

## **OPEN SPACE/RECREATION TOPIC GROUP**

**Contributing members included:** Joan Gonser, Bob Gonser, Richard Flibotte, Susan Hilchey, Jan Kent, Paul Coates and Cheryl Killam

“Define Open Space areas for Recreation and Preservation”

Suggested goals of this Topic Group taken from the Community Vision Workshop Priority Actions list include:

- 1) Defining Open Spaces, including wildlife corridors
- 2) Identifying strategically planned acquisitions for education (town/school), recreation and green spaces
- 3) Consider balanced business and residential growth while encouraging open land and protected waterways

Results of the Town-wide Survey 2007, relating to Open Space, were discussed. Respondents indicated that it is a high or very high priority to have open space, streamside buffers, protected lakes/rivers/wetlands, and protected ground/drinking water. Nearly one-fourth of the respondents favored purchasing farmlands and forests, even if taxes are impacted. Nearly one-half of the respondents favored acquiring the lands if there is no tax impact.

Our group reviewed maps depicting high value conservation lands in town both privately owned and town owned. Raymond owns the following conservation properties: Flint Hill/Norris Farms; Cammett Recreation Area; Riverside Park; Dearborn Estate, Cassier Town Forest; Cassier Estate and the Colonial Drive location. Privately owned properties include along Fordway Brook and approximately 1100 acres along Cilley Road.

Given the major floods during the past 2 years, it was suggested that a zoning ordinance might be developed to prevent rebuilding beyond footprints or land swapping to prevent rebuilding within flood zones.

We reviewed the current Chapter 5 Open Space and Recreation - Goals and Objectives only to unanimously agree that the detail information needs to be updated however, the directive of the goals and objectives in the chapter still remain the same.

The group identified the following additional priorities for the Town of Raymond:

- Continue to protect the Town's identified conservation properties and define areas for preservation with green space and wildlife corridor connections.
- Protect drinking water sources and systems including aquifers, water tables, river edges, prime wetlands and wells, both public and private
- Help reduce global warming by maintaining forests with active Forestry Management Plans
- Give consideration to the Pooled Wetland Mitigation Plan before development impacts wetlands to mitigate flooding and maximize resources/options available to the Town
- Enhance and restore wetlands and widen buffer zones to alleviate flooding
- Implement the Open Space Plan from May 2003.

**1.) What has been the Towns expenditures for acquisition of green, protected space over the past 5 – 7 years? What funding mechanisms might be available?**

2000 - Riverside Parks 45 acres purchased for \$74,000.

1998 – Cassier Town Forest 370 acres purchased for \$160,000

1993 - Dearborn 305 acres purchased for \$398,000.

1992 - Flint Hill 215 acres acquired for \$1.00  
due to non-payment of taxes

The Conservation Commission Fund receives 30% of the current use penalty money otherwise known as the Land Use Change Tax. The Raymond Conservation Commission Funds can be used for acquisitions of land, protective easements or purchasing the development rights. The balance at the end of 2007 is \$537,000.00.

Topics of discussion that should be acted upon were planned purchases of land with continuous green linked spaces, aquifers, playing fields and a place for recreational community center with use for schools and families.

Also discussed were purchasing conservation easements, updates on the wastewater treatment facility and old tannery site, and the possibility of contacting large landowners to encourage land protection methods.

## **2.) What types of outdoor recreation areas and parks exist in Raymond?**

Outdoor recreation activities such as Outdoor Theater, Earth Day celebrations, hiking trails, mountain biking, horseback riding, hunting, snowshoeing, x-country skiing, snow mobiling exists on one or more of the following properties Riverside Park, Dearborn, Cassier Town Forest, Norris Farms/Flint Hill, Colonial Drive and Cilley Road properties. There is a desire for trails that would allow ATV's a place to ride safely and a new skate board park for the kids .

Organized team sports recreation areas include:

Welch Field area:

- 1 Tee Ball Field
- 2 Softball fields and 1 Baseball field (Fields used by Raymond School District through a Use Agreement, Town of Raymond and Raymond Youth Athletic Association, also serves as a football field)

Cammett Recreation Area:

- 2 Little League Baseball Fields
- 1 Softball Field (also serves as a soccer field)
- 1 Regulation Soccer Field
- 1 6v6 Soccer Field

Elementary School: NO FIELDS

Gove Middle School:

- 1 Softball Field
- 1 Baseball Field
- 2 6v6 Soccer Fields
- 1 Little League Baseball Field
- 1 lighted Soccer Field
- 2 lighted rubberized asphalt tennis courts
- 1 lighted basketball court
- 1 lighted 400 meter stone dust track