

DOVER OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES: TUESDAY JANUARY 4, 2022
VIA ZOOM 7:30 P.M.

Attendees: Amey Moot (Chair, OSC), Henry Faulkner, Mark Adamczyk, Greg Kahoun, Justine Kent-Uritam, Val Lin, Carol Lisbon (Liaison, Planning Board), Tara Nolan, John Jeffries (Liaison, Board of Selectmen), members of the public also attending were: Dave Stapleton, Greg Bonnette, Mary Hornsby, Dave Yuknat and Craig Benson.

Absent: Jerry Arnold (Liaison, Long Range Planning), Connie Sullivan, Tim Holiner (Conservation Commission)

I. Minutes

On a motion made and seconded the minutes of December 7, 2021 were unanimously approved with edits.

II. Town Report

On a motion by Justine, seconded by Carol the Town Report submission was unanimously approved.

III. General Discussion Regarding Protection of Hale

There was general discussion about the Hale undertaking. An initiative, called SaveHale, to help support the preservation effort has been launched by citizens of Dover and Westwood with other interested individuals. They have been posting information at: www.savehale.org. Amey noted that the Hale task force will be meeting and hopes to craft responses to the likely concerns, questions and/or objections and to generate FAQs. They are also looking at deal terms that will help make the option appealing.

The Committee discussed the need for clarity within the town about what group is leading this effort. There is concern about the limited time to get people informed about a Hale article on the warrant, which is a big-ticket item that has a lot of nuances and a fair number of open issues. To get the details nailed down and communicated to the general public will be a big lift. A lot of people that OSC members have talked to are not aware of this pending issue.

Committee members have been talking with people, both to inform them about Hale and to discover concerns as a means of helping develop FAQs and a communications strategy. These concerns include:

- The overall cost and tax impact of that cost on top of other recent projects and expected near term needed capital projects for the Town, including:
 - Need to be mindful of the financial constraints felt by “middle class” and older residents.
 - Is there a way to make people comfortable that they are not overpaying?
 - Some people have expressed concern that Hale is just threatening to sell as a way to get money from the town. We need to ensure that people understand Hale’s change in focus and financial planning process.
 - Develop comps of what Dover or DLCT has paid to protect other properties in Dover, such as Blake, Porter, Pegan Hill, 46 Springdale etc.
 - Develop comps of what other towns have done and paid to protect properties via CR instead of outright purchase. Some examples mentioned were:
 - \$1.1MM Holliston for 28 acres (APR)
 - \$10 MM for 324 acres in Sharon (CR by MA DCR, fee by Sharon)
 - Develop information that lays out debt service impact of this project along with other known and expected projects.

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- Delineate the benefits:
 - Open space benefits, particularly in light of the size of the parcel (660+ acres) and it being contiguous to other protected properties (total over 2,300 acres)
 - Protection of water resources is worth mentioning, if valid.
 - Perhaps deal can be structured to give Dover rights to develop municipal wells and/or water storage tanks. Note protection of recharge areas, if applicable.
- Other issues/questions that need to be addressed:
 - How does the Westwood decision impact the Dover decision or value, if at all?
 - Need clarity about how CR is structured and what activities are allowed or restricted on various areas.
 - How was the Grossman Camp and its lease value managed in the appraisal?
 - Should Dover buy it fee simple and have an option for low income housing or other uses?
 - How to ensure maintenance of trails & camp infrastructure if Hale falters or sells?
 - Right of first refusal (ROFR) might be attractive.
 - Ensure the appraisal is publicly available and easy to find
- Keep the messaging clean and clear
 - Need an organized messaging campaign, perhaps also public forums to get issues resolved before Town Meeting (The issues can become complex and is more likely to fail if it is perceived as complex)
 - CR v fee simple can be confusing, if the Town is not really looking at fee simple then focus the message on “protect v develop.” Avoid getting into the weeds comparing and contrasting, since fee simple is not an option
 - Have clear, widely available maps

Craig Benson noted that the SaveHale organization is looking to help and looking for direction on how best to help.

IV. Updates from Relevant Boards:

- The DLCT offer for \$800,000 for the 8.5 acres on the Dover Church property has been accepted and they are undertaking a three-month effort to fundraise for closing the deal.
- The Board of Health meeting was attended by Carol, Justine and Val. There was discussion at that meeting about whether there will be a warrant article regarding water. It seems the Board has an outside professional looking at irrigation bylaw.
- The Planning Board has appointed Valerie Lin to the Associate Member position.
- Conservation Commission has a few articles on the warrant. Specifically, they propose to change the bylaw to extend their jurisdiction from 100 to 150 feet to accommodate climate change concerns. It was noted that several towns are now at 500 feet. They have already revised the no touch and no structure buffers in their regulations to extend those areas.
- Park and Rec reported issues include revisiting the Dover Greenway. To that end, Val and Kevin Ban met with Chris Dwelley and Courtney Startling. Nothing is slated to go forward this year. Hydro-raking of Channing Pond is half complete and the balance of the work will be done in November 2022 to best address the root systems. There will be timers for lights at the tennis courts, most likely the hours of availability will be between 5 and 8 PM.
- The Board of Selectmen is anticipating a very busy agenda of the next month or two.

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V. Other

Greg reported that he and Stephen Bates and Dave Williams of the Hunt Club have established a new trail to avoid issues on Russo and McKoy/Lesser properties. The “Perched Rock Trail” commemorates the Russell donation to Wylde Woods. Stephen is working to get trails on private property removed from public maps.

Boynton noted David Lewis’ long-standing work in and for the preservation of land in Dover.

The next meeting is February 1 at 7:30 via Zoom.

Meeting adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Tara L. Nolan