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Town of Uxbridge
Conservation Commission
21 South Main Street
Uxbridge, MA 01569
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**Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
January 24, 2019
Lower Town Hall, Uxbridge Town Hall**

Please note that the meeting location was changed to Lower Town Hall pursuant to a request from Town Hall Staff.

Present: Chair Andrew Gorman, Treasurer Russell Holden, Clerk Jeff Shaw, Members Lauren Steele, and Brad Allspach

Also Present: Kaila Sauer (KS) and Taylor Miller (TM), Graduate Interns from Clark University, and Philip Wheelock, resident.

Absent: Vice Chair Jim Hogan and Member Dale Bangma

CALL TO ORDER:

It being 6:05 pm, the meeting being properly posted, duly called and a quorum being present, the Chair called the meeting to order to discuss the Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP).

KS and TM presented an overview of the OSRP, including commentary on the initial 2004 draft and its 2008 revision. These drafts include environmental inventory and census statistic components. The current maps are outdated and will require revisions via GIS which KS and TM will be producing prior to their deadline. The interns are following the guidance material provided for this endeavor by the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions (MACC) in their resource library.

KS and TM presented the attached slideshow. A roundtable-style discussion was held regarding the slideshow.

The interns asked what motivated individual attendance to this presentation/visioning session. Mr. Wheelock discussed his history living in town and being involved in local government, including years he spent on the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Wheelock echoed a sentiment that Uxbridge as a whole has not had a clue about its trajectory. Mr. Holden described his interest in biodiversity and time spent working with engaging the public in natural history through his work with the Metacomet Land Trust. Ms. Steele discussed her education and interest in the OSRP, stating that many feel as if time has stood still in Uxbridge while at the same time unmeasured development has occurred. Ms. Steele also asked the group at large whether or not the Town had produced a build-out plan, to which the Commission was unaware. Mr. Allspach stated that his interest in attending the visioning session was out of concern for the direction in which this town is heading and mentioned the importance of involvement. TM discussed her background and academic interest in community development and policy. KS discussed her interest in the environment and involvement with the MACC. Mr. Gorman stated that he attended out of a concern for a lack of strategic and meaningful management of open space, acknowledging that much of the town-owned land has been taken through tax liens and not from acquisition.

Mr. Wheelock stated that it is the job of townspeople, especially the Conservation Commission, to be resources for the interns as they work on the OSRP. TM discussed that a primary function of the OSRP is to develop an achievable action plan, but the contents of that plan can vary from town to town. General discussion was had as to what these goals could be, including a management plan for existing open space, bringing the Community Preservation Act back up for consideration and possible moratorium on certain development activities to alleviate the amount of large-scale developments open at a given time. Members in attendance stated that it will be critical to have more stakeholder input from groups such as local hunters and other community organizations. Mr. Gorman stated that he tried to personally invite more parties but due to scheduling and inclement weather attendance was low during the visioning session.

KS and TM discussed that they are working on a March deadline for their academic timeline. Mr. Wheelock questioned what the next steps would be after the intern project is complete, and Mr. Gorman responded that the responsibility falls directly on the shoulders of the Conservation Commission to ensure that there is follow through with this project.

ADJOURNMENT-NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR MONDAY FEBRUARY 4, 2019

Motion: Mr. Gorman adjourned the meeting at 7:30 PM.



