

**Open Space Committee Minutes**  
**1-22-2020, 7:00 pm**  
**Stow Town Building**

Present: Vin Antil, Bob Wilber, Bill Maxfield, Ben Mast (vice chair). Also Kathy Sferra (staff); Natalie Forsythe, resident.

Ben called the meeting to order at 7:25 pm.

**Minutes** - After review, Bill made a motion to approve the minutes of 12-19 as amended. Ben seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

**Conservation Coordinator's Update** - Kathy shared a map with the group of land that a property owner is proposing to donate to the Town along the Assabet River near the Collings property. It was agreed by the Committee that it would be a desirable addition to the Town's open space and would help preserve scenic views from the river and perhaps provide a picnic spot. Bob offered to talk with the property owner about the Conservation Land Tax Credit program if needed, and said there was a 2-3 year wait list for the program.

**1:1 Analysis** - Kathy shared the results of the 2019 analysis of land protected and land developed. Only 1 acre was protected at Town Forest, and only one new single family house was developed in 2019.

**CPA Update** - Vin updated the group on the status of the Community Preservation Committee's consideration of the proposals, summarizing the projects received to date. The High Rock Church proposal has been withdrawn, though the Library and Recreation Department are still considering it. The Selectmen would prefer to see any acquisition use unrestricted funds.

**Site Visit** – The Committee agreed to do the site visit on March 14<sup>th</sup>. Kathy will work on an agenda using the survey responses.

**Committee Vacancies** – Letters of interest in appointment have been received from Natalie Forsythe and Kathy Sferra. Following discussion, Bill moved to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that both candidates be appointed. Vin seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously. Vin will follow up with a letter to the Selectmen.

**Discussion – Next Steps with Accessibility and Master Planning for SW Stow**

This discussion was deferred to the next meeting. Vin will pull together the maps of Southwest Stow. Natalie asked to have the street names on the maps. Kathy will put together a list of potential properties to consider for accessibility so the committee can discuss pros and cons of each.

**Meeting Schedule for 2020** – The schedule for the year was approved. Kathy will post the meetings on the town website.

**Open Space Committee Minutes**  
**2-26-2020, 7:00 pm**  
**Stow Town Building**

Present: Greg Jackson (chair), Vin Antil, Bill Maxfield, Ben Mast (vice chair), Kathy Sferra.  
Also Meg Costello, resident.

Greg called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

**Minutes** - After review, Vin made a motion to approve the minutes of 1-2020. Bill seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

**Annual Report** – Bill moved to approve the Annual Report for submittal to the Selectmen's office, Vin seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

**Conservation Coordinator's Update** - Kathy reported on a number of pending open space and development issues including an update on donation of the Cornell property along the Assabet River, the Joanne Drive Open Space donation, the potential acquisition of Highrock Chapel, a proposed over-55 development off Athens Lane and the possible sale of the North Course of Stow Acres to Toll Brothers for another over-55 development. The Committee discussed the Stow Acres situation, including the need to prepare for the town's Chapter 61B acquisition opportunity and a possible need for land planning consulting assistance. We will need to define a vision for the things we want to see on the property. Meg asked what will happen to the Lundy land on the other side of the Assabet. There was also a question about the ownership of the rail right of way between Gleasondale Road and the River. Kathy said she would look into these two questions.

**CPA Update** - Vin updated the group on the status of the Community Preservation Committee's deliberation on various proposals for Annual Town Meeting and their efforts to rescind several articles that have not moved forward including the purchase of affordability deed restrictions and Track Road.

**Site Visit** – The Committee's tour of Stow site visit is scheduled for March 14<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am. We will meet at Emma's. Greg is willing to drive. Kathy will work on an agenda using the survey responses but the greatest interest is to explore the Athens/Stow Acres areas. Kathy will look into getting permission to see the Athens Lane area on foot. Meg would like to join if there is room.

**Next Meeting** – The next meeting will be March 25<sup>th</sup> immediately after the Open Meeting Law Training. Kathy will look into booking a room at Pompo. The Committee agreed to start with the mapping exercise. Kathy will look into whether the Strava "heat maps" can be imported into GIS.

