



Town of Bridgewater **Open Space Committee**

April 18, 2024

7:00 PM

The meeting will be held virtually via Zoom.

To attend via video, click on the link below:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83378827415>

To attend via phone, dial: 1(646) 876-9923

Meeting ID: 833 7882 7415

MEETING AGENDA

Disclosure: Pursuant to Section 20 of Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2020, An Act Relative to Extending Certain Covid-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency, and the March 31, 2025, extension granted by Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, this meeting for the Town of Bridgewater will be fully remote and accessible to the public through remote participation to the greatest extent possible. No in-person attendance is permitted. Citizens who wish to tune in to the meeting may do so via Zoom.

A. Call to Order

B. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a) November 16, 2023 Meeting Minutes
- b) January 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes

C. Public Comment

D. Old Business

- a) Publicity: Update on Town Facebook/Website Location for Open Space News
- b) Wyman Meadow:
 - 1) Trail Work and Parking Area
 - 2) Hunting on Town property
- c) Tree Committee Report
- d) Chapter 61 Properties
- e) Hanson Farm
- f) Lake Nip Project: Conversation Committee Meeting April 25, 2024

E. New Business

- a) Town Day of Service
- b) Celebration of High Street Dam Removal/Bridge Reconstruction: May 21, 2024 @ 11:00a.m.
- c) Arbor Day

F. Additional Items for Discussion

- a) Next Meeting: Thursday, May 16, 2024 at 7:00p.m.

G. Adjournment of Meeting

**Town of Bridgewater Open Space Committee
November 16, 2023
Corrected Draft Meeting Minutes**

Attendance:

Committee Members present: Eileen Hiney, Chair, Maureen Minasian, Nicole Holmes

Members absent: Michael Silvia, Lauren Webb

A. Call To Order: A quorum was present. The meeting commenced at 7:05

B. Approval of Meeting Minutes: The October 19, 2023 draft meeting minutes were approved.

C. Public Comment: None

D. New Business

Publicity:

E. Old Business:

a. Wyman Meadow

i. Trail Work Update. Wildlands Trust (WT) started work on placement of the 2 water crossing structures this week. They have decided to use their own experienced volunteers to complete the crossings and the trail clearing. However, they will create a schedule for set times when other public volunteers can participate in the trail work as it progresses. The committee discussed possible ways to publicize the opening of the WM area including the town website, an announcement at a Town Council meeting, and social media sites including creating an OSC Facebook page. Eileen will contact Josh McGraw about these ideas.

ii. Possible Grant Through Recreational Trails Program

b. Tree Committee Meeting Report. Nicole Holmes reported on the recent meeting. There was discussion about where to plant trees on town-owned land and funds available for that. There needs to be outreach to the public to let them know that trees located on the right-of-way are town-owned and cannot be cut down without approval.

c. Hanson Farm update. Eileen gave an update on the timeline that the Town Manager recently sent out to the committees and parties involved with this project.

d. Chapter 61 properties. Eileen contacted Patricia Casady, Middleboro Conservation Agent, to discuss the potential for open space conservation of property at the end of South Street. This was a follow-up to Michael Silvia's review of Mass BioMap data related to Chapter 61 property adjacent to existing open space in that vicinity. Middleboro is preserving significant open space parcels in that area.

e. Lake Nip Development Proposal Update

The Planning Board held another hearing on the hotel project on November 6th but did not issue a decision at that meeting. Pat Neary reported that MEPA has accepted the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SDEIR) submitted to it by the developer with certain conditions. OSC comments on the SDEIR were submitted by the November 6th due date. The development must now submit a Final EIR to MEPA.

f. Parks Information on Town Website. Josh was successful getting the links to the town's parks currently on the OSC website also on the Park and Recreation section of the town web site.

E. New Business. None

F. Next Meeting. The committee will not meet in December.

The next regular committee meeting will be **Thursday, January 18, 2024 at 7:00 pm.**

G. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Eileen Hiney

**Town of Bridgewater Open Space Committee
January 18, 2024 Draft Meeting Minutes**

Attendance:

Committee Members present: Eileen Hiney, Chair, Nicole Holmes, Michael Silvia, Lauren Webb

Members absent: Maureen Minasian

A. Call To Order: A quorum was present. The meeting commenced at 7:05

B. Approval of Meeting Minutes: The draft November meeting minutes were withdrawn. Eileen will revise them and resend for approval at the next meeting.

C. Public Comment: None

D. Old Business

Publicity.

