

*B. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION*

Included in this appendix are the meeting agendas, minutes, attendance sheets, press releases, and the public forum flyer for the Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee.

***Attendees List for Sterling Open Space and Recreation Forum  
March 25, 2008  
7:30 PM– 9PM***

Name	Email or Phone	Town Affiliation	Volunteer to Help	
T Valentine	<a href="mailto:tanavalentine@yahoo.com">tanavalentine@yahoo.com</a>	town resident		Y
Heather Cline	<a href="mailto:heather@clineinnovations.com">heather@clineinnovations.com</a>	town resident		Y
Ann Heineman	<a href="mailto:annheineman@hotmail.com">annheineman@hotmail.com</a>	ELWA		Y
Dennis Crimer	<a href="mailto:dcrimer@comcast.net">dcrimer@comcast.net</a>	town resident		Y
Judy Janda	<a href="mailto:jjanda@comcast.net">jjanda@comcast.net</a>	Recreation Dept (staff)		Y
Susan Harrigan	<a href="mailto:sharragin@iax.com">sharragin@iax.com</a>	Meetinghouse News (press)		-
Jim French	<a href="mailto:jim.french@state.ma.us">jim.french@state.ma.us</a>	Sterling Land Trust		-
Heather Ruziak	<a href="mailto:hruziak@rpmasiello.com">hruziak@rpmasiello.com</a>	Recreation Board		Y
Carol Perkins (plus teenage son and his friend)	978-422-2901	Skate Park Advocate/resident		Y
Brian Cline	<a href="mailto:brian@clineinnovations.com">brian@clineinnovations.com</a>	OSIC (Chair)		-
Peder Pedersen	978-422-2920	OSIC		-
Bob Protano	978-422-8165	Planning Board Chair/OSIC		-
Barbara Roberti	<a href="mailto:rbarbara51@comcast.net">rbarbara51@comcast.net</a>	Conservation Comm. (Chair)		-
Joyce Hinckley	978-422-5100	OSIC		
Danielle Ray	<a href="mailto:danielle@legacyphotoonline.com">danielle@legacyphotoonline.com</a>	The Landmark (resident and press)		
Maryanne MacLeod		OSIC		-
Sue Valentine	978-368-7949	Conservation Comm/OSIC		-
Marion Larson	978-422-5165	OSIC		-
Bill Ayadi		OSIC		-



## OPEN SPACE and RECREATION Community Forum



### OPEN SPACE and RECREATION Community Forum

- Assist the Town of Sterling in planning the Town's future
- Hear the results of the 2007 Open Space & Recreation Survey
- Help to define focus areas on a mapped version of Sterling's 5-Year Action Plan

The volunteer members of the Open Space Implementation Committee (OSIC) are looking forward to your participation!

*Refreshments will  
be served*

**Tuesday March 25 th      7:30pm      1835 Town Hall**  
Should you have any questions contact: [sterling.openspace@gmail.com](mailto:sterling.openspace@gmail.com)  
**Marion Larson 422-5162      Brian Cline 422-0147**

6/15/2009

### Open Space and Recreation Plan Forum

Members of the Open Space Implementation Committee (OSIC) Town of Sterling:

Brian Cline, Chair	Bill Ayadi
Marion Larson, Vice-Chair	Joyce Hindley
Maryanne MacLeod, Treasurer	Robert Protano
Peder Pedersen, Secretary	Sue Valentine

### Goals for this Public Forum

- Present survey results and trends
- Receive comments and feedback
- Establish open space priorities

### Purpose of Open Space Plan

- Allows Sterling to be eligible to apply through the State Division of Conservation Services for funding to:
  - preserve historic sites/landmarks
  - develop recreation facilities
  - protect open space for conservation purposes
- The plan will be a resource and guide for town committees and for the Sterling community

### Required Elements of Open Space Plan

- Inventory of historic, recreation and conservation properties
- Town demographic information
- Environmental challenges faced by the town
- Action Plan
- Maps
- Public input

### What do we want to learn from the survey?

- Most critical open space related challenges
- Recreational interest and actual usage of recreational resources
- Actions to be taken to protect open space
- Actions regarding recreational opportunities
- Desired types of organized events
- Acceptable contribution level to improve and maintain open space

