

Yarmouth Parks and Lands Committee 6 April 2022 Meeting Minutes

(Present) Erik, Lisa, Joe, Ron, Vance, Tim on the bus and Clyde, Josh (on minute-taking)
(Absent Mary and Karen)

- Review March meeting minutes: Vance recommended for approval; Josh seconded
- New Member: Clyde Hodgkins new member: Yarmouth 25 years, newly retired (last June), gardener, sales with Staples ME and NH, then Eimskip.
- Erik's updates:
 - Veg. Mgt. Plan for open space properties for invasive species. We can start looking at other patches around town as needed, but this was the large-scale mapping enough for at least this year.
 - Anyone wanting to be on a subcommittee - let Erik know (priorities): Josh,
 - Erik asking for any edits
 - There are invasive plants on adjacent private lands? Yes, Erik noted this in his inventory and built into the GIS data, but this will not be explicitly put into any public facing map. Those occurrences are also in the survey notes.
 - Those neighboring non-town sites will be monitored as part of boundary surveys and over time, we will strive to develop relationship with those adjacent landowners re: potential for control. Need to walk the boundaries, and monitor, raise awareness with hopes that more landowners all around town would manage their own.
 - Lisa: can we offer information on our website for landowners that might join the efforts, with guidance? Yes we can do that, mostly linking to other website that do this too.
 - Spoke with environmental consultant that does invasive controls, mentioned the need for bids, but investigated schedule, and if they could do an estimate for priority actions on the plan so we can know if we need more in grants or allocation from the council.
 - Need to update Bog bridges at Spear Farm and would like to use methods used at Riverfront Woods, to allow room for mower and utility vehicle. Some damage to the salt marsh where people walk to water - it'd be good to investigate possibility permitting for a boardwalk out to the marsh, potentially all the way to the river where people tend to walk.
 - Josh Q: condition of orchard (few trees left), dam (clean out dam drain looks good) and picnic area (still has a picnic table)
- 2022 Work Plan Review: (suggested by Karen for our approval or modification)
 - Make wording consistent, they should all read in parallel as actions.
 - Will signage be a subcommittee? Not necessarily, need requirements and town branding standards, our logo and then agreement on style (all agreed the Royal River Conservation Trust design is great, with metal collar in the bottom)
 - Indicates our collaboration with the tree committee on street trees (standards). Add to bullet 7, Provide support for the strategies as listed in the Comp Plan, Open Space Plan, and Tree Committee Work Plan

- Committee Vote on plan as amended above (Lisa recommended, Vance seconded) unanimous.
- **Next steps?**
- Tree Committee updates (Lisa)
 - Emerald Ash Borer Task Force (same membership as tree committee)
 - Town committed \$89,000 for prevention program - found vendors for treatment for trees on public lands and rights-of-ways
 - ID owners with ash trees on their properties and the most significant ones in town - so will start there.
 - Emamectin benzoate will be used, it is highly effective and safest for other wildlife
 - Tier One: Main St. NYA, large and very visible on public lands and public rights-of-ways
 - Tier Two: Private owners in the public ROW will be sent a letter to see if they want to opt out, otherwise they will be treated in May to mid-June
 - Want a tree ordinance - a requirement to be a tree city.... don't know how we became a Tree City without the tree ordinance. And to have a tree warden which the town will need to support, that will need to be approved in the town budget.
 - Go through town ordinances and see which sections relate to trees
 - Expand our canopy
 - Identify issues and actions
 - Want 7 members (have 5) so recruiting - council doesn't have anything Tim is aware of yet. – **All members think of recommendations for membership**
 - Official first meeting later this month (April 2022)
 - Trees in wildlands may be good places to use biocontrol such as parasitic wasp
 - **Could add onto the agenda the removal or replacement of tree tags that are growing into trees - Lisa**
 - Some ash won't survive and will need to come down, so they are looking at species to replace them with.
- Planning Board/Council updates (RR Square and YA Expansion)
 - No news on our comments (with Karen's absence)
- New Business: Hancock Lumber Expansion
 - Application submitted, for major expansion of their buildings, taking down the bank and drive through teller, and will connect the two. The architectural standards are detailed to meet our codes, but the landscaping is not in there - the Planning Board (Eryn) says it is not commonly weighing into planting plans and preserving trees. It is a requirement according to town planner, but it varies. Hancock plan is for a renovation verses new development. Less clear how it applies, but theoretically should be. RR Square will get to it as they review one piece completed at a time.
 - Opportunity to reduce parking in the front - a major feature in the center of town, could it be moved to the back so there is a more attractive buffer, more in keeping with Yarmouth Streetscape Plan.
 - **We would like to suggest a procedural change such that the planning board incorporates this into a standard review process a review of planned new developed and substantial expansions for the treatment of the surrounding undeveloped areas**

for landscaping, trees (for an overall goal of increased canopy cover in town), use of natural buffers and natural infiltration areas, etc.– Karen?

- There is a comment in the application that they will be increasing the amount of open space (need to check)
- The Parks and Lands Committee might provide some help with this review, but we'd suggest that it's a review requirement and therefore an application requirement.
- Planning board comments would be needed by next Wednesday.
- **Lisa and Ron will review (Josh can review Mon or Tuesday) and provide draft comments to the committee in time for Wednesday morning submission to the planning board**
- Budgeting for Property Acquisition was compromised to \$25k by the town council. It was very difficult to get even this amount, in years past it's been zero, years before it was more like \$50k.
 - Vance: noted substantive funding for open space has been a long-deferred investment in our towns. It would be good to give a supportive message back to the council, and the greater need. There is huge pressure this year to keep budget low, and we can suggest that in future years, we hope that this can be improved.
 - **Josh and Vance will draft a reply note to thank the council and acknowledge poor timing, but also the urgent need for more substantial funding. This will be circulated to the full committee for comment.**
- Sandpiper Cove Dock Association
 - **Determine if there is time for PLC Comments – Erik?**
 - **Reach out to Dan Ostrye re: history and rationale used for reviews- Ron**