

Open Space Committee minutes for October 11, 2022

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

Meeting began at 7:06.

Minutes of September meeting unanimously approved.

The town has been awarded a \$33,000 **grant for “eco-tourism”** and we would like someone on the new committee being created to manage this process. Susan has agreed and Annie may also if she wants to. Susan will contact Sherry Patch to sign on to the committee.

In conjunction with the Environmental Action Committee (EAC) we will host a **drought awareness hike** on October 16th at 10:00 beginning from Krashes Fields. Annie will lead it, Gerry will be the sweep, and folks from ConCom and/or EAC will serve as educators. We encourage someone from the fire department to join us as it is pertinent to their work.

Hey Day report: Laura and Gerry said there was interest in our table. One landowner with land conservation questions and one resident interested in having a trail through her property in the center of town.

Update on **Goodnow Park:** The walk-through with Jamie Greenland and Brendan Toohey from P&R was positive and they are enthusiastic about trail clearing and installing a new disc golf range there. We let them know that the selectboard wants to be consulted prior to any major changes.

Valuable land parcels work by Deb and Rick progresses very well and is nearing completion. Once we’ve compiled our data, what shall we do with it? Certainly invite key landowners to our Land Preservation Options program/workshop we intend to hold during the winter. Once *Deb and Rick* complete their work we will all try the rating system and give feedback.

Speaking of the **Land Preservation program**, *it will be the focus of our next meeting* so we can prepare for it properly.

Trail Vision items: How can we collaborate with the Sterling Open Space Committee to connect trails from Sterling to Princeton? We already have an excellent working relationship with them and have walked the trails and discussed the options. DCR land is involved with all options so we will pursue positive avenues of communication with that state department. We do understand which approaches work better than others.

Two more benches are ready to be installed on our trails and more coming. Thanks to Rick, Gerry for installing them and Joe and Phil for building them.

Good Hikes for Kids is on the website and *Annie* will send an article to Redemption Rock News about this compilation of special hikes. The Natural Attractions list is ready for the website as well, although enhancements to it may be forthcoming.

Rick has started designing a kiosk sign for Red Fox Farm. We have to determine what to leave on and what we might want to edit out of the map. There are some sensitive issues with private property and we want to be respectful and trustworthy. *Rick* will discuss Nimrod trails with that organization next. When we know exactly how we want it to look we can begin to create the small maps on the trails. The new bridges will be installed on October 16th.

There is interest in adding a nature sign to Thomas Prince School’s nature trail system. We can set up a meeting with the principal or vice-principal and the various people involved with the trails.

There has been some progress with discussions about expanding Cobb Brook trails with landowners in the neighborhood.

Princeton Hikes! continues to be a popular program. The Princeton Hikes! brochure is on our website and Rick will design a small, attractive notice with a QR code to put up on the Post Office cork board and other appropriate locations.

We have been informed that there is some interest by the light department in creating a solar panel farm on a town parcel. We need more information. Gerry will let the EAC know.

Next meeting: Tuesday, November 8th, 2022.

Action items: Susan will contact Sherry Patch to express her interest in serving as an OSC rep on the new Eco-Tourism Committee; Deb and Rick will continue work on the high value parcels; Annie will write something up for Redemption Rock News regarding the Great Hikes for Kids list; Rick will talk with Nimrod sportsmen's club about whether or not we may include their existing trails on our RFF kiosk map; Rick will design a small notice including a QR code to post in locations frequented by the public about our hikes brochure and website.

Meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Rossow