

Section 10 - Public Comments



Tidal Marsh

Public Comments from Merrimack Valley Planning Commission



June 22, 2009

Jennifer W. Germain
Chair, Open Space Committee
Town of West Newbury
381 Main Street
West Newbury, MA 01985

RE: Regional Review of West Newbury Open Space & Recreation Plan 2009

Dear Ms. Germain and Fellow Open Space Committee Members:

The Merrimack Valley Planning Commission has reviewed the Town of West Newbury's updated 2009 Open Space and Recreation Plan and commends the Open Space Committee, the Conservation Commission, the Planning Board, and other project partners for a job exceptionally well done. Having worked closely with the Open Space Committee on various aspects of the plan, including data development and preparation of supporting GIS maps, we are well aware of the countless hours the Committee members devoted to the plan update. This comprehensive open space and recreation plan provides a wealth of important information on the town's open space and recreation facilities and needs, natural resources, community character, socioeconomic conditions, land use, and public infrastructure. Used in conjunction with the Town's Master Plan, this Open Space and Recreation Plan will be a valuable municipal tool for guiding future growth and preserving the town's outstanding land and water resources.

We are pleased to note the plan's strong commitment to preserving West Newbury's stunning natural resources and "rural character and charm", including the Town's rich agricultural lands and heritage. As you know, this region's smaller communities have witnessed an alarming loss of farmland and forest over the last several decades, and, regrettably, this trend is continuing. With each passing year, more family farms and woodlots are being bulldozed into subdivisions. While West Newbury has not entirely escaped this trend, and indeed faces continuing development pressure today, significant parts of the town landscape remain unspoiled and worthy of preservation. Despite its recent growth, West Newbury still retains much of the beauty and flavor of the New England "small town". Its quiet back roads, expansive and visually stunning riverfront, historic working farms, and pastoral woodland and wetland habitats are among the most noteworthy and treasured in Essex County. However, as the Open Space and Recreation Plan aptly points out, this current landscape is subject to change, and likely will, if steps are not taken to properly manage future growth and aggressively preserve the town's special but vulnerable resource areas. Your 2009 Open Space and Recreation Plan represents an excellent step in this direction.

Robert Lavoie
Chairman

Kevin Hagerly
Vice Chairman

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Secretary

Joseph Sullivan
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David Boudreau
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Dennis DiZoglio
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Haverhill, MA 01830
Tel. (978) 374-0519
Fax. (978) 372-4890
www.mvpc.org
info@mvpc.org

We applaud the open, public process the Committee followed in preparing the plan. The participation of multiple town boards and committees, as well as the “hands on” involvement of the general public through a new town-wide citizen’s preference survey, demonstrates a broad base of local stakeholder investment in and support for the plan. This support should prove helpful in the months and years ahead as the Open Space Committee and the Town work to implement the plan’s action recommendations.

We commend the Committee for its vision, advocacy, and initiative in implementing key elements of the previous iteration of the Open Space Plan, including but not limited to:

- Preservation of ecologically, visually, and historically significant lands, such as the Indian Hill Farm Reservation, for conservation and public passive recreation uses;
- Mapping, management, and maintenance of public trails, culminating in the creation of new trail linkages and an enhanced Open Space Website and trail maps;
- Development of additional playing fields on Pipestave Hill and behind the Page School to expand active recreation opportunities for the Town’s youth and other age groups.

We commend the Committee also for its recognition of the *intermunicipal* aspects of open space planning and natural resources protection, and of the value in exploring joint open space and recreation opportunities with neighboring communities, local watershed groups and land trusts, and other regional entities.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your plan. Your planning team, most of whom were unpaid volunteers who gave so generously of their time, have done a truly fine job and merit the appreciation of the entire West Newbury community.

If the MVPC planning staff can be of assistance to the Open Space Committee and other town boards in implementing elements of the 5-Year Action Plan, please do not hesitate to call on us.

Sincerely,



Alan Macintosh
Assistant Director/Environmental Program Manager

Public Comments from Town of West Newbury Planning Board



PLANNING BOARD

TOWN OF WEST NEWBURY

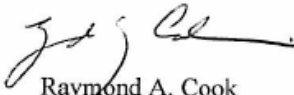
Town Office Building • 381 Main Street • West Newbury, MA 01985
978-363-1100, ext. 125 • Fax: 978-363-1119
E-mail: planningboard@town.west-newbury.ma.us

July 21, 2009

The West Newbury Planning Board has reviewed the Open Space and Recreation Plan dated July, 2009. Recommended updates and corrections have been made to the satisfaction of the Planning Board.

