

## **OPEN SPACE COMMISSION NOTES FOR JANUARY 14, 2026 MEETING**

**Attending: Sam Brown, Eric Dibner, Jim Arsham, Courtney Walsh Mike Bolk**

**Guests and Visitors: Steve, Zach from Resilience Group, Greg LeClerc-Dept Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Amy Brown, Bill Phelps**

### **Celled to order at 6:02PM**

The Casco Open Space Commission met to review the draft open space plan with consultants Steve and Zach from Resilience Planning, who presented a draft action list organized into four categories: conserving landscapes and water resources, enhancing connectivity and access, leading as a resilient community, and strengthening community identity, with commissioners emphasizing the need to specify responsible parties, timelines, and integrate water quality protections and ordinance changes into the plan. Greg Leclerc from Maine's Beginning with Habitat program under Maine Dept of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, showed free mapping services and natural resource strategies that are being incorporated into the plan, while the commission also discusses the Berry Property at Pike's Corner, debating whether to designate it for community gathering spaces, commercial development, or open space, and votes to request \$25,000 in the town budget for a landscape architect to develop planning options for the property. The team established meetings for April 6th and 20th to review the draft plan before the June 4th town meeting, scheduled a community engagement and trail work event for May 31st, and received an update from Matt Marcott that the three-year effort to secure a conservation easement on the Rattlesnake Mt. property, has not succeeded, though the property remains a priority and alternative approaches for maintaining public access will be explored.

### **Next Steps**

Sam: Link Tom with Greg and request Tom to send the draft water quality plan to Greg and the Resilience team

Steve and Zak: Review the water quality plan and comprehensive plan to identify ordinance suggestions and consider creating a fifth category for ordinance-related actions

Steve and Zak: Incorporate water quality language into the guiding principle statement and throughout the open space plan

Steve and Zak: Write and format the open space plan through February and March, with a goal to deliver a fully formatted draft by end of March

Sam: Schedule and post Open Space Commission meeting for Wednesday, April 8th at 6pm to review the draft plan

Sam: Update the next regular Open Space meeting to February 9th due to President's Day conflict and Courtney: Continue working with Allison Griffin on the Maine Community Foundation grant application for the Jugtown bridge project

Sam: Reach out to Loon Echo, Snowmobile Club, and other stakeholders for letters of support for the bridge grant application

Sam: Schedule and post a virtual Teams meeting for Monday, February 2nd at 5pm to discuss the May 31st community engagement event

Sam: Draft and submit a budget request memo to Tony Ward for \$25,000 for Berry Property plan.

**Meeting Adjourned 8:17**