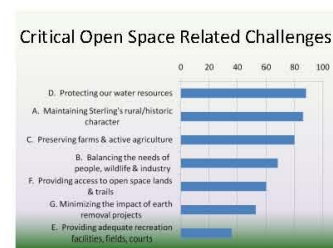


### Survey Design

- Concise
- Consistent
- Current
- Comparable

### Critical Open Space Related Challenges

- Maintaining Sterling's rural/historic character
- Balancing the needs of people, wildlife & industry
- Preserving farms & active agriculture
- Protecting our water resources
- Providing adequate recreation facilities, fields, courts
- Providing access to open space lands & trails
- Minimizing the impact of earth removal projects



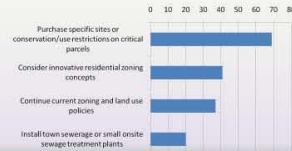
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### Comments regarding Question 1: Open Space Related Challenges

- Historic character of Sterling is important
- Suggestions for providing access to open space/trails
- Farm preservation suggestions
- Water resources must be protected
- Earth removal concerns



### Actions regarding protection of local open space resources

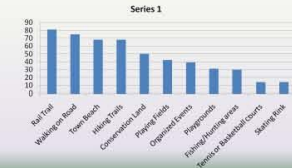


### Comments re Question 2: protection of local open space resources

- Conflicting concerns on lot size/density/sprawl
- What is enough open space vs donations for specific purchases
- Innovative zoning
- Town sewers—not much support
- Sterling too expensive for my children to afford



### Use of Sterling's Recreational Resources

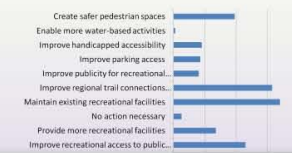


### Comments re Question 3: Use of Sterling's Recreational Resources

- Need for pedestrian safety on roads
- Where are the trails and lands we can access?
- Skate park wanted/playing fields—enough or not?
- Dogs and DCR lands



### Actions regarding Sterling's Recreational Resources



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#### Comments re Question 4: Action regarding Sterling's Recreational Resources

- Recreation department has great offerings
- What is meant by recreational facility?

#### Comments re Question 5: Top 5 recreational interests

- Map of lands/trails would be helpful
- Sholan Park—underutilized, great potential
- Create safer pedestrian opportunities

#### Comments re Question 6: What organized events would you like to see

- Suggested activities: Photography, contra dances & more
- Town social or picnic can get people together
- Need connections of rail trails, longer sidewalks to get into Town

#### Comments re Question 7: Making a monetary contribution

- Most comments support donating to a specific parcel/project is preferable

#### Trends and Comparisons in Survey Results

##### Consistent Issues Across 2007 and 2002 Surveys

- Protection of water resources is the most important issue based on results in both surveys. Note 2002 Survey had many more items focused on this issue
- Protection/preservation of Sterling's rural/historic character including farms and agriculture is the second most important issue. Many comments tended to focus on this constellation of issues

#### Trends and Comparisons in Survey Results, cont'd

##### Emerging Issues on 2007 Survey

- Maintenance of recreational resources including sidewalks, playing fields, town beach and other properties. Again many comments focused on this constellation of issues
- Walking on road was a preferred activity as noted in responses to several questions. Comments focused on safety concerns due to poor repair or lack of sidewalks

#### Top Responses by Percentage Across 2007 and 2002 Surveys

2007	2002
88% Protect our water resources	90% Preserve or protect wetland and uplands for conservation of natural habitat and water resources
88% Maintain Sterling's rural/historic	89% Preserve or protect buildings of historic character
81% Use of rail trail	88% Preserve or protect Open Space and farmlands for scenic views and vistas
80% Preserve farms and active agriculture	80% Preserve open space by supporting town effort to purchase land
75% Use of walking on road	72% Preserve open space by supporting State purchase of land or development rights



#### Questions, comments and answers

#### Possible actions regarding protection of local open space resources

- Continue current zoning and land use policies
- Consider innovative residential zoning concepts
- Support creative initiatives to protect open space resources
- Install town sewerage or small onsite sewage treatment plants
- Purchase specific sites or conservation/use restrictions on critical parcels



