

Stow Open Space Committee

October 30, 2023

7:00 pm

Stow Town Building

Attending: Kathy Sferra, Bob Wilber, Laurie Burnett, Vin Antil, Bill Maxfield, Meg Costello and four people representing Stow Conservation Trust (SCT): Bob Wilber, Janet Moffet, Bill Werner, Laurie Burnett

-Review/Approve Minutes: Antil moved to accept minutes as amended, Maxfield seconded. Minutes unanimously accepted as amended.

-Conservation Dept Update:

Stow Acres: October 29 on-site Fall Festival with tours on golf carts well attended despite rain. Public forum on 10/18, another on 11/2 at Council on Aging at 1pm offering chance to talk with elders about wishes for Stow Acres. Survey is available on-line and as hard copy.

Laurie Burnett asked about input from young people in town. Burnett noted that although a number of young people in town, difficult to get their statistical demographics, perspective. Burnett asked about reaching wide demographic spread in Stow, about the possibility of a professional study to base this decision on how to implement Stow Acres. Money not included in funding for master plan climate resilience, so no money at present allocated to creating a professional study. Recreation needs were not adequately represented in breakout group discussing outcome for north course. Recreation needs town wide assessment for active play spaces. Need blueprint for what to do with Stow Acres open space. Question of how to make recreation areas be climate resistant, help with climate resilience.

Miscellaneous issues: I Naturalist app is now set up with 197 species of birds, insects entered. Invasive species mapping is complete. Possible 7th member to participate on OS committee.

-Discussion of Athens Lane/Corzine Area Parking and Trails with Stow Conservation Trust:

Parking: SCT view on access points outside of SCT land? Will homeowners of Wandering Pond (Athens Lane) do own yardwork or by HOA? Possible integration of OS land at Wandering Pond with Kettle Plain. Plan for members of SCT to walk land of Hale Corzine/Hemenway Farm/Cottages of Wandering Pond/Kettle Plain to develop input of SCT into process. Wilber says access from Cottages into Hale Corzine is inevitable, therefore SCT needs to be amenable to creating access that is acceptable to their intent. Discussion of HOAs: not good for public enjoyment of property, not encourage public to use open space as provided by each development. Agreement that these four properties (Hale-Corzine/Hemenway/Kettle Plain/Cottages) would ideally be unified as one open space area. What will SCT inherit if take on these properties? Septic/wells/detention basins impact/open space? Are there any red flags about contamination on Cottages property? Did Wheeler do study about contaminants when purchased Athens Land property for development as part of due diligence? Report available? Need to delineate true waterways/septic/wells on Cottages property.

-Confirm Next Meeting Date: November 27 in person at Town Building 7pm.

Antil moved to adjourn. Maxfield seconded. Meeting adjourned at 9pm.

Approved Unanimously by Vote of Committee on 12/20/23