Open Space/Master Plan Committee Minutes

Town Hall, Banquet Hall

Minutes of July 15, 2009

Members Present: Gwen Broz, Sarah Heller (arrived 6:45pm), Tim Simon, William Simpson Jr., Chris Casucci

Guests: Judy and Skip Nielson of the QQLA; Dan Leahy of the Planning Board

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Chair Bill Simpson.

A) Meeting with QQLA Representatives. QQLA President Judy Nielson and her husband, Skip Nielson, met with us and discussed the recommendations of DEP Grant 319 document that they had submitted to the Selectmen. One politically sensitive recommendation was to raise the height of the flow barrier between North and South Ponds. The weir was built in 1991 at a height of 691 ft about sea level. This holds back about 1/2 of the nutrients. 18 inches higher would hold back 80% of the back wash and this is what the state recommends. The next 319 grant will study to assure the new height would not damage anyone's house.

Another issue of concern is the Spencer wastewater treatment plant that outflows into the Seven Mile River and eventually into North and South Pond. The QQLA would like to be part of the permitting process for the treatment plant and at least be notified if there are problems because it affects the lakes. Standards for lakes should be different than standards for rivers. Judy and Skip explained that it takes 2-3 years to flush out South Pond since it is spring fed while North only takes 1-2 weeks to flush since it is essentially a wide spot in the river. It was suggested that the Keith Davis of the DEP and Chicopee Watershed Committee might be able to help with this issue.

A third issue is to continue monitoring and treating for invasive weeds. The QQLA devotes a lot of time and money to treatments – Copper sulfate and hand pulling weeds with scuba divers. North Pond is too far along for this so it is only done in South Pond.

A fourth issue is the Town Beach. People are using it but no maintenance is being done. There is a lot of trash and there is a safety issue. Who is in charge of maintaining it?

A fifth issue is the need for active improvement in catch basins and storm drains so they don't flow into the lakes when there is heavy rain.

The committee thanked the QQLA representatives for their time and all that they do for the lakes.

B) Discussion with Planning Board. Dan Leahy said that in general he is happy with the OSRP and will write a letter to endorse it so that the other members can review at their August 1 meeting. Dan mentioned that the 100 year flood plain district should be better defined and the zoning maps need work. Chris said that many towns already have their zoning maps digitized and online. We should work towards that goal.

C) Next steps for the OSRP. We need letters of review from the Selectmen, Planning Board and Recreation Committee. Sarah will send copies of the OSRP version 9 to the Board of Health and Selectmen. The Rec Committee needs to be contacted as well. Tim will cover the Conservation Committee.

D) Housing and Transportation Chapters. Bill will contact Cheri about Transportation. Gwen will write a summary on Housing for the Citizen. Sarah will put Gwen in contact with Phil of the Citizen.

E) Chapter Summaries. Bill will put together an outline similar to Hatfield's of sections for each chapter. The summaries should be a maximum of 3 pages for each chapter. Sarah will send final drafts of all chapters that are done (OSRP, Housing, Economic Development) to everyone on the committee so that we can be sure everyone has them.

C) Next Meeting and Adjournment: August 5 at 6:30 pm is our next meeting. We adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Sarah Heller, Secretary

Date approved by the Committee: April 22, 2010 Date submitted to the Selectmen's office: June 10, 2010