

Open Space Committee minutes for August 23, 2022

Present: Rick Gardner, Susan Downing, Deb Cary, Laura Reynolds and Karen Rossow. Excused: Annie Charrette and Gerry Pellegrini.

Meeting began at 7:08.

Goodnow Park status: Deb and Susan are scheduled to meet with Jaime Greenland and Brendan Toohey of the Parks and Recreation Commission during the first week of September to discuss this under-utilized town park. We want to determine if we can begin clearing trails soon.

High-value open space parcels: Deb and Rick have set aside August 30th from 1:00 to 3:00 to study a map of Princeton to identify the most important parcels which would provide the best benefit for the town. They will report their findings at the next OSC meeting. The commonwealth has a Landscape Partnership Program whereby they will purchase a parcel of 500 or more acres for preservation provided the seller is willing to accept their reasonable bid (they cannot go above its assessed value) and another organization, such as Mass Audubon or a land trust, commits to managing the property as the commonwealth does not have the resources to do so.

Trail Around Princeton updates: All five benches have been installed as requested! Deb has two little brown directional signs to add to Hall's trails and the clean-up of trails has been completed. Thank you to the volunteer crew!

Susan has completed a list of natural attractions for the website. Others may be added in the future. Hikes for Kids pending Annie's return. Laura is making progress on her pamphlet which is a condensed version of the information on our website regarding hikes and trails. She'll get higher-resolution images *from Rick*. Susan will cross-reference hike names with natural attractions so people can locate them.

Red Fox Farm bridge materials are here and Rick will arrange a trail clearing day in September.

No progress on the final connection from Calamint Hill Conservation Area (CHCA) to Brooks Station Road and we realize this is a long-term goal that will take time to accomplish. Deb is leading this effort.

VOTE: To approve up to \$200 towards materials for two more benches for Cobb Brook trails. *Unanimously approved.*

Princeton Hikes! are going very well and have included several distant "adventure" hikes. Only one person over-extended himself and other hikers took care of him.

Other business: The OSC will have a table at Hey Day at Wachusett Meadow on September 24th, thanks to Laura and Gerry volunteering their time. Susan may cover for a while as well. (Karen and Deb will be working for WM that day and Susan is leading a hike in the morning.) Plan: we'll have a QR code for the pamphlet Laura and Annie are working on, we have *Princeton Hikes!* brochures, and we'll print a large poster and map with trail heads and labels of all our hikes if they fit reasonably. Also, we will have a sheet where families can recommend hike ideas. Deb will bring the copies of the various trail maps to give out that she made for the Trail Summit.

Gerry and Rick attended a Sterling Open Space committee meeting to brainstorm connecting trails between our towns. They've collectively identified possible locations but there are obstacles in each instance.

Rick was contacted by Elaine Sentello, an enthusiastic Thomas Prince School kindergarten teacher about the school trails. He explained our role is limited to the kiosks and suggested the Wachusett Meadow Tuesday volunteer group as a possible resource for clearing trails periodically.

Our next scheduled meeting is on **Tuesday, September 13th at 7:00 p.m.** in the town hall annex and remotely.

Meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Rossow