

Northfield Open Space Committee

Minutes, Oct. 17, 2017 7:30 pm

Town Hall – Land Use Room

Items in italics require action prior to next meeting.

Present: Julia Blyth, Robin Conley, Bill Copeland, Joanne McGee, Sue Space, Jerry Wagener, Chair.

Absent: Mike Barry, Rich Fitzgerald

Guest: Sarah Wells, MGLCT

1. Adoption of agenda

2. Approval of minutes. September 19 minutes were approved. Sue/Robin 6 – 0.

3. Meeting with Mount Grace representative:

Sarah Wells, conservation specialist with MGLCT, described two potential methods to conserve large tracts of land.

The **Forestry Legacy** program is a competitive federal-funded initiative which requires a minimum of 1500 acres and takes longer (3 to 5 years) to complete. The parcels do not have to be contiguous.

The **Landscape Partnership program**, developed by the state, has a minimum requirement of 500 acres. Fifty percent of the money comes from the state; 50% is from other sources such as donations or conservation restrictions. The program prefers that the land be contiguous. After the initial requirement is filled, more acres could be added if in the vicinity.

Landowners can be paid by the very popular state tax credit program but there is a two to three year waiting list. There are no grant rounds this year; the next deadline is July 2018.

The committee discussed strategies and ways to reach landowners.

There are forest service grants available for forest outreach. There is appraisal money available for communities applying for PARC grants.

4. Chapter 61 priorities:

The committee discussed with Sarah about treatment of the list of parcels. Athol used “blobs” to indicate areas to avoid targeting landowners.

5. November 1 meeting with all town boards:

Jerry reminded us of this meeting. Discussion about talking points – community parks, trails, accessible trail, new state forest, Ch. 61 lands.

6. Member comments:

Robin said that the CPC has a member from the Recreation Commission. Bill showed a video of “lifeforms” found in the upper end of Nate Tuft’s pond when the low water exposed fish nests and bottom plants. Called Bryozoans, the forms like clean, clear water. Julia said that the PTO will again host “State of the Town” dinner on April 7, 2018. Jerry announced that his two kiosks are ready to be installed in the new state forest. Amanda Lewis is organizing the DCR workers for the installation and will have a group meeting to name the trails. DCR will supply maps.

7. Meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm. Next meeting is Nov. 21, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne McGee, Secretary.

John Blyde
J. Spae

Joanne McGee
Robt K. Conly

J. L. Wagner

MGLCT	Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust
TPL	Trust for Public Land
NMH	Northfield Mount Hermon School
DEP	Department of Environmental Protection
DCR	Department of Conservation and Recreation
FRCOG	Franklin Regional Council of Governments
DFW	Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
CPC	Community Preservation Committee
CPA	Community Preservation Act