**Adjournment** – On a motion by Bill, seconded by Vin, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Kathy Sferra

  
Approved 3-25-20

## **Open Space Committee Minutes**

**3-25-2020, 7:00 pm**

### **Conducted Remotely via Zoom Webconferencing during Governor's Declaration of Emergency/ Modification to the Open Meeting Law**

**Present:** Greg Jackson (chair), Vin Antil, Bill Maxfield, Ben Mast (vice chair), Bob Wilber, Kathy Sferra.

**Absent:** Natalie Forsythe

**Also** Meg Costello, resident, Christa Collins, Director of Land Protection, Sudbury Valley Trustees

Greg called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

**Minutes** - After review, Bill made a motion to approve the minutes of 2-2020. Vin seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.


**Chapter 61 Right of First Refusal Process** – Christa Collins from Sudbury Valley Trustees was present to discuss the Chapter 61 Right of First Refusal process. She summarized the provisions of the statute, noting that if there is an assignment of the Town's rights to a nonprofit organization, at least 70% of the land must remain open. Members raised questions about the need for a site plan to show this 70% at Town Meeting and whether CPA funds could be paid back if protected land was subsequently developed. Christa also noted a requirement that more land cannot be developed than was proposed by the buyer in the purchase and sales agreement that is being matched. Bob raised the idea of a town bonding for an acquisition and using CPA funds to secure the loan. Would the terms be more favorable than straight bonding? Bob suggested that the Town be creative in the way that it thinks about use of Chapter 61 land, noting the possibility of focusing the alternative energy, climate change mitigation, carbon and floodwater storage, private development and the potential to seek an Municipal Vulnerability Project grant. Christa noted that she now had access to a new GIS datalayer on flood storage capacity and she would look at that for Stow. Bob noted the possibility of a tree nursery and Christa said that Concord had done a feasibility study for one but it had not moved forward. Various recent large-scale restoration projects were noted including Tidmarsh Farm and the Leominster Golf Course. The group wondered what the impact might be on residential development, golf courses and related uses from the Covid-19 emergency, and how long it might last. Kathy said she had reached out to Stow Acres recently about the status of their possible sale to Toll Brothers, but had not heard back. She offered to reach out again and see if Peter Brown was interested in meeting. It was noted that there might be an assemblage of more than 500 acres here which could raise the possibility of a Landscape Partnership grant.

**Town Meeting and CPC Update** – It was noted that Town Meeting has been pushed off until June 22 due to the public health emergency. Vin said that the CPC was looking into a possible rental assistance program. The status of the driving range purchase at Stow Acres is still a question.

**Next Meeting – April 22<sup>nd</sup>**. Greg asked that the Committee vote to elect a new chair as he does not have time to do that at the moment. The group asked that the Athens Lane area mapping be first on the agenda unless there is urgent business. Vin offered to make a map overlaying the proposed development on the site visit route of travel.

Adjournment – Bill moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 pm, Vin seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Kathy Sferri  
*Approved 6/24/20*

## Open Space Committee Minutes

6-24-2020, 7:00 pm

### Conducted Remotely via Zoom Webconferencing during Governor's Declaration of Emergency/ Modification to the Open Meeting Law

Present: Vin Antil, Bill Maxfield, Bob Wilber, Kathy Sferra.

Also: Meg Costello, resident.

Vin called the meeting to order at 7:25 pm.

**Minutes** - After review, Bill made a motion to approve the minutes of 3-2020 as written. Vin seconded and the motion was approved unanimously on a roll call vote.