Andrew Gorman, Chairman

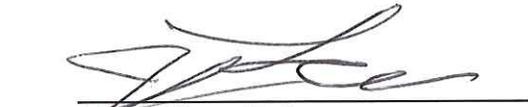
Jim Hogan, Vice Chair

Dale Bangma, Member

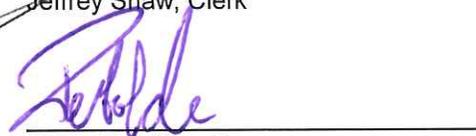
Brad Allspach, Member

April 1, 2019

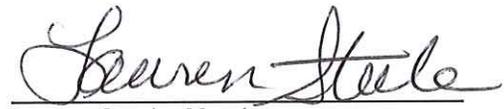
Date



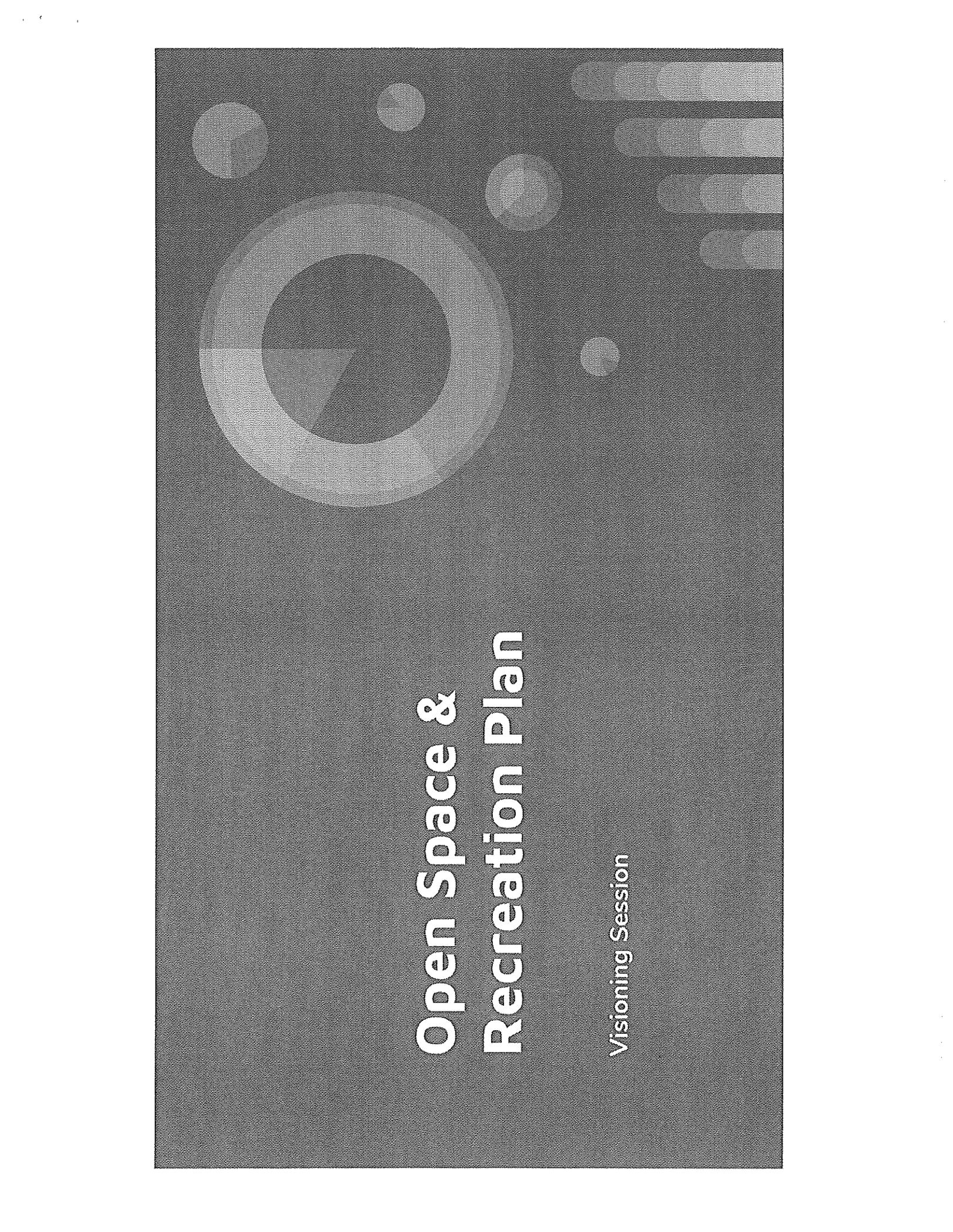
Jeffrey Shaw, Clerk



Russell Holden, Treasurer



Lauren Steele, Member



Open Space & Recreation Plan

Visioning Session



Who We Are

Kaila Sauer

Leominster, MA

B.A. in Environmental Science
Conservation Biology

M.S. in Environmental Science and
Policy

Taylor Miller

Mundelein, IL

B.A. in Political Science and Urban
Development

M.A. in Community, Development,
and Planning



What is an Open Space and Recreation Plan?

- Population and growth characteristics
- Inventories all the open and recreational space held by a municipality
- Environmental inventory of all land
- A plan for the next 5-7 years



OS&RP's in Uxbridge

- Extensive town research in 2000 and 2008
- Draft document in 2008
 - Never passed!
- New draft: May 2019



What We've Done So Far

Partners

- Conservation Commission Chair Andrew Gorman and member Russ Holden
- Conservation Agent Holly Jones
- Clark University Professors: Kathryn Madden and Tim Downs

Updates to the 2008 Draft Document

- Population demographics
- Environmental Inventory
- Map making



Discussion

What motivated you to come here tonight?

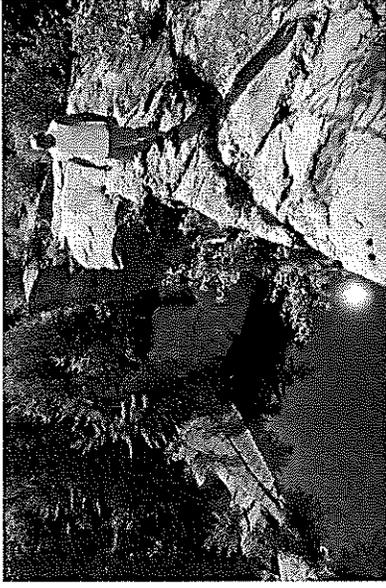
Are there specific areas in the town you are concerned about?

What would you like to see happen in Uxbridge over the next 7 years?

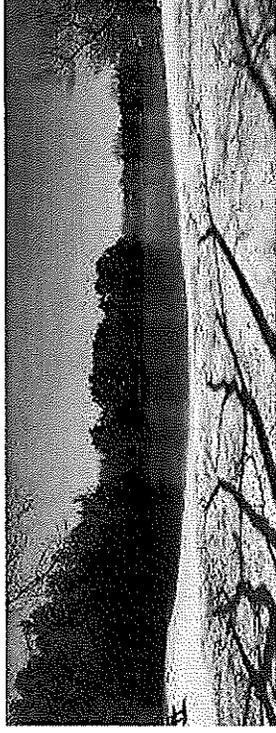


Parcels of Interest

Old Blanchard Quarry



Old McCloskey Building



Pout Pond

Peaceful Pond

Community Gardens

Dog Park



