

Northfield Open Space Committee

Tuesday, July 20, 2023

Town Hall – 7 p.m.

Present: Matt Diluzio, Sarah Kerns, Joanne McGee, Bob Perlman, Sue Space

Items in italics indicate assignments due by the next meeting.

1. Agenda: Approved
2. Minutes: OSC approved the minutes of June 27, 2023. Sue/Sarah 5-0.
3. Potential member: *Sarah will reach out to Nohham Catchat-Schilling who is interested in serving on the Open Space Committee. Matt will check on the number of members for the OS committee mandated by bylaw. Bob Perlman will contact the Town Clerk's office to be sworn into office.*
4. Mill Brook: Sarah advocated for placing into conservation the 22-acre section of Mill Brook which was recently purchased by the town for \$170,000 for a possible Emergency Safety Facility. The project was voted down at the Town Meeting, and the Emergency Services Committee had previously said the lot could also be conservation land. Sarah questioned the reasoning behind the high price for the land which is about four times the value according to the assessor sheets which now lists its value at \$102,000 (significantly less than what was paid). Some members feel the source of the pricing should be investigated. Joanne talked with Mallory about conservation options including a donation for the remaining 53-acre wetland parcel and gave Mallory contact information for Sarah Wells, conservation manager at Mount Grace Conservation Land Trust. Mallory submitted the application for the LAND grant. *Sarah Kerns will discuss the conservation idea with the Conservation Committee.*
5. Article 6 properties: The Selectboard was authorized at Town Meeting to dispose of a group of properties that have been through foreclosure process. The committee discussed several of these properties, including a larger parcel on the west side of the railroad tracks at the end of Parker Road which Joanne identified as an active birding site. *Joanne will talk with the Department of Conservation and Recreation about the process of DCR acquiring the 16-acre parcel (64 A 1) on Great Swamp Road. Because it is surrounded by Northfield State Forest, it is logical to add this parcel to the State Forest.*
6. Member comments: Bob will be helping to clear PVRs trails after consultation with John Lepore who is leading the outdoor projects at both PVRs and Northfield Elementary School. The NES project is at the planning stage and not ready for trail work. *Matt will check on reports of flooding and gravel washout at King Philips Hill. Joanne reminded the committee that upkeep of KPH is the responsibility of the Stewardship Advisory Committee. Sarah will talk to the SAC.*
7. Next meeting: The next meeting will be Thursday, Aug 24, 2023, at 7 pm at the Town Hall. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Joanne McGee, Secretary