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Town of Mansfield  
Open Space and Recreation Committee  
October 1, 2020 Minutes.

MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY USING GOTOWEBINAR PLATFORM

Present: Diane Simms, Chair; Perry DiMascio, Vice Chair; Alan Bryer; Rebecca Foster; Sharon Friedman; Ms. Gonyer, Conservation and Environmental Planner.

The chair read the following notice:

*Whereas both the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health have advised residents to take extra measures to put distance between themselves and other people to further reduce the risk of being exposed to COVID-19, Governor Baker has issued an order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, Massachusetts General Law c. 30A, §20.*

*In order to satisfy the Open Meeting Law requirements, today's Town of Mansfield Open Space and Recreation Committee meeting will available to the public via GoToWebinar and Mansfield Cable. The instructions for joining via GoToWebinar are in the Meeting Notice on the Town's Website at [www.mansfieldma.com](http://www.mansfieldma.com) and then clicking on today's date on the calendar.*

1. The Open Space and Recreation Committee meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.
2. Conservation Planner updates:

Ms. Simms said the bridge at Marie Strese was fixed today, with plywood placed over the original boards and noted the work was done by DPW. Ms. Gonyer said this is a short-term fix but there is a long-term plan. She will be meeting next week with DPW to talk about replacing the footings for the bridge because the structure is sitting on very old logs.

Ms. Gonyer had a conversation with Nancy Griffin to follow up with questions about whether or not the Open Space and Recreation Committee could have their own Facebook page. She said right now the town wants to stay with one mainstream Town of Mansfield Facebook page, but could offered the OSRC an email address and a password with one member of the OSRC as the administrator; Ms. Foster will be made the administrator. Ms. Gonyer said this will allow anyone to directly post pictures, announcements, etc. Ms. Foster will meet with Ms. Griffin to review protocol and guidelines about what can be posted. Ms. Gonyer asked that her email address be posted in case people have questions specific to Open Space or the trails. Ms. Simms said Ms. Foster should notify Ms. Gonyer with any comments or concerns.

Ms. Simms asked if there was an update on the Maple Street, Corporal Hardy parking project. Ms. Gonyer said there is no conservation jurisdiction in this area but Mr. Alves presented the project to the Commission because the area is under the ownership of the Conservation Commission.

Ms. Gonyer said she is talking with an Eagle Scout about a potentially project and noted the Commission had allocated funds for a kiosk and landscaping in the Maple Street area. She will be working with DPW once they have the layout for the project and then will decide what the landscaping needs are. She said

they also will have to decide about the memorial sign and kiosk, if the sign and kiosk should be re-located and if there are funds for new ones.

Approval of August minutes: Mr. DiMascio made the motion to accept the minutes of August 31, 2020 as written.

Ms. Friedman seconded the motion.

Mr. DiMascio – in favor

Ms. Foster – in favor

Mr. Bryer – in favor

Ms. Friedman – in favor

Ms. Simms – in favor

Motion passed 5-0-0.

### 3. Review updated draft Annual Trail Maintenance Program

Ms. Simms said the review of the Charge will be postponed to the next agenda. She said if there is anything the Committee members would like to change or add to the Charge to please email Ms. Gonyer directly and she will forward the draft of the Charge based on all input.

Ms. Gonyer said the Trail Management Plan is a detailed 12-month guideline to establish the trail maintenance standards, priorities and responsibilities that are necessary to occur on an annual basis to maintain the safety and upkeep of the six existing trail systems, Great Woods, Taylor's Hill, Corporal Hardy, Marie Strese, Sweet/Kalnin and Mill Pond. She explained how the Charge will be prioritizing things and show the effectiveness of the plan, and the roles and responsibilities to implement the annual Trail Management Plan, and what DPW is expected to do out of their budget, as well as who should oversee contractors and third-party tree services, etc. She said the TMP would explain the role of the Conservation Commission and the Open Space Committee as well as the role of volunteers and non-profit groups, while calling out Natural Resources Trust and the role they have had in the past helping to maintain the trails.

Ms. Gonyer said the overall goals of the TMP would explain what we want to provide, what we want to do and how it will be done; this will help establish the funding sources for annual maintenance needs to keep our base line of our trail systems, as well as communication between DPW, OSRC and the Conservation Commission. She will meet with DPW next week to go over the plan; once accepted by DPW, a letter will be submitted stating DPW has reviewed, accepts and approves the TMP.

Ms. Gonyer reviewed items to be done for trail maintenance, talked about kiosks, signage and parking areas for the trails and improved ADA accessibility whenever possible. Annual maintenance tasks would include:

- Trail safety and general inspections;
- Trash receptacles and scheduling days for trash/debris removal, and who would be responsible for this;
- Tree and shrub maintenance and keeping the tread width of the trails.

