



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, October 16, 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,
Chuck Dam, Sue Croft

MINUTES

- Steve Gang called the meeting to order. There were no announcements.
- Gordon Woods Next Steps – Steve informed the group that ConCom will review the memo prepared by Helen Bethell regarding Gordon Woods preservation at their next meeting at the end of Oct. Helen suggested that they continue to move forward with approaching boards and committees to express the OSRC committee’s interest in preserving this area. Helen wrote a letter of introduction to the memo that she read to the group. Feedback was positive and Steve suggested that Helen attend the open public forum being held today prior to the regular Select Board meeting to bring this to the Select Board’s attention and gain public feedback. Helen agreed to do so.
- Current Status of Parking/Easement at Newport Park – Representatives from OSRC, the Town, MAHT and MHA met on Wed 10/4. Members of the MHA acknowledged the violation of the Right of Way/Easement and agreed to work with the Town to correct this. Olga updated the group with the next steps according to Greg Federspiel which are below. In the meantime, Greg will coordinate with Town Counsel advance this effort as well as Nate Desrosiers to scope out the area and begin the layout/design process. Olga will work on the CPC application (due Dec 1) to request \$20k to create the parking spaces (this is the amount recommended by Greg and Nate). Helen noted that it would be good to have bicycle parking available at this location as well.
 1. The MHA board needs to vote to approve the plan.
 2. Town Counsel draws up a legal document laying out the new easement through the existing driveway and including the area for the parking spots at the trailhead.
 3. Voters need to approve the new easement (though we should be able to proceed with creating the new parking area as this lies within the existing easement area.)
- Sheila Hill asked if Steve could explain the difference between the need to add parking to access Powder House Hill in Newport Park versus the expansion of affordable housing at Newport Park. Steve explained that these are two separate projects. The smaller parking effort being spearheaded by Olga is underway whereas the expansion of and improvements to Newport Park is a much bigger effort being managed by MHA and MAHT and is still in the early stages. Steve discussed the

potential to trade some Town-owned land in the area for an equal portion of land that Newport Park is looking to develop that is adjacent to wetlands. He also pointed out that MAHT has enlisted the help of consultants to help plan the project and attract developers with the goal being to benefit both wetlands protection and expand affordable housing.

- Western Woods –
 - Deeds/RoW – Sue Croft informed the group of a meeting she had with Flory Denhard about work that Flory is currently doing for the Assessor’s office and a project previously done at the request of the OSRC which has been completed. The takeaway from this conversation was that efforts to confirm Rights of Way in the Western Woods have thus far been unsuccessful and that time and money might be better spent with a different approach. Sue told the group that Greg Federspiel recommended identifying areas of the WW that get the most use and where these trails cross private property and that the committee approach landowners directly to request easements or RoW. This approach could also work in areas identified for trail expansion. The approach was received favorably. Steve added that CATS could help identify active trails crossing private property. Helen noted that a long time ago people used woods roads actively and that none of that type of access was ever deeded but that has changed.
 - Repairs to Trailhead at Crooked Lane – Steve read an update from Jeff Bodmer-Turner he received via email. Jeff said he spoke to Amy Blondin at CATS about ideas concerning the Western Woods trail system, erosion control on the Crooked Lane entrance, and completing work initiated under Sue Brown for a comprehensive mapping of the trail system. She suggested further coordination with Patrice Murphy at MECT as the other primary landholder. Amy is willing to present any coordinated plan to her board and be involved. Jeff will provide further updates once he’s spoken to Patrice in detail. Patti Mitchell pointed out that fire road maintenance in the WW should also be considered. Steve said he would ask Jeff to move forward with a plan in this respect and to discuss with property owners about CR’s in addition to access (easements/RoW) during this process.
 - Helen pointed out that it would be useful to have CR’s on Town land in the WW but that more research would likely be required to do so. Helen and Steve agreed to meet to discuss further.
 - Steve mentioned that there will be a site visit tomorrow at the end of Preston Place in Beverly where the Onion River and associated beaver dam is causing problems (backyard flooding and potential septic issues) for a homeowner in this area. They will also be doing some trail exploration in this area as well. Steve invited anyone interested to join.
 - Other Potential MassTrails Grant Projects – Sue noted that this grant opportunity seems fairly flexible and that the committee could accomplish many different types of projects through this grant program including parking areas at trailheads.
- Next Steps for Strategic Planning on Watershed as a Whole – The group thought that the Western Woods should be the next area of focus.
- Review and Approve Minutes from 9/18 Meeting – Minutes were approved unanimously.
- Any other items not reasonably anticipated when this agenda was written.
 - Terry gave a brief update regarding the Bike & Ped committee’s interest in creating pedestrian links from Masconomo and Reed Parks through downtown to Powder House Hill.

One of the more immediate safety measures they are looking into is a new crosswalk from Reed Park to Harbor Point.

- Olga mentioned that she will investigate guided hikes through Powder House Hill for residents of Newport Park as discussed during the meeting with MAHT/MHA on 10/4. These hikes would be adapted based on the abilities of participants.
- The next meeting will be scheduled for Mon Nov 13 at 4:00 PM.
- The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 PM.