**Open Space Committee Meeting Notes** – *March 12, 2018*

Attendees: Sally, Kenley, Melissa, Markelle

No approval of December meeting minutes because minutes not printed

Mill River Greenway update: Floodplain property owned by Eversource will ideally be sold in part to Merritts; in part to Fortgangs to be part of Valley View Farm. Four acres along Greenway would go to town and would be a park that could be accessed by footbridge. The agreed upon prices is $1200/acre of $4,800 which is slightly more than assessed value, but the seller (Eversource) has agreed to cover costs of dividing and surveying the land. The Greenway Committee will do private fundraising or use funds that have already been raised to cover acquisition costs. Ideally the town will apply for a PARC grant in the future to develop the park. In other Greenway news, the design phase of the Greenway is about to happen and major fundraising campaign will be launched very soon/ The Mill River Greenway Committee will need help of OSC at various stages. Where can we be helpful?

The OSC may want to explore applying for PARC funds to develop multiple small parks along the future Greenway.

Update Open Space Plan – The current plan is about to expire and the main source of funding is a small communities grant from the state. To qualify for this grant the Plan must be expired and Williamsburg must apply for an EEA (state) grant in that year. It does not make sense to apply this year because we don’t intend to apply for an EEA grant and the plan update would need to happen too quickly. A better strategy would be to seek EEA funding for a plan update next fall and then apply for an EEA grant the following spring for the new community park along the greenway or some other more pressing project.

About a third of the plan update is a simple cut and paste from the 2011 plan as many things have not changed since then. Melissa is checking with UMass Planning Dept. to see if assistance with our open space plan update could be a grad student project next year. It is unclear if there would be a cost associated with this.

Sally checked in with Conway School about potential for project. We would need outside funding to have Conway School students help us, but it would be an interesting option.

PVPC funding – for the fiscal year? Given to towns – DLTA $; Sally will ask Charlene and follow up with contact at PVPC

Roz will contact VT group; not to develop Open Space Plan but to facilitate objective meetings/community participation; Roz will follow up.

As part of the plan update, we will want to don an online survey and hold at least 2 public meetings/charrettes: one at beginning and one at end. The survey would come at the beginning of the process

How to coordinate with other Town Committees re Open Space Plan Update: make a list of questions for Committees (unless an OSC member is on another committee) and iinvite their input at public meetings. Meetings. We might want have a deeper connection to the Recreation Commission for the recreation aspect of the plan.

Explore technical assistance providers, e.g. map making with students

Melissa will print out chart of sections for plan and bring to next meeting; will list names next to each section/task

Could Landscape Partnership Grant for Brewer Brook qualify as EEA grant application in FY19? Town of Williamsburg will hold an interest – Sally will check with Emmanuel

Moving forward… keep plugging away on plan and hope that when opportunity comes we will have enough done and can use funding to make new edits

**Homework: everyone read plan to get familiar; start formulating questions for survey**