The Plan would provide an explanation of work, what would be done in house and what would be done by outside contractors and tree services. Ms. Gonyer noted the mowing of vegetation only applies to Great Woods. The Plan would also include the scheduling of major maintenance tasks, including anything

that has to be done outside the norm of the basic annual maintenance plan, which would be a capital expenditure and would have to go to the town for funding, either money or through grants. Ms. Gonyer said the annual budget for trail maintenance will be outlined in the TMP; she said a request for a revolving annual budget, will be presented at the spring 2021 annual town meeting.

Ms. Gonyer reviewed the documents to be attached to the TMP:

The Inventory Table to be referenced throughout the document would provide a trail inventory listing the properties, trails, trail width and any comments about existing conditions as well as tread width, which would determine what equipment could be used on specific trails. It would list the signage, parking, landscaping at the trail heads, structures/features, any outstanding issues, such as missing signage and trail markers and when signs and markers would be added or replaced. The inventory list would also note the work to be performed in a fiscal year, what work was done and who oversaw the work, as well as any historical notes or comments.

Ms. Gonyer said a timeline has not been done yet but will be put into another table. There will be an aerial GIS of all the areas, photos of trail areas, kiosks and the entrances, and trail maps. A trail assessment form will be used to list any on-going safety issues, which Ms. Gonyer will expand to include a work assessment log; she said anyone walking the trails, including volunteers, could walk the properties, fill out the form and submit it to the Committee.

Ms. Simms asked if there are any sections the Committee would like to see in more detail.

Ms. Friedman commented it is hard to respond to the document when she is looking at it for the first time. She said the most important part is going to be the collaborative relationship for work on the trails and make sure the trails are in good working order. She said it might be interesting to pick one or two of the trails/areas to see which ones could be used as ADA-accessible trails and noted it might be helpful to the Committee to receive feedback about the trails from someone with a disability. She said she would like to look at the plan, email her comments and review the plan at the next meeting.

Ms. Simms suggested the Committee discuss the plan now.

Ms. Friedman said in the Master Plan it talks about establishing a robust maintenance and land management plan for Mansfield Conservation sites, to be overseen by a dedicated conservation and parks maintenance person. Ms. Gonyer said she will review the Master Plan and write out all the bullet points concerning the Open Space plan and outline the similar responsibilities. Ms. Friedman said the Master Plan also talks about prioritization of necessary work and the development of suggestions for both regular trail maintenance and invasive plant management and on demand maintenance. She suggested Ms. Gonyer use similar language in the TMP.

Ms. Simms suggested a main bullet point for the tasks and goals from the Master Plan, including sub-bullets to read identically to the Master Plan language.

Ms. Friedman asked if the Recreation Department does the maintenance for their properties. Ms. Gonyer said they do maintain their own properties but the OSRC should not get involved with this. Ms. Gonyer said we need to call out specifically what parcels are under the ownership of the Conservation Commission because the TMP is only for these parcels. Ms. Friedman suggested, because it is mentioned under the Master Plan in Land and Trail Maintenance, the OSRC make a comment in the Introduction that the TMP does not reference the athletic fields because these areas are maintained by the Recreation Department. Ms. Simms said they could say "the properties that are under the care and concern of the Conservation

Commission”; she said this should be discussed when the Committee reviews the Charge to keep Open Space and Recreation separately. Ms. Friedman said they could say “there are many trails in town that are opened to the public that are maintained by Natural Resources Trust” because they also have a number of trails that are maintained by volunteers. Ms. Gonyer said the concern with putting NRT information into the TMP is that Open Space does not governed properties owned by NRT.

Mr. Bryer said the TMP is a goal and guidance principal within the Master Plan and Open Space Plan.

Ms. Gonyer asked about monitoring conservation land for any potential changes due to climate changes. Ms. Simms said if this is added to the TMP, the Open Space Committee would need to explain how they would do this. Ms. Gonyer said they could include or reference monitoring in the MVP or in a grant. Mr. DiMascio said it should say MVP or any other grants.

Ms. Friedman asked if monitoring for invasive insects should be referenced in the TMP. Ms. Gonyer said the TMP should make note of any types of invasive species or colonies.

Ms. Gonyer will update the document with all the edits and additions. Ms. Simms said this will be a future agenda item, either next month or tabled for a future meeting.

4. Adjournment:

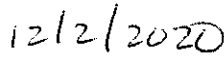
The meeting was adjourned at 7:01 pm (Bryer/Friedman)

- Ms. Friedman – in favor
- Mr. DiMascio – in favor
- Ms. Foster – in favor
- Mr. Bryer – in favor
- Ms. Simms - in favor

Motion passed 5-0.

Next meeting will be November 30, 2020 at 6:00 pm.

  
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Diane Simms, Chair

  
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Date