



# TOWN OF PALMER

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## OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### Meeting Minutes

**Tuesday May 13, 2014 – 2:00 PM**

**Members Present:** Angela Panaccione, Conservation Agent  
Tharyn Nein-Large, Conservation Commission  
Alice Davey, Community Development Director  
Dave Cotter, Trail Committee  
Linda Leduc, Town Planner  
Jim Ostrout, Recreation Director  
Bonnie Weeks, Building Inspector/ADA Coordinator

**Members Absent:** Michael Marciniec, Chair of Planning Board  
Donald Blais Jr, Town Council

**Also Present:** John Sasur, Urban Trail Presentation  
Jaimye Bartak, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

**Meeting Opens:** 2:00 PM – Angela Panaccione

### Minute Approval

Motion by Jim Ostrout to approve the minutes from April 22, 2014  
Motion Seconded by Dave Cotter  
No further discussion – Vote Taken: 5-0-2

### Member Reports

Community Visioning Posting:

- Jim Ostrout – Hung Community Visioning flyers & Survey information in Friendly's & Blue Star. Also sent home flyer with students from Converse Middle School, High School and Pathfinder
- Dave Cotter – Hung Visioning Flyers in all 4 Post Offices

### Public Survey Discussion

54 Surveys have been taken online so far. 79% of respondents are women.

Current eight (8) locations of Survey & Box:

- Senior Center

- “Yellow House”
- Library
- 4 Post Offices (Palmer, Thorndike, Three Rivers, Bondsville)

Other Methods of Survey Distribution:

- Trail Committee (Dave Cotter)
- Farmers Markets (Angela Panaccione)
- Recreation Events - Circus, Sport sign ups (Jim Ostrout)
- Veterans Agent (Angela Panaccione)
- Palmer Historical & Cultural Center – Bob Halves (Angela Panaccione)
- Condo’s in Bondsville

Surveying on Election Day – Angela will speak with Sue (Town Clerk):

- Jim & Dave will survey at Converse Middle School from 8am-10am, and from 4pm-8pm
- Angela & Tharyn will survey at church from 8am-10am, and from 4pm-8pm. Surveying at church may have to be done outside due to limited room
- Survey will be distributed upon exit and residents will be asked to complete the survey there (since its last day of surveying)
- Bring box of pens!!!

Tharyn will enter all the paper surveys online during his internship/office hours. That way Survey Monkey will tabulate all results for us.

**John Sasur: Urban Trail Presentation**

John Sasur attended today’s meeting to present a proposal for an Urban Walking Trail to the Committee and request it be added to the OSRP as a priority area for recreational development. The trail would follow the Ware River from Thorndike to Three Rivers, and pass several Native American historical sites on the way, including the Indian Weir. The Wenimisset Trail would appear to be an appropriate name for this trail based on the historical significance of the area. The trail could be a loop trail (1.6mi walk already on sidewalk) and would also serve as a vital connection trail to larger more diverse trail system in the area. The trail would also provide an easily accessible, widely available and low-cost opportunity to meet the educational, historical and environmental science needs of our students within our community schools such as the nearby Old Mill Pond School, Palmer High and Pathfinder Regional School.

Benefits of the trail include:

- Foster a more active and healthy lifestyle
- Strengthen the social and family fabric of the residents of Palmer  
Physical activity that would improve physical and mental health, and reduce stress
- Provide easy access for young and old
- Increase property values throughout the town by offering a nearby recreational opportunity
- Enhance our appreciation of Palmer’s unique natural and cultural heritage
- Provide a way to connect the villages of Palmer

Sasur has done the majority of the work for this already, including identifying all property owners along the proposed trail corridor and identifying areas of access issues, including the railroad crossing. 95% of the trail area is owned by the Town already, there are few parcels the town would need to either acquire or develop an access easement with.

### **Discuss Community Visioning Forum**

The Community Visioning Session is scheduled on May 20<sup>th</sup> from 6pm-8pm. Angela Panaccione has reserved the room at the Library. The room holds 100 people. Angela Panaccione has had a press release run in the Palmer Journal and has add the event to the town website and the Community Events Calendar. and Dave Cotter have hung the community visioning flyers around town.

Jaimye Bartak has supplied an Agenda for the Committee to review. Angela Panaccione suggested reviewing the goals and objectives first. Dave Cotter though doing the mapping first would be a better idea, to orientate people to place. Alice Davey agreed to do mapping first, so participants' could map areas that are of importance then get into the goals and objectives discussion.

Jaimye Bartak has supplied a map for Committee to review. Jim Ostrout suggested a more generic map, with limited information present would be better, that way participants could fill the map in themselves and the moderators could get a better sense of what residents knew currently existed for open space and recreational areas in town. Bartak will simplify the map and send it to Panaccione for final review.

The moderators for the evening will be: Jaimye Bartak, Angela Panaccione, Alice Davey and Jim Ostrout. Moderators will meet at the library at 5pm to begin setting up.

Panaccione will bring a sign-in sheet and copies of the goals and objectives handouts. Bartak will bring copies of the agendas.

Angela Panaccione will look into the Connect CTY Phone notice system to inform residents of the meeting, as well as look into advertising on town notice board.

Linda Leduc will send an email to PRA, Planning Board, ZBA and Town Council members reminding them of the meeting.

### **Discuss Goals & Objectives**

The Committee reviewed and discussed the goals and objectives (Chapter 8) from the 2006 Plan and developed recommendations for the plan update. A few revisions to wording were made, but otherwise the Committee felt the list from 2006 was representative of the town's current needs. Information obtained from the Community Visioning Session will help shape the list further. Angela Panaccione will make a handout for the visioning session with the revised list.

## **Discuss Maps with Jaimye Bartak, PVPC**

The Committee briefly discussed the draft maps provided by Jaimye Bartak, PVPC.

Revisions/Comments pertained to the following maps:

1. **Conservation and Recreation Lands:** Angela supplied Jaimye with new information provided by Donald Duffy, regarding Onley Road and surround conservation lands missing from the original map
2. **Zoning Map:** Linda/Planning will provide relevant information
3. **Historic Context:** Angela supplied Jaimye with pages from Don Duffy's book that list historic places by lat/long

## **Meeting Schedule**

- May 20, 2014 @ 6pm: Community Visioning Forum @ Library
- June 17, 2014 @ 2pm: Review Section 6, 8, 9 & rest of OSRP
- July 8, 2014 @ 2pm: Review Draft OSRP
- August 12, 2014 @ 2pm: Preparation for Public Hearing
- September 2014: Public Forum on the Plan
- November 2014: Submit Draft Plan to State

## **Next Meeting Date:** June 17, 2014 @ 2pm

- Review Section 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9
  - Section 3: Community Setting – Alice Davey & Linda Leduc
  - Section 4: Environmental Inventory – Angela Panaccione
  - Section 5: Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest – Jaimye Bartak, PVPC
  - Section 6: Community Goals – Jaimye Bartak, PVPC
  - Section 8: Goal & Objectives – PVPC and Committee
  - Section 9: Seven Year Action Plan – Angela Panaccione
- Continue review of draft maps

## **Meeting Adjourns:** 4:30 PM

Motion by Alice Davey to adjourn at 4:30 pm

Motion Seconded by Jim Ostrout

No further discussion – Vote Taken: 6-0-0