

Lancaster Open Space & Recreation Committee Minutes
Wednesday, May 25, 2016, 4:00 PM
Lancaster Town Hall

In attendance: Noreen Piazza, Ted Manning, Cara Sanford, Sarah Gulliver, Larry Shoer, David Koonce, Shirley Griffin

Also in attendance: Janet Morrison, Independent Consultant on Land Preservation

Minutes

Noreen Piazza circulated the minutes from the 1/27 and 3/30 meetings. No changes or corrections were noted.

Update – Annual Town Meeting Votes

At the 5/2 Annual Town Meeting, votes were taken on the transfer of various parcels:

- 1) Town Meeting approved the transfer of Parcels 32-17, 32-18 and 32-19 off of Hilltop Road to the Conservation Commission, and to designate these parcels as the Eugene Christoph Memorial Wild Forest. These parcels will remain untouched with no harvesting, cutting or removal of trees or other vegetation.
- 2) Town Meeting approved the transfer of Parcel 13-4 off of Lunenburg Road from tax title to the Board of Selectmen.

Update – Agricultural Land Protection

Janet Morrison appeared once again to discuss agricultural land preservation opportunities in Lancaster. She presented an updated map of all the agricultural and Chapter 61 properties in Town. Again, she indicated that these properties should be prioritized as part of a parcel protection strategy.

Noreen also provided a list of all the farms, nurseries, and Chapter 61A properties in Town. It was decided to take these properties and produce an agricultural parcel protection list, similar to the main parcel protection list. This list would rate each property according to attributes such as aesthetics, farming and soil quality, wildlife connectivity and owner interest in protection. This list will be completed for the next OSRC meeting on 7/27.

There was also discussion on the use of Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds for protection of agricultural properties. Noreen explained that an exploration committee had done exhaustive research on the feasibility of passing the CPA in Lancaster, and determined that there was not enough interest among residents to advance the program. Larry Shoer suggested that maybe the Lancaster Land Trust could spearhead the program. This was taken under advisement by the members of the Land Trust that were present at the meeting.

New – Fiscal Impact Analysis

The discussion on Fiscal Impact Analysis (FIA) was continued from the last OSRC meeting on 3/30. Ms. Morrison suggested that the Town consider implementing a Fiscal Impact Analysis or a Cost of Community Services Analysis whenever a farm property is being considered for residential development. This type of analysis can determine the cost to the Town for schooling, street maintenance, police, fire, etc. when turning one of these ag properties over for development. Copies of a primer on FIA were circulated. The discussion was then tabled to a future meeting.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the OSRC will be held on 7/27. An agenda is forthcoming.