

Casco Open Space Commission Meeting Minutes – Final

Meeting Date: June 18, 2018

Call to Order: ~ 6:40 P.M.

Present: Open Space – Chairwoman Barbara York, Tom Peaslee, Frank Kantor, Eric Dibner and Keith Morehouse; Public – Dana Watkins

Current Agenda and May 21 Minutes: Frank moved approval, Barbara seconded – all members present approved the minutes and the agenda, with the addition of Planning Objectives as New Business.

Old Business:

Town Meeting; The rather lengthy Commission discussion was basically a post mortem on the event, and what the “take away” is for open space. So, the subjects and ideas covered were wide-ranging. Needless to say, much of the message had to do with the lack of wider acceptance and viability of the open space initiative and what, if anything, could be done to bring a higher level of Townspeople interest and support. There has been an absence of buy-in by the Casco public and, as a result, the program has been stagnant. One impression left by opposition speakers at the Town Meeting is that there is a general lack of understanding even of what the open space program is about. Apparently, others feel there is sufficient open space existing now so ensuring its preservation is not a priority. An education effort may be appropriate.

Landowner Letter; In light of the Town Meeting results, it was decided that there is good reason to wait on this pending clarification of the viability of the open space effort. The letter would appeal to focus area landowners to consider strategies for maintaining their lands as open space.

Owl Pond Area; Once more, the Commission discussed the Owl Pond situation and a question was posed as to when it would be timely to send another request regarding commitments by landowners to give their parcels open space protection. However, it was decided that shelving this effort for the near future is probably the best course of (in)action.

New Business:

Planning Objectives; It was decided that much of what could be discussed here was covered in threads scattered throughout the previous discussions.

Public Participation: Dana Watkins, who offered his views throughout the meeting.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned about 8:40 P.M., with unanimous approval – after Eric moved and Tom seconded adjournment. The next scheduled COSC meeting is July 16, 2018, at 6:30 P.M., in the Town Center meeting room.

Submitted by Keith A. Morehouse