

Committee Members

Tina Wright, Chair
Denise Legee, Vice Chair
Charlie Ross, Clerk
Mike Francis, Member
Bruce Hamblin, Member
Jim Wickis, Member
Joanne Williams, Member



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TOWN OF MEDWAY

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Open Space Committee

Tuesday, January 5, 2021, 7:00 pm

Remote Meeting

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, and the Governor's Orders imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather inside in one place, no in person attendance of members of the public will be permitted at this meeting. Committee members will participate remotely via ZOOM. Meeting access via ZOOM is provided for the opportunity for public participation; information for participating via ZOOM is included at the end of this meeting.

Attendance	Tina Wright	Jim Wickis	Denise Legee	Charlie Ross	Joanne Williams	Mike Francis	Bruce Hamblin
Present	X	X	X	X	X (Joined at 7:34)	X (Joined at 7:06)	

Also attending: Bridget Graziano, Conservation Agent.

Tina called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Adams-to-Lovering Management Plan

- Committee members did not have time to review the draft. They accepted the action to review it prior to our next meeting. It will be added to the February agenda.
- Joanne took the action to send Charlie the final bridge names.

MassTrails Grants – Discussion with Bridget

- Susy and Bridget are working with Anne Capra, who helped with the OSRP, to prepare the grant. They believe this is the only way it can be completed in time. They have some funding for this.
- They believe the best candidate is a package focused on the Adams Street Meadow conservation area.
- Their ideas for scope:
 - Perimeter trail (ADA compliant)
 - Viewing platform (ADA compliant)
 - Update parking to be ADA compliant
 - Invasive species management
 - Work on adjacent trails into the woods on the south side of the meadow
 - Two kiosks
- The town would need to do a 20% match, which could be funds and in-kind contributions
 - The committee discussed what might be possible for CPC match funding – the best guess is \$10K.
 - In-kind matching could be labor from town employees (e.g., Bridget, DPW) and volunteers. Volunteer labor can be valued at \$20/hr.
- Discussion about making the parking accessible – Anne thinks it can be
 - Jim asked whether it would need to be paved. Mike said that small-enough gravel size can also be compliant.

- Discussion about the new trail – the Conway School report had suggested a bisecting trail rather than a perimeter trail. After the discussion, the committee agreed that a perimeter trail was preferable.
- Discussion about the viewing platform location – the starting assumption was something in the middle of the wetlands border. Jim mentioned that many locations would only provide a view of bushes, making a platform less valuable.
 - Tina pointed out that the northern end of the wetlands perimeter is higher, but there are still bushes there.
 - Another thought was at the southern end, even if the trail needed to go into the woods a bit. This may be the most promising location.
 - Charlie mentioned whether the platform had to be at the meadow... the most-promising location on the trail network for a platform is north of Adams Street, east of the long cart path, overlooking the former cranberry bog. Bridget thinks that the package is more likely to be approved if it's in one place and combined with ADA accessibility. The "cranberry bog" could not be made ADA compliant. The committee is OK with Bridget deciding whether to include some design funding for a platform at that location, but the main focus should be the meadow.
- For Bridget to be able to proceed, Tina would need to send a letter as OSC Chair stating the committee's support for the grant proposal.
 - Charlie moved and Denise seconded that the committee support the grant application and authorize Tina to send the letter.
 - Charlie, Denise, Jim, Tina, and Mike, voted in favor. There were no votes opposed. (Joanne had not yet joined.)

Suggestions for goal #10 of the OSRP: "Establish sound practices for invasive plant management on town-owned land; implement invasive species control practices"

- Jim believes the invasives management effort should initiate from the OSC. Tina pointed out that other groups (ConCom, DPW, Parks) also will need to buy into it.
- Tina distributed Jim's draft "Toward a More Natural Medway" document prior to the meeting. Some members hadn't seen the email and didn't review it in advance
- The committee agreed on the following action items:
 - Everyone to review the document prior to the next meeting.
 - Send any questions or comments to Tina.
 - Add this topic to the February agenda.
- After the committee reviews the document, Jim will review it with ConCom and DPW.

Quick Status Updates

- **Budget Items**
 - In terms of needs, the lists in the December OSC draft minutes represent the results of the committee's prior discussion.
 - The OSC has no budget of its own. Tina has spoken with Mark Cerel about getting some CPA funding on the Town Meeting warrant for May.
 - The committee discussed the desirability of having a small standing budget for items that don't fall under CPA funding, such as routine maintenance. Mike suggested \$5K.
 - Joanne spoke with several Selectmen and about getting some funding and they were agreeable. Tina will follow up with them as well as with Mark Cerel.
- **Amphitheater Village Street Access**
 - Mike and Tina are meeting with DPW to discuss ideas for the trail. The goal is to see (a) what ideas DPW may have, and (b) what could be accomplished "in-house" without contracting for outside services.
- **Land Management Plan Update**
 - This is in process and will be ready to be presented in February.

- **Lovering Trail Update**

- The estimate for plowing the “Christmas tree meadow” is \$3K-\$5K. This has been communicated to the Selectmen for possible inclusion in the budget. Bridget believes it’s relatively easy/inexpensive to do this now, but would become much harder after invasives get a stronger foothold.
- The volunteer group is considering opening up visibility of the water along the trail – the town property extends further west in some locations than originally thought.
- Gravel/crushed rock at edges of footbridges – DPW believes they can do this and can access the bridges with the necessary equipment.
- The parking lot and dog incursions received extended discussion – see below.

Other items that may come before the committee

- **Amphitheater Fence**

- There was a brief discussion of the newer segment of Amphitheater fence. It is in the wrong place and is a different style than the prior fence. All members were very concerned about the placement of the fence as it juts into the driveway/parking area and can easily be hit by a vehicle. Most of the committee members are less concerned about the style mismatch. Jim took the action to speak with Steve Carew about getting it moved.

- **Lovering Street Parking Lot**

- For safety reasons (keeping cars off street and allowing safe turns), there’s a need for a second egress from the lot. The current lot only allows three cars, requires difficult turns in the lot, and poses risks when cars leave the lot. The second egress would allow greater safety and a 2-3 more cars. The committee discussed the options.
- There is also a drainage ditch that has become filled in over time, causing water problems. This can be addressed as part of the work.
- Tina and Bridget spoke about this. Lovering Street is a scenic road, and a hearing is required before the PEDB in order to create the second egress. This in turn requires abutter notification and public notice (two at \$400 each). ConCom owns the land and supports the concept. Nobody has yet identified funding for the \$800.
- Follow-up actions:
 - Joanne will speak with Allison about funding from existing articles.
 - Bridget will speak with Susy about options, then talk with Tina.
 - Tina will speak with Mark Cerel about what CPC can fund.

- **Canine incursion onto private property of Iarussi Way trail abutters**

- There have been several incursions into private property, even after one of the owners put up a fence and added signs at their own expense. It seems that at least one of these was due to an unleashed dog, in violation of the town’s leash law.
- Bridget has spoken with the property owners.
- A natural boundary, with plantings, would be a desirable part of a long-term approach.
- The committee discussed a plan to put up a rope fence in the short run.
- The town is getting ready to put up signs reminding walkers that dogs must be leashed.
- There have been social media threads on the topic that lacked the context of the trail being part of the Planning Board’s 2004 approval of the Iarussi Way development as well as the town’s OSRD zoning bylaw requiring public access.
- The committee discussed working with the town to post about the positive aspects of the trails, which have otherwise received very favorable public feedback.

Charlie made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 pm. Denise seconded the motion. All members voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlie Ross
Clerk