

Yarmouth Parks and Lands
Meeting minutes
Oct. 7, 2020

Committee members:

Lisa Small (2022)
Mary Thorp (2022)
Jay Waterman (2021), chair
Ron Dupuis (2021)
Richard Brimberg (2020)
Ebrahim Fazeli (2020)
Karen Massey (2021)

Karyn MacNeill, YCS Direct
Tim Shannon, Council Liaison
Erik Donohoe, Parks Specialist

Call to Order at 6:02 pm.

Acceptance of amended minutes (correction on members): Karen motions, Richard seconds. Unanimous.

Updates:

Erik: working on the gravel trail and UA trail at Riverfront. Is waiting on date to work with Rotary- probably end of Oct. or early Nov. Dan Ostrye is involved. Also, Yarmouth Boat Yard is willing to loan a pontoon boat to take wood to the site.

At Pratt's, a couple of bridges will be replaced due to safety concerns.

Ron mentioned that the contractor bridge will be next year.

Lisa updates committee on signage sub-committee. Lisa and Mary met with the bike/ped. committee and they were receptive. Explained how we would start by using stickers on existing signs to signify that these are public trails. Also, want a photo inventory of existing park signs.

Karyn states that Lori has measured the signs and has an inventory.

Karen and Mary talked of having connections marked for the public. Karyn is concerned about P and L putting up signage that might increase our responsibility to maintain these connectors. Karen suggests that all public ways have signs, but put on P and L only if we maintain. Lisa wants to see public ways that are used to access parks.

Eb volunteers to take pictures of park signs. Committee talks of using the new logo only without words. Also talks of a combined network folder with all the trails and parks and connectors.

Richard states that our priority should be finding where the locations actually ARE and then deciding on the exact labeling.

Discussion of actual logo: Jay questions what words should be used. Mary stresses that the stickers would be just temporary. Karen wonders if we should leave the logo verbiage as is or say "open space". Tim says that he is unsure what the legal status or responsibilities the sign words would entail. Eb stresses that awareness of public lands and connectors is the most important goal.

Planning Board meeting thoughts:

Lisa states that the board liked the idea of reviving the tree committee. Rebecca Rendquist is trying to find interested people and might be interested in helping. Lisa referenced the article she had sent around about Mass. tree wardens.

Karyn attends 5 to 10 hours of tree warden classes each year. Ex. ash borer info. Public trees in town are getting some attention. Emma has been recently hired to do an inventory.

Mary suggests that Karyn call Tom Reinsborough. Mary had made initial contact with Tom on this.

Karyn and Lisa will talk over possible tree committee members.

Tim suggests no general call yet, but can use the Yarmouth Community Network to get help in the future. Start with cataloguing and then decide where we would like to go with this.

Eb clarifies that urgent tree needs should get reported to Karyn and Erik. Suggests a tree report app. to report problems. Also asks about partnering with a neighboring town to share a tree warden.

Karyn explains that things like hazard trees get reported on the public works line.

Tim asks what steps are needed to present the idea of a tree warden and committee to the council. Lisa says the tree committee could temporarily be a substitute for a warden. Karyn says that we have had a warden as long as she has been in town.

Ron likes the idea of a tree committee. Karyn will work with Lisa to get it set up.

Land Acquisition vs. Land Protection strategies vs. capital concerns:

Jay asks where do we want to go?

Lisa urges us to look at protections for our current parks. Ex. there are no current protections for Frank Knight Forest

Karen talks of conservation easements.

Jay asks about Nat's feelings about Frank Knight Forest. States that there are properties that could be relinquished.

Tim states that any property that the town owns out-right, can be sold. A few years ago there was discussion about creating a Park Zone which would have protections. There is always the issue of protection vs. flexibility. There can also be *process* restrictions. Also where a private party has donated land with conditions, those can bind the town.

Suggests that we ask Nat which properties are deeded.

Richard thanks Tim for his explanation. Asks which properties are the most valuable? Karyn will get a list.

Mentions that several properties could be in jeopardy ex. Gristmill Lane, Sligo, Soci, Frank Knight

Tim states that the council has noodled about this matter in the past.

Jay asks about the transfer of development rights. Is that like an easement? Has Alan Stearns been involved with any of these?

Mary stresses the importance of waterfront. If given up, one will never get it back.

Tim- Nat could probably let us know which properties are the most vulnerable.

Karyn suggests referring to the Open Space appendix.

Erik says the report contained all the town properties.

Eb suggests leaving land acquisition and protection on the work plan for this year.

Jay asks about impact fees with more people coming in to town. There are more development pressures. Could fees be earmarked?

Eb- what are other towns doing around this issue?

Karyn- fees in other towns go in to multiple pots. Usually there is a cost/bedroom. Some towns have their OWN land trust. Asks Tim if there has been any discussion on the town council about this?

Tim feels there is interest on the council.

Karen suggests we look at issues from the Open Space plan that don't involve money. Should task Alex with developing ideas.

Karen suggests a resolution be drafted to the town council. Karen will get a draft written and Karyn will send it around to members to weigh in. Lisa will help by contacting neighboring towns. Richard has some state information and will send it out to the committee.

Misc.:

Karyn mentions a new grant proposal they are working on to get an upgrade for the Royal River Park for work at East Elm St. side with more parking and lighting, replacement of bridge by cisterns, etc. This is a rehab grant from Land and Water Funds.

Skate and pump track interest is being assessed. So far, just conversations.

Motion to adjourn by Karen. Richard seconds. Unan. At 7:38 pm.

