

OPEN SPACE GROUP MEETING MINUTES OF 4/11/2023

Attendees were Betty and Sam Harris, Rich Cooper, Paulette Rand, Mary Kaltenbach, Bill Knee, Anne Beliveau and Jack Karcz

Present Projects

1. The first order of business was picking a date for dedication of the Dennis Howland Memorial bench and unveiling of the new engraved back, located at the scenic lookout on the Marsh Trail. Mary helped us to decide that May 28th, 2023 at 1PM would be the best date with a backup(?) of May 21st, 2023. If we see problems arising near the 28th, we will move the dedication to the 21st. Rich Cooper is preparing an announcement for the commemoration event, to be included on the town website, Fremont Newsletter, and emails to Open Space Group members and volunteers.
2. Interpretive Trail. Jake Higginbottom is the Eagle Scout candidate who is in charge of getting the posts installed for the interpretive signs. Once the posts are in place, the info plaques can be installed. Bill Knee is investigating material mediums to use for the interpretive signs. Ram Printing is one name brought up. We could also ask SELT who they use. I am not sure if the signs have been completed yet. There is a 2nd sign that is going up near the Aja Mahoney bench that will be a sign which explains the ecosystem and ecology of marsh life which can be installed by us anytime. It will need a post and concrete footing to secure the base.
3. There is a load of wood chips that has been dropped off near the beginning of the Depot Trail that we will use to “freshen up” the Depot Trail, and possibly some other rough and root-ridden areas. Suggestions for rough sections of trail which could use improvement are welcome. A work party will be planned for sometime this Spring. Open Space will be looking for volunteers for the project. We’ll keep you posted.

Ongoing and Future Projects

4. Landscaping (beautification) around signage at the Library. Bayberry bushes are the preferred choice. Bill Knee has a contact at Rolling Green.
5. Work party needed for Pike’s Pass (off of Copp Drive) for signs, maintenance and beautification. Date to be determined.
6. Suggestion to put a bench on the Beaver Trail in Oak Ridge North. There are two possible location candidates.

7. Hiker Signs: Hiking signs pointing right needed at several locations. This is a Conservation Committee task, (hopefully Leon will assist in installation).

8. Fremont Conservation Committee has a new brand logo, depicting a Blanding's turtle. The signs need to be installed, (some on trees, others with metal posts) around the boundary of the Town Forests. The Conservation Committee will provide necessary materials.

9. Sam mentioned that the Oak Ridge North kiosk map is a mirror image of what it should be. If we ever replace it, Sam suggests that it be corrected at that time.

10. The boundary blazes in Glen Oakes need to be refreshed. Winter is the most suitable time for refreshing blazes. A significant portion of the boundary in Glen Oakes is in wet, swampy terrain, so frozen ground is helpful. The Open Space Group will solicit volunteers for this project once it is scheduled.

11. Investigate feasibility of a footbridge to connect Oak Ridge North to Oak Ridge South on Tavern Road where water divides them.

12. Fremont Open Space Group is committed to continuing and cultivating our cooperative working relationship with Southeast Land Trust, which Dennis Howland initiated prior to his passing. SELT is having a Grand Opening of the Spruce Swamp conservation reserve on Route 125 in Brentwood on June 3, 2023. Details will follow from OSG.

13. Meetinghouse Road kiosk needs repairs (someone used it for target practice). The doors, plexiglass and signage need to be replaced. The hardware is in good shape.

14. Jack Karcz mentioned that the State has issued Fremont a grant for a boat launching ramp on the Exeter River. A possible site behind Town Hall is being considered. Work party volunteers will be needed to assist in cleaning out the area. Subsequent work projects for removing wood debris in the river may also be organized. Potential interested volunteers, please stay tuned.

15. We need to schedule more town hikes. Suggestions for a 2023 Fall hike are welcome.