

# **APPROVED**

## **Town of Grantham Open Space Committee Meeting Minutes June 3, 2015**

Thain Allan called the Open Space Committee meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. in the Town Hall located at 300 Route 10 South, Grantham, NH 03753.

### Members Present:

Thain Allan, Chair  
Allen Wilson, Vice Chair  
Craig McArt, Secretary  
Susan Buchanan, Grantham Conservation Commission  
Conrad Frey, Zoning Board of Adjustment Chair  
Charlie McCarthy, Planning Board Vice Chair

Members Absent: None

### Guest members of the Grantham Conservation Commission:

Sheridan Brown, Laura Nagy, Dick Hocker, Dave Wood

Members of the Public: None

### **Approval of Minutes**

A motion to approve the minutes of the April 9 meeting was made by Mr. Wilson and seconded by Mr. McCarthy.

***Unanimously Approved***

### **Old Business**

None

### **New Business**

After all had introduced themselves, Mr. Allan began a PowerPoint slide presentation, which is under preparation for a later meeting the Committee will schedule with the Select Board. The presentation summarized, in draft form, the work completed in fulfillment of the first part of its charge: "Map, inventory and analyze all open space (undeveloped land) parcels of 10 acres or more." Comments and suggestions flowed freely throughout the presentation as many issues were addressed. Mr. Brown thought it important to provide more clarity between parcels that are permanently protected and those under Current Use designation. Bonding was discussed, Mr. Wood suggesting setting a goal of purchasing some percentage of town space in a particular quadrant or submitting a warrant article to set aside some amount of money to purchase some number of acres. He felt the more specificity in this regard, the more value.

There was discussion about how to approach landowners and the suggestion that tax benefits be emphasized. Most agreed that the effort could benefit from liaison with land conservation organizations such as the Upper Valley Land Trust and the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. In discussing protection of Grantham's drinking water, it was noted that the high yield aquifer, as well as the unknown yield aquifer to the north of it on the map, lack appropriate testing and confirmation.

## **APPROVED**

Mr. Wilson speculated that zoning open space could be an effective means of limiting development, while Mr. Frey was skeptical that it would be practical. Mr. Wood advised the committee to focus on four or five bulleted measures to be recommended or proposed in a finalized Open Space Protection Plan, and that they be included in the Town Master Plan update. Ms. Nagy wondered if it wouldn't be helpful to indicate, using the inventory data, which parcels have the most assets. Ms. Buchanan felt that doing so would amount to prioritizing – something the Committee wished to avoid.

All agreed that increased community participation in town activities such as hiking trips, trail work, etc. could be important in stimulating appreciation of open space. Publication of a Grantham Trails Map was suggested. Mr. McArt pointed out that clearing trails in the recent open space acquisition adding to Brookside Park, because of its high visibility, presented an excellent opportunity for involving the community. The need for adequate trailhead parking at various locations was mentioned.

As suggestions continued, mention of the idea of the Town's overflow or surplus account came up. Mr. Frey suggested earmarking some percentage of it for open space acquisition. Returning to the slide presentation, Mr. McCarthy thought that the portion of Grantham lying within Corbin Park should be defined in acreage. It was recommended that the "Vacant" column in the Ownership Distribution slide was confusing and should be taken out.

The Committee favored the Select Board's September 23 meeting date to present its Open Space Mapping, Inventory and Analysis Report, and to propose that, going forward, it develop an Open Space Protection Plan instead of prioritizing parcels as originally charged.

### **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Mr. Wilson and seconded by Mr. Frey to adjourn the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

***Unanimously Approved***

The next Open Space Committee meeting will take place on July 2, 2015 at 8:30 a.m. in the Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room at the Town Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,

Craig McArt,  
Secretary