

Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee (OSRPC) Meeting Minutes

November 4, 2025, a public hybrid meeting in the Evelyn Haines Room

*** Action items and votes¹ below in bold face**

Present: John Bartlett, Chris Clark, Marlies Henderson, Mike Parker, Mike Rosa
By phone: Maria Martin
Excused: Jack Bowen, David Brown
Audience: Andrew Jennings
Staff: Katherine Malgieri

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Chair Rosa calls the meeting to order at 6:30 PM with roll call.

- 1) Mr. Jennings has several comments for Open Mic:
 - To meet OSRP action item 1.3.3 (transit access to Open Space), LRTA has established the Cook St x Boston Rd bus stop, install date "10/27" (access to Akesson Park / Garside Landing), and LRTA also fixed the inbound/outbound discrepancies off Middlesex Tpke (Micozzi Beach) and Campbell (Boys & Girls Club / PHR).
 - The 2026 MassTrails Grant application period is now open. Deadline February 2, 2026.
 - Petition form for Massachusetts to establish a Nature for All Fund Initiative as a ballot question for us to sign.
 - Relative to the GLBPP, Mr. Jennings asked if the town has pursued bicycle rack facilities.
- 2) Vice Chair Bartlett moves to approve the 9/2 minutes as presented, seconded by Parker, motion passes 6-0-1 (Damon abstained).
- 3) Jennings gives a Middlesex Canal Greenway ppt presentation based on OSRP Action item 7.2.5 and on a 2008 feasibility study, which identified along the 27 mi canal 19 remnants with restoration potential, 7 of which are in Billerica, not even including the segment that was already on the TIP at the time and considered a work in progress (Summit Pond Heritage Park). The TIP ran out in 2018 and the segment was virtually forgotten.

OSRPC discussed adding a Historic District over the canal right-of-way, but there was lack of knowledge about how to do that. Secretary Henderson will work with Director Malgieri and follow up. Many members expressed concerns about property owners and their rights. Henderson pointed out it was a matter of cultural differences; particularly in the contrast between individualistic cultures that prioritize privacy and isolation versus community-oriented cultures that celebrate interdependence. Interestingly and counterintuitively, recreational trails have proven to increase real estate values and public safety.

- 4) Chair Rosa debriefs on the OSRPC Fall Town Meeting article. 6; the parcels OSRPC voted on (including Grampy's Land²) were removed per DPW request. Rosa will contact Fred Russell to ask for details. Rosa says OSRPC will look into getting added art 97 protection for larger parcels. He also mentions CRs. Member Damon has compiled a list with additional parcels in Pinehurst / Burlington-Billerica line. Assessor plate 99 and 100. Damon will share his list with Secretary Henderson. Henderson will look up when Mixon Brook parcels were auctioned.³
- 5) The SB (Road Commissioners) discussed Complete Streets, but not if the OSRPC can weigh in / review the annual Complete Streets Prioritization Plan. Fred Russell, DPW Director suggested the prioritization plan be

¹ In favor-opposed-abstain

² (102-1-0)

³ 2023 Spring warrant art 34 "to dispose of town-owned land for affordable housing on Wildcrest Ave". Passed 155-115

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updated "as needed" instead of annually. Rosa will pursue adding Complete Streets policy and plan to the new website.

- 6) See open mic comment: Cook St x Boston Rd bus stop has been added. Install date "10/27".
- 7) Secretary Henderson has found a contact with DCR to communicate with Director Malgieri for Gilson Hill summit bench.
- 8) Updates (not for discussion)
 - Director Malgieri explains new website as a work-in-progress.
 - Member Parker asks for agenda item Walking trail around Griggs Farm. Curb-cut off Boston Rd.
 - Member Clark announces Track Chair test drive on 10/5 at 11 AM (meeting near 105 Rangeway Rd).
 - Chair Rosa announces 2025 MassTrails grant awarded Billerica \$250,000 for Yankee Doodle Bike Path
 - Secretary Henderson says the GLBPP is halfway done. 11/17
- 9) Next meeting dates: December 2 at 6 PM (instead of 6:30)!
- 8) Vice Chair Bartlett moves to adjourn, Member Parker seconds. All in favor 7-0-0.
Meeting adjourned at 7:33 PM

Minutes respectfully submitted by Marlies Henderson