

Appendix C: Community Visioning Session Agenda, Handouts & Participants



Open Space & Recreation Plan Community Visioning Session

**Tuesday May 20, 2014
6pm-8pm
Community Room
Palmer Public Library
1455 N Main Street
Palmer, MA**

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN

Public Visioning Session
 Tuesday, May 20, 2014 @ 7:00PM

Sign in Sheet

| | | | | |
|----|--------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| 1 | Alexander LaMarche | 11 Norman Street | Alexander_lamarche@yahoo.com | Citizen |
| 2 | Sylvia Pyzucha | 82 Boston Road | spyzocha@gmail.com | Citizen |
| 3 | Bob Ring | 20 Flynt Street | rr1953@comcast.net | Conservation Commission |
| 4 | Dave Cotter | 1705 Ware Street | palmerhikers@gmail.com | Hiking Club |
| 5 | Jaye Cotter | 1705 Ware Street | Jacotter56@hotmail.com | Interested Party |
| 6 | Linda Leduc | Town Hall | lleduc@townofpalmer.com | Town Planner Committee Member |
| 7 | Donald Blais | 2110 Palmer Street | Councilorblais@comcast.net | Town Council Member Committee Member |
| 8 | David Whitney | 65 Jim Ash Road | davidwhitney@gmail.com | Bondsville Playground |
| 9 | Kelly Youngberg | 28 Fieldstone Drive | Misski1@hotmail.com | Resident |
| 10 | Phil Hebert | 4231 High Street | phillyjh@icloud.com | Town Council |
| 11 | Mary Austin | 12 Carraige Drive | | Resident |
| 12 | Charlie Blanchard | Town Hall | cblanchard@townofpalmer.com | Town Manager |
| 13 | Mike Marciniac | 4076 Pleasant Street Thorndike | planningboard@townofpalmer.com | Planning Board |
| 14 | Alice Davey | Town Hall | adavey@townofpalmer.com | Community Development Committee Member |
| 15 | Angela Panaccione | Town Hall | conservation@townofpalmer.com | Conservation Agent |

Keeping their minds open

Survey will inform updated land plan

By Douglas Farmer
Staff Writer

PALMER — In an effort to not only identify recreational and conservation possibilities in town but also gauge how often residents will take advantage of them, the Palmer Open Space and Recreation Plan Advisory Committee will be surveying the populace in both online and paper form in the coming weeks.

The survey queries residents on what types of recreational activity they participate in, in Palmer ranging from baseball to yoga; what additional recreational opportunities they desire from dog parks to canoe trails; what parks they use in town like Burleigh Park, school grounds and Forest Lake; what improvements they would like to see such as bike trails, updated playgrounds and river access as well as whereabouts

in town (meaning what villages of Palmer) they are desired; and what age groups are most in need of recreational opportunities.

The survey is available online at www.surveymonkey.com/s/PalmerOSRP2014 or in paper form at the Palmer Office Building, Palmer Public Library, the Yellow House, the Palmer, Thorn-dike, Three Rivers and Bondsville post offices and the Palmer Senior Center.

Palmer Conservation Agent Angela Panaccione and Town Planner Linda Leduc, both members of the committee, said that the information is needed to update the town's open and space and recreation plan, which hasn't been updated since 2004. In turn, that plan is needed to apply for state and federal grants, such as Parkland Acquisition and Renovations for Communities (PARC) grants made available by the Division of Conservation Services (DCS) within the state Executive

Please see LAND, Page 15

have come up like the possibility of a dog park, disc golf and a community garden as well as an ongoing theme of more river access and trash cans in certain recreation areas. There is also a new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) component as well, so we are asking about access issues for the disabled in the town."

Based on interests people have for recreation in certain areas, she noted that could help inform attempts to acquire additional conservation land for purposes of recreation or wildlife corridors.

"When you look for grant funding, often the first question that is asked is whether or not that parcel is in an open space and recreation plan which adds

points to the application," said Panaccione.

And she added that the process of developing an updated plan also educates the community about what is currently available.

"We get a lot of questions about properties that residents didn't know existed," she said. "Just because this process happened before doesn't mean that we have all the most recent information."

Palmer's existing open space and recreation plan was approved for a two-year extension by the EOEEA in 2011 but now needs to be updated. It outlined a variety of goals including the expansion of protection of waterways, wetlands, steep slopes, agricultural lands and wildlife

Land, from page 1

Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA).

"An approved open space and rec plan will primarily make the town eligible for annual PARC grants," said Leduc. "There may be other grants that a current OSRP would help in creating a strong application for, such as the DCR [Department of Conservation and Recreation] Trail Grant...If the town were ever to pass the local option of the Community Preservation Act (CPA), the OSRP would certainly be a key supporting document for local project applications."

