

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

Wednesday August 16, 2023, MEETING (Skaket Room) 9AM TOWN OF ORLEANS

Attendees: OSC Members: Chair Stephanie Gaskill, Lynn O'Connell, Hardie Truesdale, David Herrick and Patti Platten, also attending from the public, Betsy Furtney.

- 1. Call to Order:** Quorum with 5 of 6 members present. The Chair called meeting to order at 0900AM.
- 2. Vote to go into Executive Session to discuss land purchase with Steven Koehler of the OCT:** Lynn O'Connell motioned to go into executive session at 0901AM. David Herrick seconded. All members present voted to go into Executive Session.
- 3. Adjourn Executive Session:** The Committee voted to adjourn Executive Session at 9:20AM
- 4. Public comment and communications:** The committee introduced Betsy Furtney of 71 Pochet Road. Betsy lives adjacent to Uncle Harvey's Pond and gave a summary of her memberships and accomplishments. Betsy gave a brief history on the adjacent preserved lot on Uncle Harvey Pond and how she had worked with Dan Connolly in removing invasive flora and fauna in favor of natives species for better biodiversity. Betsy outlined this impossible task and petitioned the OSC to be more of an advocate on use and maintenance of property after it is preserved. She invited members to view the one acre parcel adjacent to her property to see what they are up against with invasive species. The Chair stated that it is not in the "OSC charge" (updated in March 2023) to care for property after a purchase and that most purchases were transferred to town control (ConCom). John Jannell of ConCom will be here for the next meeting to discuss this issue among other things. Betsy also said she will be back for the next meeting.
- 5. Approval of Minutes from the 7/19/2023 meeting:** Hardie Truesdale moved to approve the July 19, 2023 minutes and Lynn O'Connell seconded. All five members approved the minutes.
- 6. Update of existing projects:** The Chair informed the committee on Christopher Keating limited success in negotiations for the 10 Cedar pond lot and was still attempting to meet with the owner in person.
- 7. Continued discussion of Bay Ridge Road Wetland Lots:** The Chair commenced discussion by stating that she had been hoping to bring the lots up for discussion at the next Select Board meeting in Executive Session. However, in talking with George Meservey, he stated that he had no recollection of being contacted by the owners contrary to the consensus of the committee. The Chair now was not sure who in town had been contacted by the owner (Edward Wannamaker). Contact information for Mr. Wannamaker was scant and the committee discussed ways in which they could reach out to him. Lynn O'Connell discovered that he is indeed around as he was the author of a recent editorial in the Cape Cod Chronicle. The Chair asked if the committee wanted to send a letter of interest to the P.O. Box numbers listed on the Orleans tax card. In 2020 and 2021, the lots were also listed for sale for \$115,000 and \$129,000. Incomplete email addresses were also found online. The Chair said she would draft a letter of interest and also queried whether we should try to meet the CPC deadline in November for funding. Hardie Truesdale stated that we should first get a response before acting further on this project. A general discussion on the area and ways to purchase the property ensued. Lynn O'Connell asked if we have any CPC money left over from the previous year. The Chair answered that we have \$20,000 left over for anticipated appraisals by Mark Robinson, but that some of this money was earmarked for the last Cedar Pond Lot purchase.
- 8. Discussion of meeting with Orleans Conservation Agent John Jannell in September :** The Chair noted again that John Jannell would be happy to talk to the committee at the September meeting. She also noted that he is very much in favor of the town preserving the Bay Ridge wetland lots.
- 9. CPC 2024 grant applications discussions:** The Chair stated that money is going to be tight this year and that we had already had the 2024 grant application discussion. The committee had enough on its plate and that no more grant applications were needed at this time.

10. Prioritization and Goals. Outreach to other town committees and organizations: The Chair pointed out how we could have joint sessions with the Recreation or other committees on the Bay Ridge area and other projects. The Chair also said that John Jannell had pointed out that we should become more aligned with the Conservation Commission. David Herrick recommended a joint session sometime in the future. Lynn O'Connell recommended this also with the Historical Committee as well as the Affordable Housing Committee. The Chair also questioned if we should be working with the affordable Housing Committee on the old Governor Prence property about open space property set asides.

11. Other business: No other business.

12. Discussion of committee positions for FY24 (Chair, Vice Chair, CPC rep): Chair Stephanie Gaskill nominated Lynn O'Connell for the Chair position. David Herrick seconded. All members present voted to appoint Lynn O'Connell as Chairperson. The Chair discussed the Vice Chair position and noted that Select Board member Andrea Reed had stated that this position should be held by someone interning for the Chair position. The Chair said she would also clarify whether the Select Board agreed to seven full time members and not five full time members and two non-voting associate members. David Herrick stated that in their interview with the Select Board, they were told that Patti Platten would be the full time member and David would be an associate member. In Conclusion, the Chair stated we will table the issue for now since we are uncommitted at this time .The Chair mentioned how they will ask Christopher Keating at the next meeting if he would like to continue on with the role of Secretary and take a subsequent vote. The Chair then asked if there was any interest in the CPC position. Lynn O'Connell asked if the Chair was still interested in the position or was dropping the CPC Liaison role. The Chair responded "No" and that she enjoyed her position as liaison and noted that the CPC thought continuity was a good thing.

13. Next meeting scheduled: Wednesday September 20, 2023 at 9AM is the date of the next meeting.

12. Adjournment of Meeting: A Motion was made to adjourn by Hardie Truesdale at 10:16AM. Lynn O'Connell seconded. All five members present approved.

Respectfully Submitted, Christopher Keating, Clerk