#### Hallocks Point – Chapter 61 Right of First Refusal

The Town has been given Notice of its Right of First Refusal for approximately 10.68 acres of land on Hallocks Point for \$1 million. The Committee reviewed this site earlier and commented on the proposed subdivision, requesting that a wooded buffer be maintained along Sudbury Road. Since then a seven lot subdivision has been approved by the Planning Board and Conservation Commission. It was noted that Chapter 53 of the Laws of 2020 has tolled the 120 day clock. Because the Notice was received during the state of emergency, the 120 day clock will not start running until 90 days following the lifting of the state of emergency. This is likely to give the Town time for a fall Town Meeting article if one is needed. Sferra noted that she has received a number of calls and emails from Lake Boon residents that are interested in seeing if a way can be found to prevent development of this land and keep it as open space. The Committee had a lengthy discussion of this property and the offer that has been presented. They agreed that there is significant interest in considering this opportunity and agreed on the following "conditions" for moving forward:

- There is acknowledgement that additional land protection on Lake Boon is a priority in the Open Space and Recreation Plan. At the same time there are a large number of other potential acquisition priorities either being worked on or on the horizon. It is important to "keep as much powder dry" in terms of CPA funds as possible for these projects as well as other housing and historic preservation projects.
- Members agreed that *approximately* \$350K in CPA funds would be reasonable to put toward this project. The balance could be raised through a combination of limited development and fundraising. This would allow the maximum amount of CPA funds to be preserved for future needs.
- There was agreement that 2 lots could be developed off Hallocks Point Road (likely reconfigured somewhat from the current lots via ANR plan) with frontage on Sudbury Road. These lots should be configured so as to maximize their economic value and have the least impact possible on the natural resource values of the property. Driveways should be off of Hallocks and the maximum vegetated buffer protected along Sudbury Road. It is expected that sale of these two lots could likely yield at least \$500K (at \$250K per lot). A local broker could be consulted for a more precise estimate. There was interest in affordable housing however Kathy had heard that SMAHT was not interested. This should be confirmed. In any case, the goal would be to minimize the number of lots that need to be developed on the Point.

- It was felt that the Stow Conservation Trust might be interested in participating in this project as assignee – either alone or in partnership with Sudbury Valley Trustees. The Board of Directors will need to be consulted.
- There was agreement that a LAND grant is not likely to be a successful source of funds given EOEEA's funding priorities and the time available to submit prior to the July deadline. It was also agreed that project proponents should not count on available free cash or other town funds, given financial constraints.
- There will need to be a private fundraising component. It was felt that the most immediately interested neighbors around Lake Boon should set a target of \$100K in private fundraising. SCT (assuming their involvement) would seek to raise additional funds from the community and might serve as a vehicle for fundraising. Bob thought \$50K would be reasonable. The case would need to be made that protecting this land is not just about protecting Lake Boon shoreline, but also the Town's rural character.
- This would make the financial picture for this project look something like \$350K in CPA funds, \$500K from limited development, \$150K in private fundraising. Some small additional funds would be needed for legal, title, etc.
- It was agreed that a "vision plan" for the ownership, use and management of the property will need to be developed. This is an important element of winning community support for this project. A large motorized boat ramp was viewed as undesirable and already available on Sudbury Road.

Kathy agreed to write up these bullet points and share them with the Committee as part of the minutes and also talk with Dave Siewierski of the LBA. She will also encourage him to talk with SCT.

#### Committee Organization

With three recent resignations, the Committee members agreed to reach out to those who might be interested to seek new members and invite them to attend future meetings.

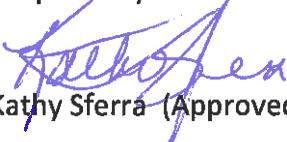
On a motion by Kathy, Bill was elected Chair and Vin was elected Vice Chair, and continuing representative to the Community Preservation Committee. Bob seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously on a roll call vote (4-0).

The next meeting is scheduled for July 22<sup>nd</sup>. It is likely that a Joint Board Meeting on Hallocks Point will likely be held in July.

#### Adjournment

With no other pressing business, Bill moved to adjourn the meeting, Bob seconded and the motion was approved unanimously on a roll call vote (4-0).