- a. **Facebook.** Michael Silvia followed up with Josh McGraw about posting information about towns park and open space on a Facebook page. Josh will talk with the Town Manager about this. Lauren will not be able to work on this. Her term on the OSC is up in March 2024 and she will not renew due to other demands on her time. She would be willing to maintain some on-line connections with various sites if that would be helpful. Michael is willing to be responsible for posting on-line information and keeping it current.
- b. **Parks and Recreation.** It's not clear who has responsibility for providing information to the public about parks. Town parks are under the jurisdiction of the Parks and Recreation Commission but its focus has been largely on active recreation. We need guidance from Michael Dutton. The West Bridgewater Open Space Committee has a good website that could serve as a model. Nicole noted that the town manager's office can provide assistance with issuing press releases for committees.
- c. **Wyman Meadow Announcement.** No immediate announcement is planned. Opening the trail to the public is delayed due to much higher-than-normal rainfall. Michael Silvia showed a logo/design for town parks that he has presented to Bob Rulli to consider. Michael understands that there are other town staff that are involved in the broader issue of town signage.

Wyman Meadow

Trail Work and Parking Area. Bog-boards are needed in multiple additional spots that have standing water. Bob Rulli advised Owen that it is not necessary to go before the Conservation Commission again for approval of additional bog boards as the impact is minimal. Wildlands has had enthusiastic volunteers for this project with more than 50 individuals attending 6 "VolunTuesdays" in recent months. Gravel is needed for the existing grass parking area, which has turned to mud during recent heavy rainfall. The Town Manager said that the town DPW or Parks Department can provide this.

Grant. Wildlands Trust will not apply for a grant under the State Recreational Trails Program because of other pending Wildlands and Town grant applications under this program. However, it submitted a grant proposal to the National Park Service Challenge Cost program related to Wild and Scenic Rivers, for \$10,000 to fund lumber costs, signs for the existing kiosk, and 4 interpretive panels. A decision is expected in April.

Hunting. Wildlands has decided that it will not allow hunting on the North Fork preserve given the limited acreage of the parcel. John Hart has asked town official about rules for hunting at Wyman Meadow but has not gotten an answer yet.

Tree Committee Report. Nicole Holmes reported the TC is looking for places to plant trees on town lands and has funds for this from mitigation paid by developers who remove trees. The TC has completed paper work to once again become a “Tree City” again after a 20-year hiatus. This will open up additional grant opportunities. It is also considering possible updates to the tree ordinance which currently covers only town-owned trees. The TC would like to expand the town’s jurisdiction to regulate clear-cutting of private trees on large parcels. The Tree Committee has funds which the OSC might be able to tap for specific tree-related projects. Michael mentioned the need to expand the tree canopy on Mt Prospect St. in the open area near the middle school. Lauren suggested looking at areas where street trees have been damaged in recent storms. Eileen suggested taking a look at replacing trees in the historic cemetery near CVS on Summer St.

c. Hanson Farm. There is a public requirement for public “benefit” held under a Conservation Restriction purchased using Community Preservation Funds. There is not a requirement for public “access” to such property. The Town Manager is looking for input on the question of public access vs. public benefit. The possibilities of public access via trails, public gardens, a tree nursery, and farm education were raised. There was also a sentiment that it should be up to the Hansons to determine what best suits their needs to operate the farm. Eileen will submit a summary of these ideas to the Town Manager.

d. Chapter 61 properties. Eileen will try and arrange a meeting between Wildlands Trust and Patricia Casady, the Middleboro Conservation Agent, with her and Michael Silvia and possibly town staff to discuss the potential for open space conservation at the end of South Street. This is a follow-up to Michael Silvia’s review of Mass BioMap data related to Chapter 61 property adjacent to existing open space in that vicinity. Middleboro is preserving significant open space parcels in that area, which is crucial habitat for the Taunton River.

e. Lake Nip Development Proposal Update

The Planning Board has approved the project with conditions although what those are was not clear from the meeting discussion. There is not a written Planning Board decision to review yet. The project is scheduled to come before Conservation Commission on January 25, 2024. This OSC should submit comments to the ConCom.

E. New Business. Kitty Doherty has asked the OSC to submit another letter in support of a grant request for the Old State Farm Trail. This is for Phase 4 of the project. Eileen will write and submit the letter.

F. Next Meeting. The committee will not meet in December. The next regular committee meeting will be changed from the 3rd Thursday to **Thursday, February 22, 2024 at 7:00 pm.**

G. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Eileen Hiney