

Swanzy Open Space Committee
4/10/07 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, Nancy Carlson (left the meeting at 5:20), Deb Crowder, Theresa Diluzio, Katherine Feist, Jeanne Thieme, Bud Winsor. Town Planner Carbonneau.
Also present: Dave Krisch (left at beginning of non-public session), Brittney Adams (left at beginning of non-public session), Lewis Kibler (left at 5:15).

Guests/members of the public (15 minutes)

Lewis Kibler discussed his property on Taylor Hill Road.

Brittney Adams, a wildlife journalism student at Monadnock Regional High School, expressed her interest in helping with open space preservation.

Status of current land protection projects (10 minutes)

Pendleton easement

Attorney Mary Lou Caffrey has been working to resolve issues with Lily's reverse mortgage. She is optimistic.

Johnson easement

The estimated total land area of the Johnson parcel is 120 acres. About 17 acres (around the buildings and gravel pit) will be reserved from the easement. Of the remaining +/- 103 acres, about 18 acres consist of wetland and flood plain soils. About 30 acres are mostly steep forest. Approximately 55 acres are level and developable, with extensive frontage on town roads.

The Monadnock Conservancy's Lands Committee has deliberated and enthusiastically voted to proceed. The Board will take formal action on moving forward with the easement on April 13. The Lands Committee anticipates asking that some potentially hazardous materials (say, old vehicles that might leak fluids) be removed.

John Newcombe of the Monadnock Appraisal Company has prepared "rough" values of the conservation easement, for preliminary planning purposes only. If the Committee adopts the policy of offering up to 10% of the value of an easement, when needed, a separate valuation will need to be prepared for each parcel (approximate cost, \$400 per valuation). Members noted that payments for easements would actually be donated to the Monadnock Conservancy, to finance the Conservancy's purchase of the specific easement.

Blood easement

The invoice for legal fees has been submitted for reimbursement.

Liaison reports

The Conservation Commission has reserved time at the beginning of their April agenda for OS to appear, to discuss our committees' missions and scope of work.

Advisory Board: Thieme has prepared the quarterly report, for immediate e-mail distribution to Board members.

Status of assignments + projects (15 minutes)

Web page - We still lack technical expertise. Who can help?

Project management worksheet, communications log - Feist distributed and introduced the worksheet and log. These materials will be the basis for Feist's in-depth explanation of the conservation easement process at the May meeting.

Protection of 3 town-owned lands - Carlson and Winsor continue to work from tax parcel maps to determine which town-owned lands have highest priority. Mount Caesar still appears to be at the top of the list, as well as the Harriet Carter field. The Sawmill property is owned by the Conservation Commission, but has no restrictions; however, as mostly wetlands it is a low risk for development.

It will soon be apparent which small parcels in subdivisions likely should be conveyed to abutters.

Certain properties not in town ownership may be priorities for protection. These include two parcels in Westport Village and the G. Hall parcel.

Town land purchase/easement management - The Open Space Committee is the first item on the Conservation Commission's April agenda. At this meeting we hope to exchange descriptions of our committees' roles and responsibilities.

March postcard - The Pendleton postcard is still on hold until complications with the Pendleton reverse mortgage are resolved.

Oxen initiative -

Crowder completed a charcoal and pastel portrait of Buck and Ike, to be reproduced on donation receipts, note cards, posters, and other promotional materials.

A corral-building work day is scheduled for April 22, at the Potash Bowl, from 9:00 to 5:00. Workers should bring a sack lunch.

The birthday party has been nudged to Sunday, May 20, to make it easier for business people to attend. The party will begin at 1:00, with major contributors having their portrait taken with the oxen. At 2:00 we will give the oxen our birthday wishes, sing the song, and present the guys with their "cakes." We need many cupcakes for the two-legged guests.

Krisch has engaged Ralph Randall (New England Off-Premise Advertising, on South Winchester Street) to prepare a 4'x6' sign for the corral, at a deep discount. Krisch and Feist have secured donations to pay for the sign. Crowder will assist in the design, which will include the Old Homestead Association logo, the Open Space logo, and the words "Buck and Ike - Swanzey's biggest rural characters."

On March 31, master teamster Tiger Batchelder drove the oxen. He finds them docile, well-trained, chubby, and a good prospect for our activities. With Mike Johnson's help, Barlow, Thieme, and Feist will become Buck and Ike's personal trainers, to get them back into shape.

Members of the Planning Board received copies of the brochure and a quick overview at their April 5 meeting.

Our \$5,500 Entergy grant requests were not funded. However, donations continue to trickle in.

Wildlife Action Plan maps – The Town’s tax map provider is in the process of transforming tax parcel data to GIS format.

Budget report

To date, the balance in the Open Space Acquisition Fund is \$138,089.14

[\$40,877.26 (balance from 2005) + \$50,000 (balance from 2006) + \$,2137.68 interest
less expenses \$4,925 (paid out in 2006) = \$88,089.14 + \$50,000 (allocated for 2007)]

New business (40 minutes)

1. At 6:10, motion by Feist, seconded by Winsor, to enter non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3,II(d). Vote by role call. All in favor. The Committee came out of non-public session at 6:40. Motion by Winsor to seal the minutes indefinitely. Seconded by Dilusio. Vote by role call. All in favor.
2. John Newcombe of Monadnock Appraisal Company will be invited to attend the May 8 meeting to discuss appraisals of conservation land.
3. The Open Space Committee continues to receive offers of help from Swanzeey citizens. Randy Martin (Keene Motorsports) and Gerry Bussiere both have expressed interest in helping the Committee. Putting this interest to the Town’s best advantage will be a topic of the May 8 meeting.
4. Carbonneau distributed articles from the 4/11/07 *Peterborough Ledger* by Dick Ober and others about conservation easements.

New assignments (5 minutes)

All Committee members were given oxen initiative brochures with new insert page, a solicitation guideline, and asked to solicit three friends for a contribution to “bale out” Buck and Ike.

Minutes of 3/20 meeting

Vote by Crowder to approve the minutes. Second by Feist. All in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Victoria Barlow