Respectfully submitted,

  
Kathy Sferra (Approved 7-23-20 by vote of the Committee)

## Agenda

### Stow Open Space Committee

August 19, 2020 – 7:00 pm

### Remote Meeting VIA Zoom Videoconferencing

- Review/Approve Minutes
- Hallocks Point Subdivision- Discussion Chapter 61 Opportunity
- Golf Course Planning & Development Study
- Meeting with Planning Dept Staff - Athens Lane Area Proposed Development/Open Space/Zoning
- Discuss Committee Vacancies
- Other Conservation Coordinator and Committee Member Updates
- Next Meeting Date

This meeting will be held online via the Zoom Web Conferencing service. To join the meeting, go to: <https://www.zoom.us/join> and enter the meeting ID 895 8843 3992 and passcode 837527. From your phone you can also call 1-929-205-6099 and enter the Meeting ID/PIN followed by the # sign and the password.

Cancelled due  
to lack of  
quorum

**Open Space Committee Minutes**  
**9-23-2020, 7:00 pm**  
**Conducted Remotely via Zoom Webconferencing during Governor's Declaration of Emergency/  
Modification to the Open Meeting Law**

Present: Vin Antil, Bill Maxfield, Bob Wilber, Kathy Sferra.

Bill called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

**Minutes** - After review and minor edits, Vin made a motion to approve the minutes of 6/2020 as amended. Bob seconded and the motion was approved unanimously on a roll call vote.

**New Member Recommendation – Meg Costello** – Margaret (Meg) Costello has applied for one of the vacancies on the Committee. She has been attending meetings and is an associate member though was not able to be present tonight. Bill moved to send the Selectmen a letter recommending appointment of Ms. Costello. Vin seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously on a roll call vote.

**Hallocks Point – Chapter 61 Right of First Refusal**

The Committee discussed the current status of this effort. A meeting was recently held with the Community Preservation Committee who seemed inclined to support the request for \$400,000 toward the purchase price. It was decided, however, to defer the vote and give the Working Group a chance to discuss the project with the Finance Committee, which occurred last night. It appears likely that Town Meeting will not occur until January. It was also agreed that it would be helpful to have the CPC vote at this time, to keep the momentum going for the fundraising.

**Golf Course Planning Study** - Bob update the group on the initial meeting of this effort and noted that a follow up meeting will be held next week. The goal is to develop some concept plans that will integrate future development and conservation, with golf remaining on the site so long as that is desirable.

**Conservation Coordinator's Report** - Kathy noted that Joanne Drive is moving forward with development. Chris Merrill met with the Planning Board this week to discuss possible development of his land off Wedgewood Road. Nate Shepard's land on Harvard Road is on the market as is Kirk Teska's house on Sudbury Road along Track Road. The Athens Lane potential development is also the subject of discussion with the Planning Board.

**Next Meeting** – The next meeting is scheduled for October 28, 2020 at 7 pm.

**Adjournment** – At 7:45 Vin moved to adjourn, Kathy seconded and the motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Sferra

*Kathy Sferra*  
*Approved 10-28-20*

**Open Space Committee Minutes**

**10-28-2020, 7:00 pm**

**Conducted Remotely via Zoom Webconferencing during Governor's Declaration of Emergency/  
Modification to the Open Meeting Law**

**Present:** Vin Antil, Bill Maxfield, Bob Wilber, Kathy Sferra, Meg Costello

Bill called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

**Minutes** - Vin made a motion to approve the minutes of 9/23/2020 as written. Bob seconded and the motion was approved unanimously on a roll call vote.

**Athens Lane Area Development** – The Committee reviewed a letter and map sent to the owner/developer by the Planning Department providing comments on the concept development submitted by the applicant. The letter notes that the Planning Board will be focusing on working on a bylaw. The meeting with the Planning Board was postponed and will occur in mid-November. Members noted the desirability of access through BOSE if that could be obtained. Members were curious about the number of school children in Villages. The difference between age-targeted and age-restricted was discussed in terms of its impact on septic flow and permitting.

