



Manchester-By-The-Sea Meeting Posting

Notice of Public Meeting – (As required by M.G.L.Ch.30A §18-25)

Board/Committee: Open Space & Recreation Committee
Day & Date: Monday, September 18, 2023
Time: 4:00 PM
Location: HYBRID (Zoom Link Below and Room 7 in Town Hall)
Signature: Sue Croft
Attendees: Steve Gang, Olga Hayes, Helen Bethell, Patti Mitchell, Terry Cowman, Jeff Bodmer-Turner, Sue Croft

MINUTES

- Steve Gang welcomed attendees and called the meeting to order.
- Discussion with representative from KP Law (Shirin Everett) Regarding Deeds/Rights – Shirin Everett explained that she is currently reviewing the titles/deeds for the previous primary landowner (Pygmalion Properties?) to see if Rights of Way had been transferred as properties changed hands. That research continues. It was noted that the primary location where this research would be most beneficial would be at Highland Ave which is a private road containing one of the main access points to the Western Woods trail system. Shirin pointed out that this research can be quite tedious and time consuming and suggested that she engage KP Law's title researcher to delve into this in more detail. Given the potential cost associated with doing this, Sue Croft volunteered to talk to Greg Federspiel about next steps and associated costs.
- Current Status of Parking at Newport Park – In response to the letter sent to the MHA Executive Director on 7/18/23, Ms. Frontiero has reached out to Greg Federspiel to schedule a meeting to discuss this. Shirin Everett from KP Law explained that based on the current easement the Town should be given access to Powder House Hill but that this does not include parking. Folks wanting to walk into the reservation from Newport Park should be given an 8'-10' passage from anywhere on the property. Shirin also noted that parking can only be on Town owned property and that an amendment to the deed specifying this may be necessary.
- Western Woods –
 - Repairs to Trailhead at Crooked Lane – Jeff Bodmer-Turner has reached out to CATS regarding a scope for this work and has not heard back yet. All agreed that the MassTrails Grant would be advantageous to pursue for this or other projects. Sue Croft noted that this grant does not open until sometime in November and is open until sometime in February. So, there's plenty of time to continue to research options and gather info. Jeff also mentioned a regional project that the Town is currently involved in with other Cape Ann towns specific to Wildfire Protection. This project takes into consideration the trails/cart paths/carriage and logging roads with regards to accessing heavily wooded areas like the Western Woods around Cape 10 Central Street, Manchester-By-The-Sea, MA 01944 – 978.526.2000 – www.manchester.ma.us

Ann primarily by safety vehicles. Jeff pointed out the necessity of working in parallel with this Wildfire Project for any trail improvements. Jeff recommended that the OSRC spec out and prioritize the trail improvements they want and then compare that list to what the Wildfire Project has identified.

- Beaver Dams on Onion River off Preston Place – Currently there are backyard flooding and potential septic system issues being reported by a homeowner in this area. Steve and Jeff have both met with homeowners and where possible have walked the area to see the impact and identify the locations of the problems. It was reported that there is nothing to be done about the issues resulting from beaver dams at this point other than to keep an eye on them. ConCom will be addressing this issue in more detail at their meeting on 10/10.
- Gordon Woods Next Steps – The committee reviewed the final draft of Helen Bethell’s memo and voted in favor of bringing the memo to the Conservation Commission for further approval. After receiving input from ConCom, the next steps will be first to bring to MECT followed by Planning Board, BoH, Finance Committee, Sustainability Committee and Select Board. Helen will send the memo to Patrice Murphy with MECT for review and to potentially tie into their capital campaign. The memo and all documentation associated with this effort can be found under “Drinking Water Protection” [HERE](#).
- Update Re: Possible Conversion of Small Portion of Powder House Hill Reservation on Pine St to Affordable Housing – Steve spoke with John Feuerbach who expressed interest in working together on this. A meeting has been scheduled for Thursday 9/21 at 4:00 PM to discuss further. Helen wanted to know if KP Law represents MHA and the answer was no. Someone will inquire as to who does represent them during the meeting on Thursday. Helen noted that it might be more effective for the lawyers who represent all parties to meet and sort out the details of this swap.
- Next Steps for Strategic Planning on Watershed as a Whole – For now the focus will remain on the Gordon College Woods effort and continuing to pursue relationships with neighboring communities to protect the watershed.
- Minutes from 8/21 meeting were unanimously approved.
- Next meeting will be scheduled for Monday, October 16 from 4:00 to 5:30 PM.
- The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 PM.