

## **MINUTES OF THE OPEN SPACE TASK FORCE**

# MEETING #2

## April 3, 2025

## Knightly Meeting Room, Salem Town Hall

## **Task Force Members Present:**

- Georgia Brust, Con Com Rep
- Caitlin Fitzpatrick, Con Com Rep
- Sean Lewis, Planning Board Rep
- Keith Stramaglia, Town Council Rep

## **Town Staff and RPC Staff Present:**

- Crayton Brubaker, Community Development Program Manager
- John Vogl, GIS Manager
- Jenn Rowden, Land Use Program Manager, RPC
- Rob Pruyne, GIS Manager, RPC

The meeting started at 5:00 pm.

## 1) Welcome & Introductions

The members and staff introduced themselves.

## 2) Stakeholders Engagement Updates

Ms. Rowden provided an update on the stakeholder engagement including: website page, draft announcement, and targeted stakeholder engagements. Interviews with Linda Harvey, Ross Moldoff, Chris Goodnow will be a part of the engagement with potential interviews with others. If Task Force members have additional stakeholders they think of, they can email Mr. Brubaker and they can be included as a part of the engagement.

### 3) Review of Draft Data and Descriptions and Associated Maps

Ms. Rowden provided an update on the maps that were sent out to the Task Force. The maps that have been updated were updated with federal and state data. The RPC will continue to work with Mr. Vogl to incorporate the Town GIS data. The RPC will also continue to develop the narratives for each map.

The maps and narrative and data will act essentially as a Natural Resources Inventory which will complement the Townwide Master Plan.

Ms. Rowden went through the various maps and explained each map. The Task Force discussed both the preliminary updated floodplain maps and the 2005 floodplain maps. In the Open Space Report update, both maps will be used and narrative can be developed to explain that both are referenced. The Task Force discussed the various maps in depth and provided insight on several items related to water bodies. Ms. Rowden and Mr. Pruyne discussed that the Natural Heritage Bureau data may not be worth mapping due to the lack of specific location data. The plan is to

1 put in a narrative and a table, but not a separate map for this data. The Wildlife Action Plan can  
2 be mapped as well. The Task Force discussed an impervious surfaces map and limitations of  
3 current data; the Town has forested lands data that can essentially be the inverse of that. Mr.  
4 Vogl suggested to incorporate the forested lands into a base road map. The Town GIS data will  
5 be incorporated in the Open Space map. Between now and the next meeting, several of the maps  
6 will be updated. Mr. Pruyne and Mr. Lewis discussed the practical purposes of these maps for  
7 the public and what they will be used for.  
8

#### 9 **4) Discussion on Prioritization Criteria**

10 Ms. Rowden discussed the draft prioritization criteria and asked the Task Force's ideas of each  
11 of the proposed criteria. Below is a summary of each of the draft priorities as a result of the Task  
12 Force's discussion:

- 13 • Purchasing easements for flood mitigation – may typically be a lower priority in terms of  
14 purchasing land and easements, would typically prefer engineering solutions such as  
15 culverts, etc.

16       RPC discussed how flood mitigation measures can include a variety of items beyond  
17 purchasing easements as they relate to open space prioritization. Much of the protection  
18 already comes from existing Salem and FEMA regulations related to floodplains. Much  
19 of the “weight” of this priority for open space criteria would be captured by the presence  
20 of floodplains.

- 23 • Connect Town Center with open space and neighborhoods – higher priority, preference  
24 of walkability and proximity to existing open spaces, sidewalk and trail access

26       RPC comment how adding open space prioritization “weight” to trails, etc. can done to  
27 capture this.

- 29 • Investing in gathering places that connect residents with nature through recreation and  
30 entertainment – not necessarily applicable.

32       This may be more accurately covered by the Recreation Plan being developed.

- 34 • Connect parks, open spaces, waterways through recreational access – recreation  
35 opportunities are a higher priority, especially in terms of sports fields and public beaches.

37       This priority can be captured with the evaluation of proximity to existing parks, etc. and  
38 the connectivity portion.

- 40 • Promote and implement environmental conservation projects to enhance the natural  
41 resources and beauty of the Town – medium priority based on feasibility of projects (i.e.  
42 Field of Dreams)

44       This priority may weighted lower or can be reviewed in after the draft open space map is  
45 produced. The map may help to inform where the projects should take place rather than  
46 the projects informing the map.

1

2     • Identifies and maps habitat blocks and wildlife corridors, especially the Spicket River

3       corridor – medium to high priority.

4

5       This will be captured for prioritization by the existing Salem Wildlife Corridor work and

6       the Wildlife Action Plan.

7

8 **5) Meeting Schedule**

9       The next meeting will be on Thursday, May 8 at 4pm.

10      ***Motion: Mr. Stramaglia made a motion to adjourn at 6:25 pm***

11      ***Second: Mr. Lewis***

12      ***Vote: 4-0-0; Motion passes unanimously.***

13      The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

14      Minutes by: Crayton Brubaker, Community Development Program Manager