

## Meeting Summary - OSRP Advisory Group Meeting #1

**To:** Needham OSRP Advisory Group  
**ATTENDEES:** See attached  
**FROM:** Tracy J. Adamski, AICP  
**DATE:** September 29, 2016

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On September 28, 2016, a kickoff meeting was held at the Charles River Room in the Public Services Administration Building in Needham to discuss the 2017 update to the Needham Open Space & Recreation Plan (OSRP). The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the OSRP Advisory Group, discuss the components of an OSRP, describe the roles and responsibilities of the OSRP Advisory Group, and walk through the OSRP update schedule.

### 1. Introduction

After Patty Carey led Advisory Group introductions, Matt Varrell turned the presentation over to Tracy Adamski, who gave an overview of what an Open Space and Recreation Plan is, and its purpose, and outlined the roles and responsibilities of the Advisory Group.

### 2. Overview of OSRP

- Roadmap for prioritizing open space and recreation projects and expenditures
- Pre-Requisite for MA Division of Conservation Services grants

### 3. Advisory Group Roles and Responsibilities

- Help develop political interest and support
- Provide guidance and input on the OSRP and Process
- Help conduct ADA Inventory Surveys
- Provide input on the Open Space & Recreation Survey
- Review goals from previous OSRP for applicability to 2017

### 4. Draft Survey Questions

After the introductory section, discussion ensued regarding possible survey questions.

#### Existing Conditions of Needham's Open Space and Recreation Facilities

- Possibility of adding uses and/or facilities on sites
- How well blazed/signed are trails - concerns that not all public access trails are well-marked
- Map of open space and recreation facilities would be helpful to identify locations - Possible to connect online survey to map?
- How often are spaces visited = what is driving you to use particular space and why
- Who is using spaces - dogs? Different age groups?
- Awareness of different spaces and values
- Possibility of dividing list of facilities by neighborhood
  - Central → DeFazio
  - Ridge Hill
- Tie open spaces to neighborhoods
- Discussed maybe grouping facilities by type

- Maybe ask about 3 or 4 used most frequently
- Public education needed regarding different facilities and features

#### **Accessibility of Existing Open Space and Recreation Facilities**

- Use care in having the public make determinations on "ADA accessibility" – they are not experts and could invite legal issues
- Signage identifying publically accessible spaces, and the history of those spaces
- Accessibility by parcels – can make question(s) about accessibility less general, and more specific to existing open space and recreation facilities
- Different definitions and levels of accessibility:
  - Handicap accessibility
  - Dog friendly
  - Strollers/kids
- Discussed potential for future accessible boardwalk for Sweets Preserve
- Need for better signage/blazing to mark public access trails throughout Town

#### **Town of Needham's OSRP Priorities**

- Aesthetics of nature should be a priority
- Funding: would preference be that money be used on new facilities vs. improvements/maintenance
- "If you had \$x, what would you do?"
- Education about Community Preservation Act Funding – types of projects, limitations

#### **Other OSRP Comments/Questions**

- Consider open space and connections to adjacent communities - corridors
- % of Needham open space
- % Needham open space relative to adjacent municipalities
- Possible to create list of parcels Town would like to have conservation easements
- Possible to list top 10-20 open space and recreational spaces
- Include bike lanes/bike safety
- Have more sports/activity oriented questions

#### **General Comments**

- Both electronic and paper version of the survey should be available (library could be used for paper distribution)
- Use a newspaper story to publicize the survey
- Old OSRP plans are available at the library and historical society
- Part of the goals of the project is for everyone to understand each other's perspectives on open space and recreation lands

### **5. Next Steps**

- Tighe & Bond:
  - Calculate percent of Needham as open space
  - Develop draft of survey for Advisory Group review
  - Develop draft public forum outline for Advisory Group review
- Advisory Group:
  - Sign up for ADA self-evaluation survey survey (members were able to sign up to participate prior to leaving)
  - Review draft survey and public forum outline when available

### **6. Schedule**

- Next Committee Meeting – November 2<sup>nd</sup>
- Survey – November through December
- First Public Forum – November 16<sup>th</sup> (Powers Hall)

Please direct questions or comments to Patty Carey ([pcarey@needhamma.gov](mailto:pcarey@needhamma.gov)) or Matt Varrell ([mvarrell@needhamma.gov](mailto:mvarrell@needhamma.gov)).

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Town of Needham Open Space Recreation Plan  
September 28, 2016 Advisory Group Kickoff Meeting

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**Attendees**

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Tracy Adamski  
Mike Bolio  
Meghan Bourque  
Axie Breen  
Robert Bucelwicz  
Paula Callanan  
Patty Carey  
Kate Carter  
Janet Carter-Bernardo  
Cynthia Chaston  
Cal Collins  
Ed Cosgrove  
Gary Crossen  
Joanne DiSangro  
Ross Donald  
Kevin Fleming  
James Goldstein  
Prathyusha Gunda  
Rick Hardy  
Chris Jantzen  
Meeta Kapadia  
Kevin Keane  
Michael Kurdziel  
Howard Lipton  
Jeanne McKnight  
Mark Miskin  
Peter Oehlkers  
Ed Olsen  
Greg Smith  
Matthew Varrell

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