

Report of the  
Open Space Action Committee  
2011

Purpose of Open Space Action Committee

The Rochester Open Space Action Committee (OSAC) was appointed by the Board of Selectmen in April of 2010 to implement the approved Rochester Open Space & Recreation Plan. The goals identified in the Open Space Plan seek to protect the quality of life in Rochester by continuing stewardship of surface and ground water, maintaining large tracts of privately owned open space, preserving farm and forest views and ensuring wildlife habitat. Equally important are the goals of providing outdoor recreational opportunities to Rochester's more than 5,000 residents.

2011 Open Space Action Committee Accomplishments:

- Visited and reviewed a number of permanently protected properties in Rochester. Worked on a draft walking trails guide that is a collaborative project involving the Rochester Conservation Commission, Rochester Land Trust and Open Space Action Committee. The Committee is making final edits and will go to print in 2012.
- Reviewed existing water quality data and found that drinking water quality in Rochester is adequate with low nitrogen levels.
- Worked in collaboration with the Rochester Conservation Commission in the preparation and mailing of an information flyer to over sixty local farmers soliciting members for the Rochester Agricultural Commission.
- Encouraged the Board of Selectmen to activate the Agricultural Commission (adopted at the 2005 Annual Town Meeting) and appoint members. Six members were appointed in the fall of 2011.
- Encouraged the Planning Board to consider the following zoning initiatives:
  - “Transfer of Development Rights” (TDR) provision in the local bylaws provide a legally binding way for a landowner to sell development rights that a buyer can use somewhere else in Town.
  - “Comprehensive Land-Use Plan” based on existing physical characteristics (i.e. topography, soils, water supply, wetlands, etc.)
  - “Open Space Residential Development” to provide a place for TDR's to transfer into and to provide an alternative to the Flexible Development option in preserving farming acreage and open space.

The Planning Board considered all of the above items in 2011.

Respectfully submitted,

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