

# TOWN OF SOUTHBOROUGH



## CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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### MEMORANDUM

Date: April 23, 2020

To: Board of Selectmen & Mark Purple, Town Administrator

From: Melissa Danza, Conservation Agent

**Subject: 2019 Open Space & Recreation Plan Approval**

Thank you for your time and consideration in reviewing the 2019 Open Space & Recreation Plan (OSRP). Prior to your next meeting I wanted to supply some additional information to help aid in this process.

This plan ultimately began in 2015/2016 when the Town utilized services from the Conway School to prepare this newest version with surveys, outreach, and listening sessions done as required by the state in 2016. Once the draft was finished, there was a waiting period while another consultant was acquired to complete the ADA evaluations of our town owned playground, parks, and open space. Since this completion, the original draft has been updated to reflect changes as required by the EEA with their conditional approval in March of 2019 (see attached). These changes have been since made and the only outstanding item is the letter of support from the Board of Selectmen.

I am happy to report that the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) also finds that the listed goals and priorities aligns with their 2050 Master Plan. The representative from Conservation Commission in the Master Plan Committee has also incorporated these items within the new Master Plan discussions to ensure that these priorities are enforced consistently and congruently throughout town documents. There have been consistent efforts through this process to ensure that this document fits in with the overall feel, priorities, and comments from the town as a whole.

While it has taken extra time to get a final and complete plan, many boards and committees have begun to work on their designated tasks since reviewing the latest version and issuing their support including Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Recreation Commission, Open Space Preservation Commission, and others. With the changeover within departments and boards we have made sure that they have been updated on the current status and had time to review the OSRP. I am asking at this time for the Board to issue their support because the clock in which this document is in play for began with its conditional approval and I want to ensure the best use of our time. There are also several grants available to different boards and committees that

require a fully approved OSRP. To help them in their granting writing process, I want to ensure that this step is taken care of as soon as possible given the unknown changes in deadlines or future availabilities of funds in these programs.

As this OSRP has been conditionally approved, we are not looking for edits as priorities and goals have been thoroughly vetted throughout the years with individual responsible parties taking it upon themselves to verify the correct actions to meet each goal. I hope that given this information and the extensive time that multiple entities have spent on this document, that the Board will vote favorably and allow those relying upon it to move forward with their ventures in acquiring funding or reaching goals to better our recreation and open space lands.