

Open Space Committee meeting minutes April 12, 2022

Present: Deb Cary, Susan Downing, Rick Gardner, Laura Reynolds, Karen Rossow

Guest: Annie Charrette

Meeting began at 7:05 p.m.

Minutes of March meeting amended and unanimously approved.

Trail Summit assessment: It was successful with an engaged audience of about thirty people. Feedback from participants was positive. Improvements would include more meet-and-greet time and ask participants at the beginning if there was anything in particular they were hoping to have addressed. Rick and Deb hoped for greater attendance. We should maybe send mailed invitations to people that we especially want to reach (instead of a general mailing). We are looking for more trail stewards and a more cohesive group of them. They are generally not interested in sit-down meetings but want physical action items so perhaps we should engage them on a more frequent basis.

OS&RP status review: It includes five major goals and we are making good progress on them.

Goal 1: Maintain and improve Princeton's existing natural resources, open spaces, and recreational areas.

- The town should develop a town-wide park plan, including Sawyer Field and Goodnow Park and OSC should participate in this. Note: Goodnow Park is considered part of the town common and nothing notable should be done to it without input from the Selectboard and the Historical Commission. The park behind the Princeton Center building has recently been officially closed due to danger of slate potentially flying off the building's roof and knocking someone dead. Krashes Field is in good hands with P&R. There is a new P&R director.
- Trail use standards are complete.
- Town beautification is in limbo but there is a group formed for that and Karen is our liaison. **Karen will reach out to them again.**
- ADA action plan is also not moving forward but the town completed an official assessment. Karen is the liaison to the town for that. There is no committee or plan for improvements as such but any park improvements must take ADA compliance into account.

Goal 2: Plan for protection of Princeton's scenic, historical, and natural areas through proactive planning and advocacy for thoughtful development strategies.

- Develop a list of high-impact parcels. This should be done by OSC in conjunction with the PLT and P&R. We haven't done this in a number of years so, since there's been changes in this area we should establish updated criteria for important parcels and monitor the properties. This dovetails with our intent to hold a Land Preservation Workshop next year. We will target appropriate landowners for invitation. So we'll work on this during the coming year.
- We will do the same for wildlife corridors. Deb notes that while we haven't worked on this and the list of high-impact parcels for the 2020 OS&RP we certainly have put in tremendous work on it in prior years.
- Support the Green Communities Program and promotion of the Community Preservation Act for Princeton. The first is in the works and the second we could potentially spearhead in a few years. (Princeton voted the CPA down about twenty years ago but it's time to try again.)

Goal 3: Promote the appropriate use of Princeton's recreational resources

All of these goals have been met, although we can continue to add to the natural or historic points of interest. **Rick** will get in touch with Bud Brooks for more help as he is an excellent resource for this.

Goal 4: Improve Connections between Open Spaces, Parks, and other important town locales

There are six points here and we have completed five of them: Improving coordination with P&R, improving trails, completing CHCA work, continuation of guided hikes, and trail signage. Rick will invite the new director of P&R to an upcoming OSC meeting in a few months, as we have done with the previous two directors. Point six, to establish best places to install sidewalks in town for the Complete Streets project, is pending. Karen notes that the next Town Plan is in the works and she expects this topic to be included. She is on the Town Plan Steering Committee.

Goal 5: Improve Coordination between Departments, Committees, and Local Organizations

These have been met. We expect to continue participation in the annual Earth Day Town Clean Up.

Other business: Deb reports that the Historical Commission has invited us to their upcoming meeting on April 28th at 7:00 p.m. remotely. The access code will be on the town website under meetings. Susan will try to attend.

Rick has to push work on Red Fox Farm trails until sometime in May.

Biking routes is something we can look into sometime in 2023.

We are doing great with regard to trail signage.

VOTE: *Unanimously approved* to spend \$100 on additional mini-maps.

VOTE: *unanimously approved* to spend up to \$200 on bench materials with volunteer construction.

VOTE: *Unanimously approved* to add Annie Charrette as an alternate on the Open Space Committee.

Karen will send a thank-you email to attendees of the Trail Summit.

We discussed problem with size of *Princeton Hikes!* groups. We will send an email out to all participants stating the need to cap the number of hikers for each hike. Susan will write something up and send it to Rick. Additionally, the upcoming hike schedule might be sent to Princeton hikers and sent to the larger group if the Princeton folks don't fill a given hike. This is painful but unavoidable, as the current numbers are untenable and we don't have enough volunteers to lead hikes.

Next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 10, 2022.

Meeting adjourned 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Rossow