

Billerica Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee (OSRPC) Policies & Procedures (P&P)

Summary

The nine (9) member Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee (OSRPC) was formed under the auspices of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA), Division of Conservation Services (DCS), to create an Open Space & Recreation Plan, using the [Open Space and Recreation Planner's Workbook](#) most recently revised in March 2008.

The State government level encourages municipalities to plan for Open Space & Recreation, offering planning tools and subsequent funding:

«Planning provides the opportunity to assess where you are, where you would like to go, and how you might get there. Planning now to protect important open space and recreational facilities can greatly enhance the attractiveness of your community and encourage compatible growth in the future. Studies show a net fiscal benefit of open space on local tax bases, when compared to residential development. » (Workbook page 1)

«Finally, a Massachusetts community with an approved Open Space and Recreation Plan becomes eligible to apply for Self-Help, Urban Self-Help, Land and Water Conservation Funds, and other grant programs administered by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Division of Conservation Services. Open Space and Recreation Plans also help to coordinate with ongoing acquisition efforts of state environmental agencies and local and regional land trusts. » (Workbook page 3)

Besides giving guidelines to create a plan, the Workbook also provides the OSRPC with teeth to monitor the implementation of the plan:

«Each year, the community (perhaps your newly-formed Open Space Committee [...]) should evaluate implementation activities of the previous year and revise the Action Plan accordingly. » (Workbook page 46)

Membership (all 9 OSRPC members are to be Billerica residents)

1 member of the Conservation Commission, appointed by its chairperson

1 member of the Recreation Commission, appointed by its chairperson

1 member of the Planning Board, appointed by its chairperson

1 member of the Select Board, appointed by its chairperson

1 member of Commission on Disabilities, or their designee, appointed by the Select Board

1 member of the Parks Department, or their designee, appointed by the Select Board

3 at large members appointed members by Select Board

Officers

The OSRC chair will be voted on by a quorum of the OSRPC members, for one year, from July 1 – June 30. Likewise, the OSRC will vote for a co-chair, and a secretary.

Consistent with Open Meeting Law regulations, the chair and secretary will prepare and post the agenda; the secretary will prepare minutes, and, after approval, post and share with Town Clerk, Library and online Agenda Center.

The OSRC shall meet monthly, or as needed.

OSRPC members should be encouraged to participate in the DCR/MARTAB Trails Conference (held every other year). If needed, the chair shall seek the funding to register those OSRPC members who wish to participate.

Committee Task

It is the charge of the committee to create a timely OSR Plan, and to monitor the implementation of its 7-year Action Plan. The Plan will list current status of open space and recreation, as well as goals and objectives, and the Plan designates parties responsible for meeting the goals; reaching objectives.

In collaboration with the Town Manager / Chief Procurement Officer and Town Meeting, the OSRPC can seek funding for hiring a consultant to write the 7 year OSRP, starting 3 years before the expiration date of the current plan.

The OSRPC is not itself responsible to meet the set goals and objectives, but it can assist the responsible parties (remind, facilitate). The OSRPC shall not be at odds with the responsible parties.

Generally, the OSRPC shall meet monthly on the first Tuesday of the month.

Additionally, the OSRPC will organize an annual low-budget social field trip. Participation in this field trip is optional. The purpose of the field trips is to be aware of open space & recreation attractions in or out-of-town. Guests are welcome.