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### Use of Sterling's Recreational Resources

- Conservation Land
- Fishing/Hunting areas
- Hiking Trails
- Organized Events
- Playgrounds
- Playing Fields
- Rail Trail
- Skating Rink
- Tennis or Basketball courts
- Town Beach
- Walking on Road

### Comments regarding Protecting Water Resources

- Water resources must be protected
- Very important to protect our water resources, especially those that are underground. The town should be balancing growth to ensure a sustainable water supply
- Water resources are understood to be critical and I assume local, state and federal government standards and policies would not allow industry into town that was detrimental to any and all resources
- The town really needs to do more investigating of the Kane-Perkins Co on Route 12. They are close to water area across Route 12. They have blocked every single visual Area. Should we fear the impact of such massive earth removal at this spot?
- We must preserve our water resources. Shame on the town if it thinks it can profit from the sale of the Wekepeke waters

### Comments regarding Open Space Related Challenges

- Need clean up and rubbish removal behind Appletown Market - papers, rubbish blowing - it's a health hazard. What does the DPW do?
- Repair the fence around the Common and paint it. It's disgraceful and reflects on our care of the town and its property
- Over the past 25 years, I have watched Sterling lose its historic homes, some dating to the beginning of this town. They crumble and decay only to be replaced by two or three trophy homes. The owners let them be empty and rot beyond repair. Soon it will decay and crumble. I so we lose our historical beauty so someone can line their pockets. Very sad.

### Comments regarding Open Space Related Challenges

- Also enforcing existing town and state laws regarding wetlands and runoff
- All above are important to Sterling's future. Finding a balance will be the challenge
- Providing access to open space land and trails—Not all open space should be used for rec. Sterling has a **SPRAWL** problem due to lack of community planning. This is a **critical** need for the town
- Our kids need more fields to play on. They also need a skate park, because skating is a sport too

### Comments regarding Protecting Open Space Resources

- All development should stop until a real assessment of Sterling can be completed. This survey will not do that. Surveys are an excuse for real action. For decades I have seen them, filled them out and no action ever results. All surveys say protect open space, rural character and farms, yet we continue to lose farms and Sterling is no longer a rural town. I doubt anything significant will result from this survey
- A moratorium on **all building in Sterling should be considered seriously**. No one has a clue for the long-term sustainability of the town from all of this growth, i.e., impact on after resources, impact on land.
- This town needs to stop building such huge trophy homes

### Comments re Use of Sterling's Recreational Resources

- Sterling has **plenty** of recreation. Now is the time to evaluate—**NOT** continue to develop. What we have is not 100% utilized—No need to create more.
- Tennis or Basketball courts—should be allowed for skate-boarders! How dare you put a sign up!
- I just moved to Sterling and have yet to explore all the recreational resources that the town offers. But, I anticipate using the conservation land, hiking trails, rail trails, skating rink, etc.
- It is a disgrace that the tennis courts on Rt. 62 in W Sterling are in such poor condition. I enjoy playing tennis and those are the only public courts. They need to be resurfaced, at the least
- Many roads provide wonderful opportunities for photography or sketching

### Comments re protection of local open space resources

- Land cost too high for your own children. Smaller lot or frontage.
- The town needs to collect money from developers specifically for open space preservation and recreation.
- Zoning and conservation determine the character of the town. We need to be creative to balance growth and preservation.
- Planning Board comprised of local realtors is prescription for continued excessive development.
- Sewerage expensive & would enable too much density.
- Continue current zoning...We have out priced our land with the &OCR to the point your children can't afford to live in the town.

### Comments regarding Preserving Farms and Agriculture

- We probably need to slow development which comes at the expense of older farms. Balancing this so it doesn't get out of control is important and so that it preserves one's character is important. That's what makes Sterling a desirable place to live
- Add tax incentives for farmers to encourage farming
- We must preserve our farms. Once they are gone, they can never be replaced. Farms actually save the town money as opposed to development.
- Our farms form the most important component of rural character
- To grow (and have increasing property value) we probably need to allow development, which occurs at the expense of older farms. Balancing this so it doesn't get out of control is important and so that it preserves some character is important. That's what makes Sterling a desirable place to live and work.