

Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee Meeting – May 31, 2018 Minutes

Time: 6:30 – 7:30 PM Location: Town Hall, First Floor Conference Room

Members Present: Tania Lillak, Chair; Toni Bandrowicz, Vice Chair; Jim Olivetti, Clerk; Richard Smith, Sarah Koch, Angela Ippolito, Planning Board Chair, Danielle Strauss, Recreation Director; Pete Kane, Director of Community Development;.

Members Absent: Sara Hepburn, Patrick Jones, Selectman Liaison.

This was a special meeting of the Committee, duly announced with agenda posted on the town website calendar.

AGENDA ITEMS

Discussion on proposed cemetery location for dog park and vote:

The Chair reviewed the purpose of the special meeting, which was to discuss the proposal to site a off-leash dog exercise park at the rear of the cemetery. Selectman Peter Spellios had contacted Tania to request the Committee's consideration and support in advance of the Board of Selectmen taking up the proposal at their meeting on June 6.

A spirited discussion followed. Among the points made were the following:

Toni summarized the inspection visit she and Jim made to the site. She noted that there seemed to be plenty of space available for the park, and no nearby residences.

Sarah suggested that providing access to the dog park via Capen Rd. would be less disruptive and more direct than having access through the historic part of the cemetery.

Angela noted that the old cemetery roads are narrow and winding, and questioned how someone would access the park with their dog on foot, as there are currently signs prohibiting dogs in the cemetery.

Danielle suggested designating some roads near the proposed site as one way could help traffic flow.

Pete noted that a proposal to make the dog park location "temporary", using materials that could be easily removed, would lessen the park's impact on need for additional grave plots in coming decades.

Pete also stated that a certificate of non-applicability would need to be obtained from the Historic District Commission, as the Commission can not make ruling on "use" of the historic site, only aesthetics.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Richard made the following motion:

"to submit a letter of support to the Board of Selectmen for the use of the location in the back of cemetery for a dog park and support a group comprised of the TA, selectmen, open space, and SPOT to finalize park layout, rules, etc. The Open Space and Recreation Plan committee does have serious concerns in regards to impact to the cemetery as a consequence of access and traffic flow."

The motion passed 5 in favor, 1 opposed and 1 abstention.

Preparation of letter to Board of Selectmen

Toni will prepare a draft letter to the BoS based on the content of the motion and prior discussion of the issue. The draft will be emailed to Committee members with individual feedback on it returned directly to Toni.

The next regular OS&RPC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday June 12, 2018.