

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY February 16, 2022, VIRTUAL MEETING 9AM TOWN OF ORLEANS

Zoom Attendees: OSC Members: Chair Robert Cunningham, Christopher Keating, Hardie Truesdale, Lynn O'Connell and Stephanie Gaskill. **Observer:** Kevin Galligan, Liaison for the Select Board.

Call to Order: Quorum reached with 5 members present. The Chair called the meeting to order at 09:05 AM.

1. **Approval of Minutes from the 12/15/2021 meeting:** Stephanie Gaskill moved to approve the December 15, 2021 minutes and Lynn O'Connell seconded. The Committee voted 5-0 to approve the minutes.
2. **Report from Stephanie Gaskill, Liaison to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC):** The Chair opened the CPC report by questioning if there was a discussion on the Cedar pond application in particular the phrase "not to exceed the amount of" in regards to the purchase price. Stephanie stated "no discussion just general comments and unanimous votes on all the projects". The Chair then stated that he would like the OSC members to take a vote on whether he should proceed to negotiate with the property owner of the Cedar Pond parcels. The Chair stated that he could proceed with a Purchase and Sale agreement not to exceed \$5000.00 and contingent upon approval at town meeting. Christopher Keating moved to allow the Chair to engage in negotiations. Hardie Truesdale seconded. All voted to approve 5-0. The Chair finished noting that there was a recent good report on the water quality (oxygen, water temperature and salinity) of Cedar Pond. The water quality is dependent on the water control to the pond. There were competing objectives between less flow and good quality (less saline, more brackish) and allowing herring access to the pond with more flow.
3. **Old Business:** The Chair reported that in discussion with many committees, discussion ensued on the elevated boardwalk project connecting the Christian property with the Siekal property. He would like to engage with the RC, OSC, ConsCom and the OCT for a long term vision (2 years or less) on this project. Hardie noted that he had a discussion with Stephen O'grady. and with Alex his land manager about a contractor named Jeffrey Norgeot (Builder of many stairs and docks in town) and that it would be good for the committees to meet with him along with John Jannell. Stephanie Gaskill then asked about cost of project. Hardie said that it would be important to get these people together to review the regulations and cost of the project. The Chair reiterated that he's sure there are many regulations to contend with being an area of critical environmental concern. Stephanie stated that it would be good to work with an engineer on the project. Stephanie noted that we should get an application in to the CPC for "private" funding to get this project rolling. The Chair was happy to state that the OSC had documented the Open Space History for 272 acres protected in town. Kevin Galligan brought up Old Business again at the end of the meeting stating that it would be nice if Stephanie commented on bonding issues of any undesignated projects that the CPC was considering. Stephanie used this opportunity to revisit old business and talked about bonding and the votes from the previous CPC meeting. She stated that five million in bonding was turned down for the Affordable Housing Committee (AHC) application but that \$500,000 was approved for the AHC and \$1,000,000 for the Housing Asst. Corp. Stephanie then commented on the Historic Committee's Application and bonding for the Firehouse project and that a vote was put off until the March CPC meeting. Stephanie asked the OSC members for input on the 2 million dollar bond for this project to guide her in how she should vote on this matter. Hardie felt that he needed more details on the project. Stephanie thought the price tag was steep and reiterated that there was a lack of parking. Lynn O'Connell said she was impressed with the proximity to the middle school and downtown access but would need more details on the project. Christopher Keating concurred with Lynn. Both Hardie and Lynn suggested that it might make sense to see how the town proceeds with the Governor Prence project as a more viable community center. Stephanie then asked Kevin Galligan to speak on the Governor Prence project. Kevin stated that the planning committee won't complete their work until later this year but noted that it was revealed that there were no hazardous materials to contend with and therefore would not have the burden of remediation. Kevin stated that he felt positive about the Firehouse project. He noted that he Chamber of Commerce pays for itself and the building just needs to be brought up to code (electrical and heating). He also noted that the task force had also spent a lot of time on this project and that it's a risk to delay with low interest rates and the cost of Capital Projects going up. The Chair then asked Stephanie if an informal vote on this matter would help. Stephanie concurred and noted that the town still has to approve this project at town meeting. After discussion by each member, the general consensus was that we should move forward with this project and then let the town make a decision on the project at Town Meeting..
4. **New Business:** The Chair then reviewed the town CROS Plan. One snippet the Chair picked noted from the plan was that animals need at least a 300 feet corridor to traverse wildlife habitats. The Chair stated that this was a great plan and approved by the state. The OSC cannot apply for state grants unless this plan is final and approved by the state. The Chair discussed the monthly schedule and stated that Stephanie will chair the April meeting as he will be on vacation. Lynn asked if this meeting will be a zoom meeting or in person? The Chair noted that its better to be face to face. Kevin Galligan stated that Governor Bakers supplemental budget bill included an extension for boards to remain remote until July 15 of this year. The Chair stated we will be meeting by Zoom until July 15. The Chair noted that it is ok for boards to meet for social engagement under the Open Meeting Laws and that this may be in the plans for the spring. In conclusion, the Chair asked all the members to let him know if they will be continuing on as board members into 2023.
5. **Tentative date for next meeting:** March 16, 2022 is the tentative date for the next meeting.
6. **Adjournment:** Hardie Truesdale moved to adjourn at 10:10 AM. Stephanie Gaskill seconded. All approved.

Respectfully Submitted, Christopher Keating, Clerk
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