



TOWN OF PALMER

Open Space Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 15th, 2021 – 11:30 AM

LOCATION: VIA ZOOM

Donald Blais, Jr.
David Cotter
Nick Zeo
Kathy Burns
Phil Hebert
Michael Swiatlowski
Howard Fife
Amber Kumpulanian
Kelly Bergeron
Lynn Greany

Contact: Sarah Fortune
Email:

sfortune@townofpalmer.co

Members Present: Donald Blais, Jr.
Nicholas Zeo
Howard Fife
Amber Kumpulanian
Mike Swiatlowski
Kelly Bergeron

Members Absent: Dave Cotter
Phil Hebert
Lynn Greany
Kathy Burns

Also Present: Sarah Fortune, Interim Conservation Agent
Mimi Kaplan, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

1. Call to Order: 11:30 AM – Donald Blais, Jr. (Chair)

- a. Roll call attendance:
- i. **Donald Blais, Jr. – present**
 - ii. **Nicholas Zeo – present**
 - iii. **Howard Fife – present**
 - iv. **Amber Kumpulanian – present**
 - v. **Mike Swiatlowski – present**
 - vi. **Kelly Bergeron – present**
 - vii. **Dave Cotter - absent**
 - viii. **Phil Hebert – absent**
 - ix. **Lynn Greany – absent**
 - x. **Kathy Burns – absent**

2. Review Mail/Phone Messages

There was no mail or phone messages to review at this time.

3. New/Old Business

- a. Review Project Timeline & Scope of Work

The Interim Agent reported that she has begun updating Section 3 of the Open Space Plan, which discusses the Community Setting. The Town will also be responsible for updating Sections 4 and 5, which discuss the Environmental Inventory and Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest in addition to Sections 8 and 8, which discuss Goals and Objectives and the Seven Year Action Plan for implementation of the Open

Space Plan. The Town will also develop, distribute, and publicize a community survey on open space needs and desires, and will organize one (1) public visioning session.

Mimi Kaplan, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) representative reported that PVPC will be updating the eight (8) required maps and seven (7) recommended maps to include in the Open Space Plan; these maps will likely be ready to review in August 2021. PVPC will also attend three (3) meetings with Town staff and the Open Space Advisory Committee.

The Open Space Plan should be fully updated and presented to Town Council for adoption by December 2021. Once submitted to the Division of Conservation Services (DCS), the plan will likely receive conditional approval which will allow the Town to apply for grants while also making revisions as necessary and as determined by DCS.

b. Review Survey Results

The Committee proceeded to review results from the open space community survey, which was available for residents to respond from July 1, 2021 to July 30, 2021. The survey was available to take digitally and by hard-copy form; the hard copies were distributed at the Town Hall, the Palmer Public Library, all four (4) Post Offices, and the Senior Center. The survey was also distributed digitally to the local Housing Authority, to the Palmer Public School District, and via several community Facebook groups. The survey was advertised in the local newspaper, on local access TV, and through informational flyers posted at popular community establishments.

There were a total of 200 responses to the open space community survey; 156 responses were online while 44 responses were in hard-copy. Kelly Bergeron asked what age group had the largest response rate; Amber Kumpulanian stated that age groups 30-44 and 45-59 had the largest response rate.

The Committee proceeded to review and discuss the online survey results; due to technological difficulties, hard copy surveys had not be uploaded into Survey Monkey prior to this meeting.

c. Select Date for Public Visioning Session

The Committee proceeded to select a date for the required Public Visioning Session, which will allow members of the public to review and provide input on the draft Open Space Plan. Public visioning sessions could include a powerpoint presentation summarizing the draft OSRP, or attendees can split into groups to review and provide input the various sections. The Committee will work to advertise the Public Visioning Session to get as many attendees as possible. The session is scheduled to occur on September 28, 2021 at 6:30 PM and will be held at the Palmer Public Library or at the Town Hall.

d. Finalize Committee Meeting Schedule

The first scheduled meeting of the OSRP Advisory Committee was scheduled on Monday, June 21, 2021 at 7 PM but was canceled due to a lack of quorum. In order to avoid future meeting cancellations due to quorum, the Committee came to a consensus that Thursday mornings are generally a good time to meet. The Committee also agreed that meeting via Zoom rather than in person worked well. Mimi added that the Committee can meet without her attendance if they feel that more meetings are necessary.

4. Set Next Meeting Date

- a. The next meeting of the Open Space Advisory Committee Meeting will occur on Thursday, August 12, 2021 at 11:30 AM viz Zoom.

5. Meeting Adjourned: 1:00 PM

Motion made by Nick Zeo to adjourn at 1:00 PM

Motion was seconded by Hoard Fife

No further discussion

Role call vote: Donald Blais, Jr. – aye; Nicholas Zeo – aye; Howard Fife – aye; Amber Kumpulanian – aye; Mike Swiatlowski – aye; Kelly Bergeron – aye

Vote was Unanimous – Motion Caries

Sincerely Submitted,
Sarah A. Fortune
Interim Conservation Agent



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The following is a list of documents used at the above-mentioned meeting, in addition to those included in the agenda packet which is part of the official record of the meeting:

Number	Description	Agenda Item	Notes
1.	OSRP Update: Project Timeline	Review Project Timeline & Scope of Work	Retained in 2021 OSRP Update
2.	ORSP Update: Scope of Services	Review Project Timeline & Scope of Work	Retained in 2021 OSRP Update
3.	Online Survey Results	Review Survey Results	Retained in 2021 OSRP Update