

Yarmouth Parks and Lands
Meeting minutes
Oct. 7, 2021

Committee members:

Lisa Small (2022)- exc.
Mary Thorp (2022)
Ron Dupuis (2021)
Vance Brown (2023)
Ebrahim Fazeli (2021)-abs.
Karen Massey (2021)
Matt Cannon (2023)

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

Karen Massey calls the meeting to order at 6:03pm.
Acceptance of the Sept. 1, 2021 minutes. Ron motions. Karen seconds. Unan.

Updates:

Erik—New staff member, Eli, and Erik have been working on the carriage trail at RFW at the first and second wetland crossings. In Oct. , a trail specialist will come to view grading trails to U.A.
Karyn, Erik, and Dan Ostrye have submitted the RTP grant for Westside Trail extension. After hearing in Dec., there are 2 years to finish it (if the grant comes through).
Still waiting on LWCF grant (needs state and federal approval).

Karen asks about the trail turn in Riverfront Woods by the river. Feels there needs to be clearer markings so the bank does not erode. Erik agrees. Karyn mentions the hope that an interpretive sign will be placed there, also.

Karyn—Erin is working with the West Main St. developers. New proposal is for 1 orig. house and 2 others with a conservation easement, but no public access. There is a 26 foot drop. Reiterates that the acreage is 1.78 acres and a contract zone issue. Matt asks if it does not become a conservation easement, what happens then?

Further updates:

The history center sale is moving forward. Tim feels the 2nd and 3rd yearly payments of \$83,000 will be earmarked for the acquisition fund. The first is already spoken for in the current budget, BUT there may be a chance that more would go into acquisition IF there are monies left over. Mary asks if our input as a committee was worthwhile. Tim gives an adamant yes.

Mary asks if the Soci contract has been signed. Answer is no. Vance asks if the fence can be removed (no, will be maintained until the foliage grows in). Tim brings up several issues- is there an end point at which it can no longer be signed? What are the legal

ambiguities? Committee wants to know if a time limit can be imposed. Karen stresses that PLC needs to follow up with this.

Mary gives an update on *Matthew Gilbert's Eagle project* identifying wildlife habitats in 16 of Yarmouth's public spaces. He is making significant progress and the mapping will eventually be incorporated into the PLC on-line guide with the help of Erik and Josh Royte. The BS troop recently traveled to Lane's Island to map there. Committee is very pleased and Karen and Ron wish to be updated for a possible connection to other projects and groups that they are involved with.

Frank Knight Forest Management Plan: not much to report. Letter has gone out to abutters without much response. Got one interested party from Brookside. Scott Hanson involved.

Karyn reminds Erik to keep the abutter to the right and the one a house down in the loop due to previous interest.

Tree Committee:

Karyn hosted a small gathering of volunteers to "tree wrap" the ash trees in certain areas. It is just informational, but help to show the value each tree based on size. Really it is an awareness campaign to get people to notice the Emerald Ash Borer. Trying to reach out to landowners, also. It is on the council agenda.

Karen asks what we can do. There is an inoculation possible every 2 to 3 years. Vance asks how long before it hits Yarmouth if it is only 10 to 12 miles away. Karyn states that usual spread is 2 miles/year. That does NOT account for wood transfer or nursery stock movement. Yarmouth trees are 1/3 ash according to one study. Karyn ends by stressing the need for more people to help with this project, especially in the spring.

Latchstring Park fundraising: There is currently \$150K in pledges and donations out of a \$350K price tag. The group will be pursuing fundraising ideas.

Maine Coast Heritage Trust donation: Karen mentions that it will be coming before the town in the next couple of meetings and wonders how much we have in our acquisition fund. A figure of \$60,000 in donation was bandied about in some emails. Currently, there is 38,000 and 12,000 (from history center sale)= @50,000. Mary states that she is uncomfortable in: a) spending MORE than we have and b) spending ALL we have. She feels that 20,000 is a more reasonable amount. PLC seems to concur with a more fiscally conservative figure.

Tim will pass along that we are supportive of preserving the property in questions, but are uncomfortable bankrupting the fund. Karen asks him to keep us posted and will prepare a statement for the committee to review.

Other business:

Karyn mentions that the dog ordinance is being discussed. Tim says there is a public hearing scheduled.

Welcomes new staff member in the office- Lisa. She has a health and wellness background and hopefully will coordinate more outdoor programming.

Work Plan discussion:

Karyn is finalizing designs and will present to us in another month or two. It is a fairly sizable investment of money.

Open Space Guide: Erik will release it again to us to look at some editing. Needs better photographs. Suggests checking the guided tour. Wants to incorporate additional resources. Talks of possibly printing a series of maps from the guide.

Spear Farm: Erik says invasives are mapped. Town wide invasive plan may be a better idea. Work on over the winter. Karen asks about restrictions on tree removal after storms. Falmouth has a large outreach campaign on invasives. Ron feels an overall plan is a good idea. Karen mentions the removal of a big patch of knotweed on Bayview St. There is also a great deal of knotweed along the river corridor. Revise work plan to include invasives? Would fit into the forestry management piece.

Other:

Vance asks about foraging for mushrooms on public lands. Is there a guiding policy?

Erik mentioned the Public Grounds Ordinance as guidance.

Mary mentions the training by the Schoodic Institute on rockweed surveillance and assessment.

Meeting adjourned at 7:33pm. Mary motions, Ron seconds, unanimous.