

Town Of Rowe
Open Space and Recreation Committee Meeting
February 3, 2023 at 1:00 PM
Zoom Meeting

Note: This meeting was a joint meeting with FRCOG staff leading the meeting. FRCOG staff are assisting the Rowe Committee with the Open Space and Recreation Plan for Rowe.

In Attendance: Laurie Pike, Alex Reisman, and Dana Williams from the Rowe OSRP Committee and Tamsin Flanders from the FRCOG staff.

Audience of Citizens: None

Meeting Called to Order at 1:02 PM.

The scope of work to be completed by the end of June would include sections 3-8 of the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Approximately one chapter a month will be finalized. The next joint meeting will be March 3, 2024 at 1:00. Section 3 will define community characteristics and maps.

Tamsin has requested a write up that explains hydropower and facilities within the town's boundaries. Committee went over comments on section 3 draft. Questions and comments that will need further research included: Are there any businesses in town? There are two excavation companies family owned and operated and a bed and breakfast. The committee will inquire as to whether there may be others. What percentage of the town's land has been permanently protected? We may be able to get this answer from the assessors' office. How open space in town connects with other open space in town? This might be best explained with a map. The town park connects with several conservation restriction parcels, New England Forestry Land, and Mass Fish and Game Property. The Bear Swamp Conservation Area is a large parcel of protected land. Perhaps the best way to show protected land and its connection to other protected land would be with a map or maps.

The committee moved on to continuing our review of the OSRP survey that was conducted this fall starting with question 6. Some observations that were made in regard to the data included the following: There is a need to educate the public on the different options for conservation of land both private and public and the advantages and disadvantages. There is community support for addressing invasive species concerns. It was noted that the most prominent invasive that is visible is the Japanese Knotweed that lines the stream below the Mill Pond. There is interest in the community to improve pollinator habitat. Pollinator gardens and corridors could be future projects. Storm water is a concern and is part of the goals for the MVP Plan. Goal Post articles and advertisements were a popular way for residents to obtain information about things happening in town. One of the biggest factors that prohibit people from participating in events is time and scheduling.

Hiking was a popular response for recreation in town. Comments included trail signage needs to be improved. (The Park is acquiring new trail blazes with grant money and these will be

installed summer of 2023.) As noted previously there are public spaces where hiking is allowed but some people are unfamiliar with those areas. It has been suggested that a goal for the plan might be a map that shows those areas and some of the existing trails. In addition, accessible trails and parking for the trails were requested along with possible accessible fishing. These projects if pursued would likely qualify for grant money.

Other possible goals supported by the data might include boat launch improvements, more signage for hunting areas, a town sailboat and/ or paddleboat. Also, a number of people were in favor of allowing people from out of town to use some or all of the park facilities. It was noted that most of the park's trails and the lake is accessible to people from other towns with the exception of the town main picnic, beach and swim area. The park currently doesn't have the staff or budget to supervise and accommodate larger numbers of people at the beach and swim area. In addition, the beach and picnic area are under a covenant that stipulates these areas are for residents and their guests only.

Meeting was adjourned at 2 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Laurie Pike
Open Space and Recreation Committee Member

The February 3, 2023 OSRP meeting minutes were approved and accepted by roll-call vote at an OSRP meeting on March 24, 2023.