

Final

Charlestown Conservation Commission  
March 28, 2024  
Town Hall Town Council Chambers

- I. Call To Order - Lynn called the meeting to order at 7:05
- II. Roll Call - Shirley Griffin, Steve Williams, Karen Baldyga, Silvermoon LaRose, Lynn Macalister, Nicholas Testa
- III. Introduction of Guests - Ouray LaRose
- IV. Town Council Liaison To the Commission Remarks - No new liaison in attendance
- V. Approval of Minutes: February 22, 2024 - Karen made a motion to approve the February 22, 2024 minutes with corrections to language under Old Business and correction to Nick's name. Nick seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- VI. Old Business - Discussion and/or Potential Action(s), Announcement(s) and/or Vote(s)
  - A. 74.5020 budget request has been accepted, will move forward to council.  
Concerns about whether the emergency needs to the trails will be cared for by DPW. The dangers were reported to DPW but no response has been made to the CCC about if/when these would be addressed. Karen questions if we should close access to the trails if these concerns can't be taken care of. Nick brought up concerns about tree that is a danger on Tucker. It has been flagged with an orange ribbon but people are moving through there anyway. The question remains, should these areas be closed until the issues are addressed.
  - B. Earth Day Festival @ Ninigret Park - April 20th, Karen will set up, Nick will help with the booth; Lynn will drop off materials early and set up and come back for cleanup. Silvermoon will provide fabric markers for use that day.
  - C. Other - none
- VII. New Business Discussion and/or Potential Action(s), Announcement(s) And/or Vote(s)
  - A. Other - none
- VIII. Reports: Discussion and/or Potential Action(s), Announcement(s) And/or Vote(s)

- A. 2024 Annual Open Space Monitoring Report - Not written yet, but Steve and Lynn completed the reviews of the properties. There were two properties missed that had been added so they will need to be checked out before the report goes in.
- B. Social media - 888 Followers; Shared thank you for help from volunteers with Schoolhouse Pond. It was advised that a notice should be put on Facebook “Please be aware that coyotes are active on preserves, be alert if you have dogs on the trails. Leashing is encouraged but not required.”
- C. Preserve monitoring, management and/or maintenance of:
  - 1. Arnold Family White Cedar Swamp Preserve - One Copper Cap is off of the sign, needs to be replaced, Lynn will try to find it.
  - 2. Charlestown Moraine Preserve - Lynn visited, no trees down before the last storm, will need to be rechecked.
  - 3. Patricia Sprague Forest Preserve - 2 trees down, widow makers, one close to parking lot. Lynn put a ribbon around those. They were on the list (4 trees in total, the other 2 at South Farm) that we requested DPW to address.
  - 4. Richard Trails Preserve - There was a tree down but someone (unknown) came out and cleared it.
  - 5. Schoolhouse Pond Preserve - 14 volunteers came out for the clean-up. Volunteer letters were provided to 2 students who came out to assist. Kent Kreutler, volunteer, carved and painted arrows to put up on the property to help visitors stay on the right (blue) trail. It was agreed that use of the arrows will be helpful and Lynn will let him know we are happy to have him put them up.
  - 6. South Farm Preserve - Again, someone (unknown) took care of a very large tree on this property that was down. Additionally there were 2 trees that came down in the field and those were also removed. However it was not done by DPW or by the conservation commission. There is a tree that’s down across the path blocking traffic that is on the list for DPW to take care of, caution tape is on it.
  - 7. Tucker Woods Preserve - There is a tree (mentioned above during budget discussion) that needs to be removed. Request was put in to DPW.

## IX. Member Comments/Announcements

- A. April 27 we had agreed on a cleanup day at Schoolhouse. As Sprague was unable to be addressed at the March cleanup, the cleanup was moved to Schoolhouse. The April 27th cleanup will now be scheduled for Patricia Sprague. Notice will go out inviting others to come help.
  - B. There is another property on our open space annual report, the Lucy property that abuts Westerly on Ross Hill Road (16-6-1). Steve has brought up that he believes there are other open spaces not on our list that are owned by the town that should be investigated. Why do we have all of these? Could we be doing something with them? Steve feels that we're not using them because they're not marked and they could be for public use. Lynn expressed concerns about creating it for use as she doesn't believe we can handle maintenance on another property. Karen mentioned that we should put into the report that there should be more monitoring of these properties (beyond one time a year) to be sure they are not being used incorrectly. Others also agreed with Steve that there are properties that could be used, including one that could be a potential bike and ATV trail. It was agreed that these thoughts be added to the report with the recommendation that the town consider opening these up for public use and funding the management of them, and more consistent monitoring of them.
- X. Adjournment - Nick made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Shirley seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:19pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,  
Silvermoon LaRose, Conservation Commission Secretary

**The next regular meeting will be held Thursday April 25, 2024 @7:00 pm  
Charlestown Town Hall Council Chambers** The public is welcome to any meeting. If communication assistance (readers/interpreters/captions) is needed or any other accommodation to ensure equal participation, please contact 401-364-1210 at least three (3) business days prior to the meeting.