

Present: Acting Chair Gail Pare, Susan Carmichael, Sandy Hislop, Jan Stuart, Chris Cross, Planner Tom Morgan.

Meeting was opened at 7:09 p.m.

Discussed the makeup of the committee - made up of representatives of various Boards and Commissions.

Marlon Frink, formerly a Planning Board rep. Will be asked to remain on the Open Space Committee as a Member at Large.

Noted that the Selectmen have the ultimate authority over the appointments and Jan Stuart, Selectmen's rep, agreed to discuss at the next Selectmen's meeting Appointments will be formalized when list of members are verified.

Minutes: Minutes of meeting held 2/7/02, were read, amended by deleting the statement that a donation would be sent to the County Extension Service (Town pays dues for this service). Minutes as amended were accepted on a motion by Sandy Hislop, seconded by Jan Stuart.

It was suggested that a honorarium be made to Attorney Charles Tucker for his time spent at the last public informational meeting. Tom Morgan stated that Attorney Tucker is very knowledgeable in the field of legal land preservation easements and he would recommend him at such times that the Town needed agreements written up.

Tom Morgan brought to the Committee's attention that two properties are threatened with development and Committee should be actively pursuing and contacting the owners to discuss options available for preserving open space.

One of the properties has frontage on Old Post Rd & Fox Point Road. A long discussion ensued regarding options to be presented - Tom Morgan suggested that a Conservation Easement to the town of land fronting the roads would retain the rural atmosphere while allowing residential development of the rear land.

Chris Cross suggested, as the land is within the flight path, that the PDA/FAA be approached regarding land uses.

Majority of the committee felt that it would be best to protect the rear land to maintain wildlife habitat and natural resources and prevent the need to construct roads and allow development of residential lots on the roads.

Concluded that a conservation easement on the rear land is preferred - that the owners will be contacted to discuss the possibility of granting an easement.

The second property identified by Tom has waterfrontage and the Nature Conservancy is

interested in negotiating with the owners.

Committee discussed the need to educate the townspeople on the benefits of preserving open space - that short term may be costly but long term will save taxpayers from the expense of enlarging schools, police, fire department and highway departments.

Funding to preserve the open land was discussed - the Committee agreed that the need for funding is immediate and will recommend to the Selectmen that a Special Town Meeting be held to raise money by Bonds.

Tom Morgan agreed to draft a letter to be mailed to owners of the fifteen (15) properties on the priority list, asking that they let the Committee know if they have any interest in negotiating with the Town. The draft will be reviewed before being signed and mailed.

Other Business:

Chris Cross brought to the Committees attention the work in progress to preserve the Tricky Cove area of Town by easements from the State. Will discuss further at the next meeting - however it was noted that this Committee's main purpose is the preservation of residential open space.

Chris also reported that the owner of the former drive-in theater would like to discuss the possibility of granting the town a 10 year non development agreement for waiver of property taxes. Committee agreed that this is commercial land and the town would gain no benefit by keeping it undeveloped and waiving the property taxes.

The Committee agreed to meet next on May 2, at 7 p.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:05 on a motion by Sandy Hislop, seconded by Susie Carmichael.

Pat Main
Secretary