The CPA is a surcharge of up to three percent on local property taxes (with the first \$100,000 in valuation exempted) for pur-

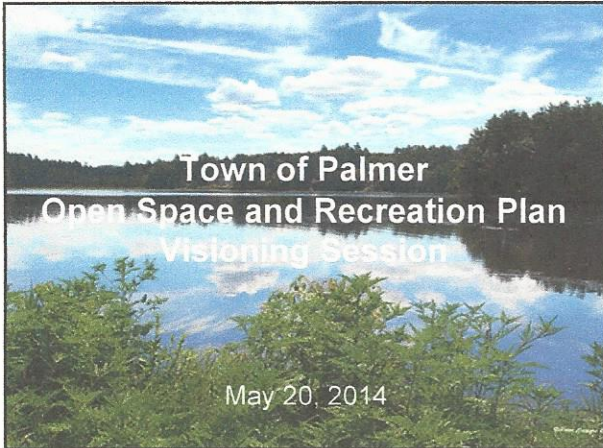
poses of open space and historic preservation, affordable housing and occasionally public recreation. The state matches a percentage of funds raised through fees collected from deed transactions, though that percentage has fluctuated in recent years.

But Panaccione said there are a wide range of goals that can be gleaned from the surveys and the open space plan, not the least of which is a current inventory of town-owned parcels, including those not open for recreational use.

"There were surveys conducted in 1995 and 2004 with prior revisions and part of it is seeing what has been accomplished and what still needs improvement," said Panaccione. "There are some new ideas that

corridors; the development of a multi-purpose trail system; and the improvement of recreational resources in municipal parks and playgrounds. It also identified projects for the future such as the creation of public access to Crystal Lake and the securing of access to the Chicopee River Rail Trail.

Panaccione said the surveys will be collected through the June 10 town elections, when a table will be set up outside polling locations. Prior to that, a community visioning session will be held Tuesday, May 20 in the community room of the Palmer Public Library at 6 p.m. Once results have been tabulated, another visioning session will be held in the future.



Background and Purpose

- OSRP required for state grant eligibility
- Last OSRP adopted in 2006, expired in 2011
- This OSRP will be in effect until 2021
- Open Space Planning Committee:

| | |
|---|---|
| Angela Panaccione , Conservation Agent/Coordinator | Alice Davey , Community Development Director |
| Linda Leduc , Town Planner | Dave Cotter , Trail Committee |
| Michael Marciniac , Planning Board Chair | Bonnie Weeks , ADA Coordinator |
| Tharyn Nein-Large , Conservation Commission | Donald Blais, Jr. , Town Councillor |
| Sean O'Donnell , Conservation Commission | Jim Ostrout , Recreation Director |

What is open space? What is recreation?

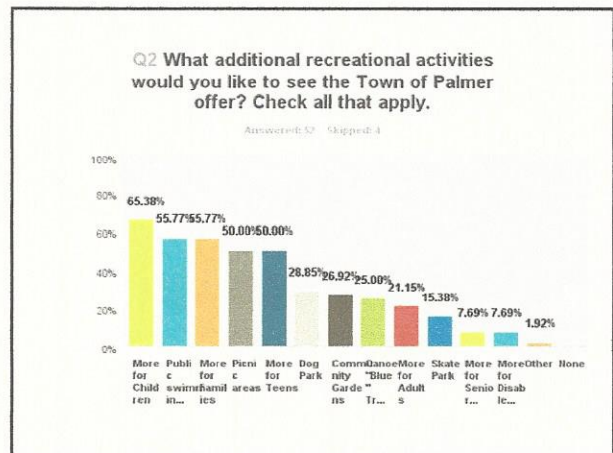
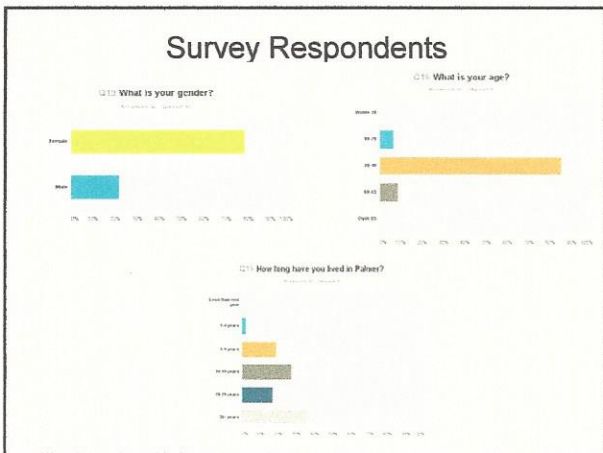
- Open space is conservation, forested, recreational, agricultural, or corridor/park lands/open areas protected from development
- Also can be undeveloped land with conservation or recreation interest (may or may not be protected from development)
- Active recreation includes organized activities, such as soccer, tennis, etc.
- Passive recreation includes walking, hiking, etc.

