

To: Sterling Board and Committee Members, Town Employees, and Residents

From: Open Space Implementation Committee and Board of Selectmen

Subject: Public Forum on Sterling's open space and recreation priorities, Your Feedback Critical

The Sterling Open Space Implementation Committee (OSIC) is currently updating Sterling's 7-year *Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP)* and is seeking input not only from Sterling citizens but also from town boards, committees, and town employees at a **Public Forum to be held on Saturday April 28, 2018 from 9-11 AM at the Sterling Senior Center** located on Muddy Pond Road. Some boards and committees have been contacted by OSIC in the past year for information, but there are still information gaps that need to be filled in order to meet the state's OSRP requirements.

This comprehensive document contains information about demographics, history, geology, soil, water resources, recreation, wildlife, open space inventory along with environmental challenges. [A Summary of the 2010 ORSP](#) is on the town website to give you some background. After incorporating comments from the public from a recent survey and from the Public Forum, the Open Space Plan should reflect what the Sterling community sees as its priorities and needs for the next 7 years, distilled into an action plan. A completed, state-approved Plan will also make the town eligible to apply for state grants enhancing recreational facilities, parks, fields, and land protection.

As you are probably aware, Sterling is also taking steps to develop a new Master Plan for the town. A state approved Open Space Plan constitutes about 30% of what is needed in a Master Plan. Therefore, your comments will have a particularly significant impact this year. Please try to have someone from your board, committee or department represented at this meeting. Be prepared to provide an answer to this question: What are the top 3 challenges that your board, committee or staff face in the next 7 years?

This is an important opportunity to help shape the future of Sterling. The Public Forum program will include:

- OSIC mission; purpose of Open Space Plan; Forum Goals
- Overview of OSIC activities over the last 7 years
- 'Hidden Gems of Sterling' Presentation
- Results of 2017-18 Open Space Survey
- It's Your Turn: Small group discussion on topics related to recreation infrastructure and activities, open space and environmental challenges in Sterling
- It's Your Turn: Small Group recommendations and feedback from each group.

Refreshments will be served and a packet of Sterling Trail maps will be available.

We look forward to meeting and hearing from you at the Forum.

The Open Space Implementation Committee (OSIC) --Jeff Keay, Marion Larson, Peder C. Pedersen, Chuck Plaisted, Robert Protano, Erin Rehrig, Jim Wilkinson