The Board would like to thank the Open Space Committee for its efforts in preparing the updated Open Space and Recreation Plan. We appreciate the time and research that have been put into the Plan.

Very truly yours,


Raymond A. Cook
Chair

Public Comments from Town of West Newbury Board of Selectman



TOWN OF WEST NEWBURY
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
1910 TOWN OFFICE BUILDING
381 Main Street, West Newbury, Mass. 01985
Phone: 978-363-1100, Ext. 115 Fax: 978-363-1117
selectmen@town.west-newbury.ma.us

June 30, 2009

Jennifer Germain, Chairman
Open Space Committee
46 Turkey Hill Road
West Newbury, MA 01985

Dear Ms. Germain:

At our regularly scheduled meeting on June 24 the Board of Selectmen voted to approve West Newbury's updated Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Thank you for all the time the Open Space Committee dedicated to this project over the past year.

Sincerely,

Glenn A. Kemper, Chairman

Richard J. Cushing

Thomas M. Atwood

cc: Open Space Committee ✓

Public Comments from Town of West Newbury Conservation Commission

Town of WEST NEWBURY

**Town Office Building
381 Main Street, WestNewbury, MA. 01985**

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

August 3, 2009

West Newbury Open Space Committee
Town Office Building
381 Main St
West Newbury, MA 01985

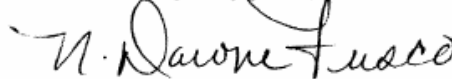
Dear Ms Germain,

The Conservation Commission has reviewed the draft of the Open Space and Recreation Plan prepared by the West Newbury Open Space Committee. We believe that the Committee has accurately and comprehensively reviewed the Town's historical and physical background, inventoried existing facilities, land, flora and fauna, and set out a thoughtful analysis of resource and community needs.

We support the Plan's goals, objectives and recommendations as a responsible approach to preserving and protecting the Town's irreplaceable natural resources and its community values. We believe that the Plan will provide the Town with a template for maintaining and preserving natural resources and open space and its character while providing passive and active recreation opportunities for all residents. We look forward to participating in its implementation.

We look forward to continuing to work on the implementation of the Plan to ensure it remains a living document

Very truly yours,



N. Dawne Fusco, chair
West Newbury Conservation Commission

Public Comments from State: Review of Open Space & Recreation Draft Plan



Deval Patrick
GOVERNOR

Timothy Murray
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Ian Bowles
SECRETARY

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Tel: (617) 626-1000
Fax: (617) 626-1181

July 7, 2009

Jennifer W. Germain
West Newbury Open Space Committee
381 Main Street
West Newbury, MA 01985

Re: Open Space and Recreation Plan

Dear Ms. Germain:

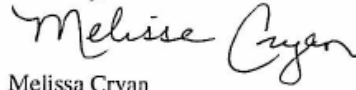
Thank you for submitting the draft Open Space and Recreation Plan for West Newbury to this office for review and compliance with the current Open Space and Recreation Plan Requirements. This plan was particularly thorough and has been conditionally approved through July 2014. Conditional approval will allow the town to participate in DCS grant rounds through July 2014, and a grant award may be offered to the town. However, no final grant payments will be made until the plan is completed.

Once the following items are addressed, your plan will receive final approval:

1. History of the Community – please expand this section to include more information on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
2. Population Characteristics – this section should have information on population density and employment trends.
3. Vegetation – please include information on public shade trees
4. Environmental Challenges – additional information on forestry issues and environmental equity issues is needed.
5. Section 5 – this section should include a definition of the word “protected”. Also missing is a discussion on open space equity.
6. Analysis of Needs – the Community Needs should include information on the SCORP and how it pertains to West Newbury. It can be found online at <http://www.mass.gov/Eoeea/docs/eea/dcs/massoutdoor2006.pdf>.
7. Five-Year Action Plan – each objective should have a potential funding source included.
8. Letters of review from the regional planning agency, planning board, and chief municipal officer must be included.
9. Maps – most of the maps printed a bit fuzzy. Make sure that in the final version of the plan the maps are all legible.

Congratulations on a great draft plan! Please contact me at (617) 626-1171 or melissa.cryan@state.ma.us if you have any questions or concerns, and I look forward to reviewing your final plan.

Sincerely,



Melissa Cryan
Grants Manager

cc: Board of Selectmen
Park and Recreation Committee
Conservation Commission