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AMESBURY

CITY HALL
62 Friend Street
Amesbury, MA 01913

**Amesbury Open Space, Natural Resources, and Trails Committee
MEETING MINUTES
January 22, 2025, 7:00 p.m.**

This meeting was conducted under the "Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law" G.L. c. 30A, Section 20, signed on March 12, 2020.

Attending:

- Call to Order: Present – Jonathan Sherwood, Rich Hucksam, Fred Zackon, Michelle Faucher, Jessica Redfern, Pascal Rettig
- Minutes from October 30, 2024 meeting: Zackon motion to approve, Redfern second. Unanimously approved
- Public Comment: none
- Communications: none
- Chair's Report:
 - Noted that there is a new Conservation Agent, Amanda Armington (previously a member of the Conservation Commission). Agent will continue to serve as OSNRTC liaison with the City.
 - Also noted that there will be a new OSNRTC member, once appointed by the City Council – Jena Jekums
- Projects:
 - Battis Farm and Powow Conservation Area Report: Bill Geizentanner was present to discuss the recently completed report regarding land management recommendations for Battis Farm and Powow Conservation Area. Discussion followed on December 2024 public presentation of findings and recommendations and resulting feedback. Geizentanner noted that Audubon has updated guidance regarding the date at which grassland areas dedicated for grassland bird breeding can be mowed, moving the date forward from August 15th (old guidance) to July 24th. Committee discussed priorities coming out of the report, to take up with Conservation Commission (owners of the parcels) and DPW (managers). Sherwood will compose a letter to Con Comm and DPW/City prioritizing: enforcement of rotational mowing plan, seasonal signage alerting dog owners to nesting birds, public education regarding the nesting birds and need to protect, and request for endorsement by Con Comm of these priorities. Discussed possibility of having a competition among school children to design images for signage to be used in nesting season.

- Bill Geizentanner invoice approval: Zackon moved and Redfern seconded acceptance of the Battis Farm/Powow Conservation Area report and payment of submitted invoice. Unanimously approved.
- Referrals:
 - Meadowbrook Special Permit Application: Rettig and Redfern provided updates regarding the large solar array project proposed at Meadowbrook pond (parcel 45-4). OSNRTC previously provided negative recommendation to City Council regarding 2024-096. Owner has also submitted a special permit application regardless of outcome on 2024-096. Planning Board referred Special Permit Application to this Committee for comment. Redfern noted that in current version of 2024-096, the Meadowbrook parcels have been removed from the zoning overlay district. Latest version of solar zoning overlay district also requires wildlife plans, plans for decommissioning of arrays, and prohibits clearing within certain distances of water resource areas. OSNRTC unanimously approved 2 actions (Zackon motion, Hucksam second):
 - i. OSNRTC will send updated recommendation to City Council regarding 2024-096, noting that with current changes (added protections, removal of 45-4), OSNRTC gives a positive recommendation to the ordinance.
 - ii. OSNRTC will send a negative recommendation to Planning Board regarding the special permit application by the owners of 45-4.
- Adjourned 8:35 p.m., Zackon motion, Redfern second. Unanimously approved.

Minutes unanimously approved at March 26, 2025 meeting, respectfully submitted by Jonathan Sherwood, Chair, OSNRTC