

2018 OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

The Open Space Committee had another active year in its oversight of the Town's conservation land and other open space areas. The Committee's responsibilities include maintaining and protecting the town's open space, keeping the town's Open Space and Recreation Plan updated per State guidelines, seeking grants and other funding sources for acquisitions or improvements to existing open space, and maintaining and improving the trail systems on Town conservation lands and within Hubbardston State Forest for the enjoyment of the citizens.

2018 Comings and Goings: We were happy to welcome new member Chip Pettirossi to the committee during 2018, but greatly saddened by the departure of long-time member and chairperson Jassy Bratko. Jassy had provided many years of dedicated effort and expertise in open space issues to the Town, was a driving force behind many of our major open space projects, and will be sorely missed. Luckily, we still have her email address when we are stumped with questions that would benefit from her input!

2018 Projects:

- Cleared vegetation at Dottie Rock overlook in the Malone Road Conservation Area to expose the panoramic view to the east.
- Conducted a site walk at the Geordie Lane Conservation Area to kick off the development of a land management plan.
- Installed safety rails and non-slip surfaces on several bridges within the trail system.
- Began the process of negotiating a conservation restriction for the Malone Road Conservation Area.
- Made revisions to the town's Open Space and Recreation Plan in preparation for a new round of grant funding applications in 2019.
- Groomed ski and snowshoe trails at Malone Road.
- Participated in ongoing skirmishes with beavers to alleviate flooding on the trail system.
- In partnership with North Quabbin Trail Association, performed rough cut for a gentle trail at Malone Road that will be accessible to mobility-challenged users. Further refinements coming in 2019!
- Planted a wildflower garden at Malone Road.

Submitted by Open Space Committee Members:

Stephanie Frend
Bob Hatch, Chairman
Rick Jones, Secretary
Mark Kresge
Chip Pettirossi, Treasurer
Pat Taylor
Susan Worth