

Middletown Open Space & Fields Committee

Minutes of Meeting

February 16, 2011

A meeting of the Open Space & Fields Committee took place on Wednesday, February 16, 2011 at 5 pm at the Middletown Police Station, 123 Valley Road, Middletown. The meeting was called to order by Mason Hawes, Chairman.

Member Present: Cheryl Boergesson, Nicholas Coogan, Maryalice Huggins, Christin Lambiase, John Pinto, and Ralph Thomas

Members Absent: Anne Baptista, Dick Barker and Steve Ponte

Ex-officio Members:

Present: Bruce Long, Town Council Liaison; Robert Johnson, Conservation Commission

Absent: Dick Adams, Planning Board [Notified the acting Chairman in advance that he be unable to attend]

Others Present:

Prospective Members: George Barcus and Ed Sisk

Agenda

Review and approval of minutes: The minutes of the January 19, 2011 meetings of the committee were approved.

Old Business:

- **Park Steward Program.** A draft document entitled "Park Steward Program" providing an overview of the program and describing the responsibilities of park stewards was reviewed and approved (copy attached). The Recording Secretary was asked to forward it to the Town Administrator.

- **Valley Farmer's Market.** An ad hoc committee composed of Anne Baptista, George Barcus, Mason Hawes and Ralph Thomas was formed to examine the issues associated with the establishment of the market and to report back to the committee.

- **Support for Middletown's Arbor Day/Earth Day Efforts.** Tim Shaw was unable to attend the meeting, therefore there was no discussion of this item.

- **Meeting of Aquidneck Island Communities Open Space Committees.** Dick Adams was unable to attend the meeting, therefore there was no discussion of this item.

- **Site Visits to Middletown Parks.** The site visit to the Boulevard/Albro Woods/Tibbets Farm complex that had been scheduled for 10 a.m., February 12 was cancelled because of the snow cover. A visit to Oliphant Playground was scheduled for 10 am, March 5. Mason will arrange for notice to be send to abutting residents.

- **Community Gardening/Farming.** Mason indicated that this will be a continuing agenda item because of the interest in community gardening/farming. He also indicated that it will be addressed in the Middletown Comprehensive Plan now under development. Both community gardening and farming, if permitted, on Middletown town property will require implementing policies, procedures and protocols.

Mason stated a preference for community farming modeled on the Intervale Center in Burlington, Vermont and similar organizations. The objective would be to develop partnerships with local farmers to assist in bringing their products to market, and building and sustaining their businesses.

New Business:

- **Election of Vice Chairman.** Postponed to the March meeting.
- **Council Liaison Update.** Bruce indicated that the committee should look for ways to publicize its activities and seek community input. He asked that for those issues recommended for Town Council action, e.g., establishment of a Park Steward Program, be sent for coordination to the Town Administrator.
- **Proposed Agenda Items for March Meeting.**

- o Site Visits to Other Middletown Parks**
- o Community Gardening/Farming**
- o Farmer's Market**
- o Support for Middletown's Arbor Day/Earth Day Efforts**
- o Meeting of Aquidneck Island Communities Open Space Committees**
- o Dogs in Middletown Parks**

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m. The next meetings of the committee will be at 10 a.m., March 5, at Oliphant Playground and at 5 p.m., March 16, 2011, in the Community Room of the Middletown Police Station.

Ralph Thomas

Recording Secretary