property has extensive wetlands and does not seem to be prime farmland. It also does not abut other protected lands. Mr. Kilkelly questioned whether the town would support using town funds to protect this land. It appears to be better for livestock grazing as the lay of the land and soils are not valuable; it would probably not qualify for an Agricultural Preservation Restriction. He also

noted that the property is not in Chapter 61A so the town would not have the right of first refusal to match a legitimate offer.

Mr. Hodgdon thought the request for help could be worthy of a response and that we should ask Mr. Burns what we can do to help. Ms. Carey will reach out to Mr. Burns and ask how he is hoping to structure a deal with his co-owners and what are the potential costs. The committee will also investigate whether this property was listed in the Open Space and Recreation Plan as a priority.

Possible Land Donation off Adams Street: (Parcel ID: 004.0-0002-0043.0)

Ms. Pilch reported that Ms. Karen Paul contacted the Conservation Commission regarding donating this 22-acre parcel. This land-locked parcel directly abuts the Fairbanks Conservation Land and other protected land in Milford. Ms. Paul had some conditions for donating the land, including a commemorative bench. The Conservation Commission supported accepting the donation and the Conservation Agent is following up with Ms. Paul. The Open Space Committee had previously contacted the owners about this parcel and at that time they were not interested in a donation but wanted to sell the land at a price that did not seem reasonable for a land-locked parcel. Ms. Pilch will follow up with the Conservation Agent on the progress of this donation.

Open Space and Recreation Plan Update

In order to qualify for state grants and as a good practice, the town's Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) should be updated every seven years. It was last updated in 2013, although never approved by the state, so it is overdue for an update. The plan covers open space, including both conservation and recreation lands. The Conservation Commission is aware of this need for an update and Conservation Agent Ryan Clapp has spoken to Town Planner Karen Sherman who does not think much work needs to be done. The town's open space inventory needs updating as some new properties have been acquired, and public input is required. The Committee members discussed the need to refresh ourselves on the previous OSRP and also about how to get public input. A survey of residents is one method and could be available on the Town's website. Members agreed to think of ways to get the word out on a survey once it was developed and to look up the previous OSRP on the Town website.

In recent years, the Committee has primarily been reactive, responding to properties as they have become available. Ms. Carey suggested that it again becomes proactive and reach out to property owners. The previous OSRP identified target acquisitions which the Committee should review.

Updates

Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT) has raised all but \$5000 of the money they pledged toward the **Thistledew Farm** Agricultural Preservation Restriction. As authorized by a vote of the Committee on August 14, 2019, \$5000 from the Town's open space acquisition fund will make up this difference.

Walter Branson contacted SVT about the **263 South St.** property and there was some interest. Ms. Carey will contact Christa Collins of SVT to follow up.

Interview with Potential Committee Member

Emmanuelle (Manu) Schwarz expressed her interest in being a member of the Open Space Committee (OSC) and described her background. She moved to Holliston last summer and wants to be more involved in the Community. She has read the OSRP, is passionate about the environment, and has experience in geomorphology, education, sustainable gardening, and permaculture.

Ms. Pilch made a motion to forward Ms. Schwarz's name to the Select Board as a recommended OSC member. Mr. Hodgdon seconded. A roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Carey	Aye
Mr. Kilkelly	Aye
Mr. Hodgdon	Aye
Ms. Pilch	Aye

At 7:42pm, Ms. Pilch made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Hodgdon seconded. A roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Carey	Aye
Mr. Kilkelly	Aye
Mr. Hodgdon	Aye
Ms. Pilch	Aye

Minutes approved by a roll call vote of the Holliston Open Space Committee at a meeting on March 15, 2021.

<i>Lixy Carey</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Matt Hodgdon</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>PJ Kilkelly</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Ann Marie Pilch</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Emmanuelle Schwarz</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>John Vosburg</i>	<i>Abstain</i>