

Swanzey Open Space Committee

1/8/08 meeting minutes

Minutes are not final until reviewed and approved by the Open Space Committee. Review and approval of minutes generally takes place at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Committee.

The meeting convened at 5:00 p.m.

Attendance: Victoria Barlow, Deb Crowder, Theresa DiLuzio, Jeanne Thieme, Bud Winsor, Town Planner Sara Carbonneau.

Guests/members of the public - none present.

Status of current land protection projects (project manager)

Pendleton easement - Mary Lou Caffery advises putting to rest the prospect of an easement until legal issues are resolved.

Johnson easement (Thieme)

The family is reviewing a Purchase and Sales Agreement.

Kibler and Gill (DiLuzio)

The Perry Farm conservation easement is complete. Dee Robbins has submitted an invoice for \$12,000 for transaction costs.

Dee offers to attend the February OSC meeting to go over her file for this project.

Pullen ~ No activity. Thieme likely will see the Pullens in February.

Dunn (DiLuzio) - no activity.

Potential projects ~ Committee members also discussed two other potential projects in south central Swanzey. DiLuzio and Thieme will contact the property owners to offer help and information.

Liasion reports

SM - The annual budget hearing will be held on Wednesday, January 9, at 7:30. Barlow will attend to represent the OSC.

PB ~ At its January 3 meeting, the Planning Board discussed its objectives for 2008. The Board would like to extend the work of the cross-committee (with representatives from the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, and Open Space Committee) working group that developed the proposed Conservation Residential Subdivision (CRS) regulations. If the March vote approves the zoning amendment that replaces existing cluster development provisions with the CRS regulations, the working group will be asked to make the necessary changes to the subdivision regulations to incorporate the CRS provisions.

The working group will present the CRS regulations to the February 21 Planning Board meeting.

Members discussed promoting the regulations prior to the town vote on March 11, and concluded that sufficient information will be available in the voters' guide.

ConCom – Year-end project wrap-up prompted Dee Robbins of the MC to defer until February her offer to attend the ConCom meeting to present information on conservation easements, with a focus on reserved rights. Ryan Owens would also like to present at this session.

At its December meeting, the ConCom decided to hold a joint meeting with the OSC. Barlow and Stepenuck have been trading e-mail messages to pin down the meeting objectives. From the OSC perspective, discussing the Conservation Fund is top priority, and should take no more than 15 minutes. Barlow proposes the two groups meet in the 30 minutes between the OSC and ConCom meetings – from 6:30 to 7:00 on February 12.

Currently, the Conservation Fund holds \$101,213 (not including income from managing town forests), held in two separate bank accounts. In the past, the ConCom has used this fund to send students to conservation camp, for roadside cleanup, and for memberships. To disburse the money, the ConCom only needs to submit a written request to the Selectmen.

In discussion, OSC members noted that since the bulk of the Conservation Fund comes from the current use land use change tax, it makes sense to apply some of that income towards protecting open space. Furthermore, if the OSC did not exist, and the ConCom was doing the work of protecting open space, the ConCom likely would be applying the Conservation Fund towards that effort.

Members will ask the ConCom to consider funding easement transaction costs on a case-by-case basis, with the understanding that the transaction costs typically cost no more than \$15,000 and that, realistically, we expect to complete only two to three per year.

CIP – no activity

OS Advisory – Thieme expects to complete and distribute the report by end of week.

Status of assignments + projects

Web page – no activity

Project management worksheet, communications log – DiLuzio continues to develop the project management worksheet. She is incorporating a flow sheet used by the MC.

The MC is willing to provide a copy of their files at project completion.

Protection of 3 town-owned parcels – Carlson and Winsor

Grace Lilly of the Conservation Commission has compiled information to unravel the status of the Mill K parcel, a top contender for town protection. Crowder and Barlow will invite her to present her findings at the March OSC meeting.

Town land purchase/easement management – Crowder and Barlow

With a positive Town vote, the Conservation Subdivision workgroup will continue meeting to amend the subdivision regulations to incorporate the new Conservation Residential Subdivision regulations.

Oxen initiative – Barlow and Thieme

Thieme has procured another 200 plush oxen, with printed kerchiefs.

For the month of May, the NH Local Government Center calendar features Dee Geer's photograph of Buck and Ike.

Buck is available, by appointment, to hold telephone conversations with young children.

Wildlife Action Plan maps - no activity.

Resource Directory - no activity.

Budget report

To date, the balance in the Open Space Acquisition Capital Reserve Account is \$92,464.14
[\$40,877.26 (balance from 2005) + \$50,000 (balance from 2006) + \$2,137.68 interest
less expenses \$4,925 (paid out in 2006) = \$88,089.14 + \$50,000 (allocated for 2007) less
\$33,625 allocation for purchase of Johnson easement and \$12,000 for Perry Farm transaction
costs. Projected pending expenses: Johnson transaction costs like will be on the order of
\$15,000 - \$20,000.

The OSC spent \$2,238.37 in 2007 from the "office" account.

*(NB: Please distinguish the Open Space Acquisition Capital Reserve Account – managed by the
Selectmen - from the Conservation Fund. The Conservation Fund, which is managed by the
Conservation Commission, includes income from the Current Use change tax.)*

New business

Annual Report draft submissions - Receiving no further comments, Barlow submitted the OSC
report and the Buck and Ike report to Town Hall on December 21.

Discussion of areas of focus for 2008 work - Members assessed ideas, basing priorities on

- Personal desire to execute the idea
- Maximum effectiveness relative to the amount of work
- Variety, to reach the full spectrum of people, especially children

Winsor: Celebrating the donors of easements is of highest priority.

Committee members will deliver a gift basket to donors at the completion of easements. Postcards
should be mailed town-wide at the completion of each project.

Members decided to hold an annual tea in April to celebrate the heroes who have protected or
are considering protecting their land, and who have helped furthered open space protection. The
2008 tea will be held on April 22, location to be determined. Thieme will head up event planning.

DiLuzio: Use regular reminders to encourage open space protection. At the least, always include
information in *Swanzy Uncovered*. Consider preparing an OSC newsletter that would come out
more frequently, at least three times a year.

Carbonneau: Target owners of properties of 25 or more acres with another mailing. Post existing
articles and materials on the Town web site.

Barlow: Buck and Ike are our most effective way to reach children. Buck and Ike will attend . . .

Birthday party (early May, date TBD);

MRHS Walk for Animals (May 18);

Cheshire Fair (for one day only; the Fair runs from July 30 through August 3);

The Old Homestead (July 18, 19, 20);

Old Home Day and parade (July 20), including art show of special Swanzy places, with some
images to be included in a town calendar?

MRHS Homecoming parade (September)

Crowder: Prepare and mail one postcard to list all of Buck and Ike's events, featuring the new portrait. Include the option of a telephone interview with Buck.

Carbonneau: Prepare an OSC calendar for 2009. Include dates of town events, meetings; contact numbers. Give copies to donors to Buck and Ike. Hold a contest for artists and photographers, and select images of people's favorite open spaces (or Buck and Ike!) for each month.

Crowder: Consolidate events, wherever possible. For example, at the end of the Old Home Day parade, hold a celebratory picnic/cookout at the Potash Bowl.

Members decided to defer until 2009 holding an event with abutting towns to celebrate open space protection.

New assignments

Continue to consider the most effective ways to accomplish the OSC mission.

Minutes of 12/11 meeting

Motion by Winsor to approve the minutes. Second by Thieme. All in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m. Next meeting: February 12

Respectfully submitted,
Victoria Barlow