**Golf Course Planning Study** - Bob updated the group on progress with this effort to look at both the North Course and South Course at Stow Acres. The consultant has prepared a series of concept plans that were viewed by the group. There will be one more meeting of the planning team and then it is hoped that there will be a public forum to get feedback on some concept plans. The importance of having a comprehensive vision that includes both conservation and development was noted. Conservation amenities might include trails, ballfields, and some restoration areas. It was hoped that at least one vision will show a plan for "build out" of the property; another should show what it would look like if there was a "conservation buy down" of the total number of units. Ongoing golf could be accommodated in a conservation restriction. Vin felt that this would be a good use of CPA funds so that we could have certainty around the conserved portion of the land. It is unclear when the amount needed would be known or when the funds would be needed, but it is not likely to be this fall. Vin noted that there are other pressures for CPA funds with Town Hall renovation and other projects. CPC is trying to do some proactive planning for this. Bob also noted the potential for MVP grant funds if the project is structured right.

**Conservation Coordinator's Report** - Kathy noted that Joanne Drive will break ground this week. The owner has decided to give the 23 acres of open space to the Town and it is likely to include a canoe landing. The 12 acre Harvard Acre Open Land donation is also moving forward slowly. This will include an easement across the tennis court parcel. There is a nearby parcel of tax title land that may be of interest. Past investigations revealed title issues. The Hallock Point project is in a quiet fundraising phase. It is still unclear when the next Town Meeting will occur. Vin asked about the Gleasondale Trail project on the Kane land. Kathy explained the history of the project. Vin said it was likely they will come to CPC. Kathy noted that there are still two vacancies on the Committee. Also, she would like to talk at some point about division of labor within the Committee (agenda, minutes, etc.).

**Next Meeting** – After discussion of possible next meeting dates around the holidays, the Committee agreed to hold its next meeting on December 9<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm. It is hoped that the golf course plans will be available to discuss.

Adjournment – At 8:15 Bob moved to adjourn, Kathy seconded and the motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,



Kathy Sferra

 12/9/20

**Open Space Committee Minutes**

**12-09-2020, 7:00 pm**

**Conducted Remotely via Zoom Webconferencing during Governor's Declaration of Emergency/  
Modification to the Open Meeting Law**

**Present:** Vin Antil, Bill Maxfield, Bob Wilber, Kathy Sferra, Meg Costello

Bill called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm.

**Minutes** - Bob made a motion to approve the minutes of 10/28/2020 as written. Vin seconded and the motion was approved unanimously on a roll call vote.

**Hallock Point Update** – Kathy and Bob updated the group on the Hallock Point project. Fundraising is going well in the quiet phase with about ¼ of the funds raised or pledged to date and a GoFundMe campaign and letter to all the residents going out in the next week. She noted that she has met with a broker who is willing to provide assistance with regard to marketing the lots, and hopeful that they might sell for more than was estimated. Meg asked if the project could be done without selling one or both of the lots, but it was noted that this would increase the fundraising goal significantly and was likely not do-able.

**Golf Course Planning Study** - Bob updated the group on progress with this effort to look at both the North Course and South Course at Stow Acres. The group is considering proposals that would involve some development, along with significant conservation on both courses, and the possibility of continuing either 18 or 27 holes of golf. Conservation amenities might include trails, ballfields, and some restoration areas. The project will likely encompass several phases. As it appears likely that a proposal will need to be considered at Spring Town Meeting, a proposal has been submitted to CPC for \$1-\$1.5 million in CPA funds. The exact amount and acreage is to be determined. Vin updated the group on the CPC's discussions to date and the challenges that they are facing with a number of projects including a large request for Town Hall restoration. The Committee will be discussing bonding in the coming weeks and may also meet with the Board of Selectmen. It was noted that the CPC will discuss Stow Acres on January 4<sup>th</sup>. Kathy will send around the agenda and call-in instructions.

**Conservation Coordinator's Report** - Kathy noted that initial designs have been received for Track Road that will need further work. A notice was received with regard to Army property off Bruen Road. It is not clear if this is a priority for conservation but it is adjacent to White Pond and other conserved properties. The group suggested sharing the notice with several entities that apparently did not receive it including Sudbury Valley Trustees, the Town of Maynard and DCR. Kathy will do this.

**Next Meeting** – January 20<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm.

**Adjournment** – At 8:25 Bob moved to adjourn, Vin seconded and the motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,



Kathy Sferra

