



Sperry Park Committee Meeting

January 3, 2023 at 6:00 pm

Hybrid meeting held via Zoom and in-person

Town Hall 1st floor meeting room

Meeting Minutes

Committee members in attendance: John Adamovich, Sheila McCreven, and Jane Shernow. Committee members absent: Mike Walter, Chris Burr-Bahner, and Clifford Lynch. Guests in attendance: Sophia McDermott

Chairman John Adamovich called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm. Sheila McCreven took notes for the minutes as Secretary pro tem.

John provided an update on the status of Sperry Road, reporting that it is currently closed for the winter. Traditionally, the road is reopened in March each year and the committee discussed its expectation that this will be the case once again in 2023. Sheila will inquire about setting up an email address at the Town website so the public will be able to contact the committee.

The committee then discussed a request regarding the park, submitted by Amity High School student Sophia McDermott (see attached). Sophia explained her proposed project and committee members thanked her for her interest in the park and provided feedback on her proposal. She was advised that her survey should not focus on potential use for swimming as this is prohibited due to the property being part of the public water supply watershed. She will instead focus on examining current public understanding about the existence of the park and gauge interest in its history to help guide future plans to increase visits to the park. Increased use of the park will be determined by the committee, in consultation with the Board of Selectmen as necessary.

The committee discussed next steps and consensus emerged that the committee should select a meeting date in late-January or early-February at which it can vote to approve Sophia's project. It is believed that the committee has the necessary authority to act in this regard according to its enabling Ordinance. Sophia will submit a draft of her survey questions to the committee in advance.

Potential dates for this meeting will be circulated by email and the chosen meeting date will be noticed on the Town website, as required.

Sheila will provide an update on the proposed project on behalf of the committee at the January Board of Selectmen meeting and ask if there are any questions the Selectman may have for the committee. She will report back at the next committee meeting.

By unanimous consent, the committee adjourned its meeting at 6:26 pm.



Sheila McCreven <sheila.mccreven@gmail.com>

Project Summary

Sophia McDermott <sophiarivka@gmail.com>

Wed, Dec 7, 2022 at 9:32 PM

To: "sheila.mccreven@gmail.com" <sheila.mccreven@gmail.com>

Hi,

Below is a brief summary on my project that I believe will be presented to the Board next week. Thanks again for talking with me today!

Sophia

My name is Sophia McDermott, and I am a part of the Conservation Ambassador Program (CAP) at the Natural Resource and Conservation Academy (NRCA) at UConn (<https://nrca.uconn.edu/cap/>). This is a yearlong program in which high school students work with a UConn mentor and a community partner to develop community-based conservation projects.

For my project, I hope to collect information on the public interest around Sperry Park and specifically the use of Sperry Falls, through a survey published in the town paper and newsletter. The survey will aim to assess whether citizens want to make Sperry Park more open to the public (in that recreational use of the falls is permitted) by giving it high/moderate impact designation, or maintain its lower impact designation as a reservoir.

Additionally, I hope to educate the town on the importance and history of the park through this survey: what it means to the town, and what it has historically meant to the town. This project will hopefully educate and guide the town in its restrictions/allowance of recreational use in the park, and provide more access/clearer guidelines to patrons. I welcome feedback from the Board of Selectmen or other town committees on the content/distribution of the survey.

I hope to send out this survey and have the data collected by February 2023, so that I can analyze and present the data in March. I look forward to meeting members of the Board of Selectmen and thank them for their consideration and interest.