

Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee (OSRPC) Meeting Minutes¹
July 6, 2021

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7:16 PM Chairman Rosa opened the public meeting; invited all to rise for the pledge of allegiance to the flag. Roll call:

2021 SEP -8 A 8:43

Present: OSRPC members Michael Parker, John Bartlett, Justin Damon, Marlies Henderson, Jack Bowen and Michael Rosa

TOWN OF
BILLERICA

Chairman Rosa announced that agenda item #6 has been withdrawn at the request of member Damon who submitted it.

1. Open mic. Zoom moderator Andrew Levine states there are no hands raised; no public comment.
2. Approval of June 1 meeting minutes. Michael Parker made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Justin Damon. Unanimous (roll call) vote in favor.
3. Discussion on OSRP committee Members discussed OSRP Committee charge / charter expansion. Marlies Henderson mentioned that effectuating implementation can be an added charge of the OSRP committee; besides creating the plan, also effectuating its implementation – as recommended in the Workbook. Draft Policies & Procedures for the committee to be more specific. John Bartlett comments that the objectives and goals of the plan assign responsibility largely to the Recreation and Conservation Commissions. The OSRP committee can monitor whether or not the goals are achieved, but should not be at odds with the responsible commissions. Marlies clarifies that she means 'effectuating the implementation' rather than implementing; reminding or assisting the responsible parties. John Bartlett also comments that there was no Parks Department when the current plan came out; the OSRPC could look at getting the newly formed department to help meet the goals; the Parks Department has taken over some of the responsibilities of the Recreation Department. Mike Rosa comments that the Parks Dept. is involved with property maintenance – not so much meeting open space goals. **John Bartlett** will see which 2018 OSRP goals & objectives would now fall under Parks Department, due to the shift of tasks, for the next agenda. Michael Parker suggests considering teeth for the committee towards plan implementation. Mike Rosa would like to see a set of Policies & Procedures with guidelines / direction (P&P) to describe role of the OSRPC for future reference. A later discussion can determine if the OSRPC should be recorded in the bylaws – which better secures the existence of the committee.

John Bartlett mentions a Middlesex School land purchase on Riveredge, where the town had the first right of refusal. At the time, the OSRPC worked on a warrant article. The attempt failed. Mike Rosa suggests that the OSRPC P&P will include that the committee monitors open space parcels, 61A, and right of 1st refusal. Justin Damon asks: If the OSRPC can submit warrant articles, can it also have an advisory function on matters of open space & recreation? P&P can

¹ Note: Action item names and votes in bold font.

describe this scope of power of the OSRPC. Mike Rosa added the OSRPC can help move warrant articles through Town Meeting, regardless who submits the warrant article.

Jack Bowen signed in at 7:34PM. Chairman Mike Rosa asks if Jack has pursued re-appointment after his term expired.

Marlies re-signs in at 7:37PM after a 12 minute (recorded) break

Mike Rosa looks for a listing of all 61A tax deferment properties, so if a parcel comes up for sale the OSRPC can make a recommendation. John Bartlett adds that such a list is included in the 2018 OSRP – but it appears it needs an update. Marlies Henderson believes that a Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT) has a more complete inventory.

4. Commission on Disabilities member Maria Martin is in the process of submitting an application with the Select Board to get appointed of the OSRPC. She is not attending this meeting. Marlies will follow up.
5. Michael Parker explains he is a ZBA member. Part of the Elks property has been used by Billerica Lacrosse, but requests a variance for a subdivision, with a back half and a front half – donating the back half (ca. 1 acre) to the town as (landlocked) 'open space'. After discussion Marlies Henderson moved, and John Bartlett seconded that: "with respect to the Elks variance request, the OSRPC recommends to accept an open space parcel land donation, with 20 foot wide public access easement to prevent the parcel from becoming landlocked." This was unanimously voted for by all present (Jack Bowen was signed out at the time).
6. (withdrawn)
7. Marlies will work with Andrew Levine to create a webpage on the Town Website. Andrew Levine can help with this.
8. Next meeting date (First Tuesday of the month) is August 3. Continue on Zoom platform until we can all meet in person again.
9. Justin Damon moves to adjourn, Michael Parker seconds. Roll Call. Meeting adjourned at 8:09 PM