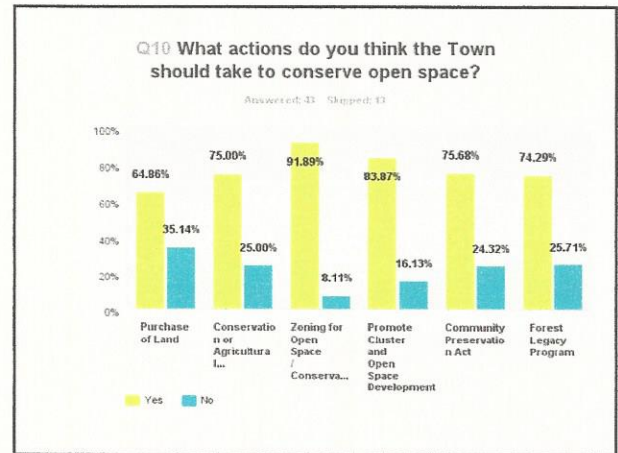
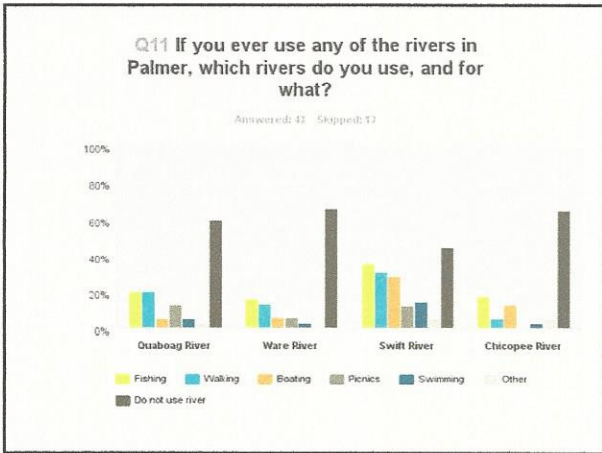
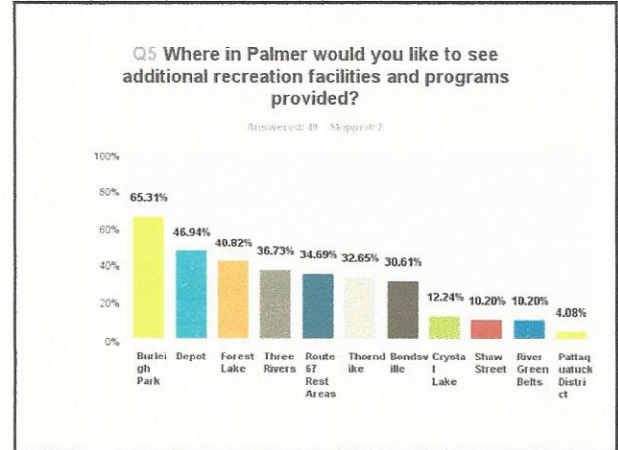
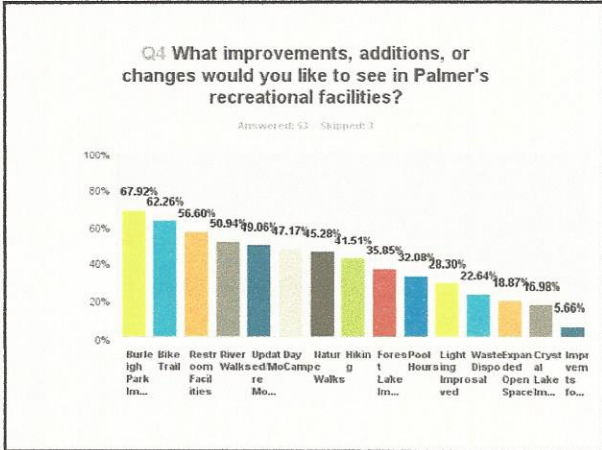
Palmer OSRP Survey

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/PalmerOSRP2014>

1. What type of recreational activities do you and/or your family participate in here in Palmer? Check all that apply.

2. What additional recreational activities would you like to see the Town of Palmer offer? Check all that apply.





Community Preservation Act

- Municipalities may elect to create a local community preservation fund through tax levy not to exceed 3%
- Palmer does not participate in CPA

Forest Legacy Program

- Federal program for state-designated areas of environmentally or economically important forest areas that are at risk of development
- Primary protection tool is conservation easements, keeping land in private ownership
- Palmer is located in one of MA's designated Forest Legacy areas

2006 OSRP Goals

1. Preserve sensitive conservation areas and agricultural lands
2. Protect water resources and promote appropriate use of them
3. Preserve and manage open space lands, archaeological treasures, and scenic views for conservation and recreational purposes.
4. Protect significant plant and wildlife habitats, endangered organisms, and wildlife corridors.
5. Enhance neighborhood parks, playgrounds, and recreational opportunities.