

November 2017

DIRECTORS

Dear Friend of Open Spaces,

Dover:

Justine Kent-Uritam
Exec. Dir.
Sara Molyneaux

As we review the events of 2017, Upper Charles Conservation Land Trust (Upper Charles) has accomplished many things in cooperation with private citizens, other land trusts, and local governments. To our past donors, we appreciate your support. And to people who are not yet familiar with our group, we hope that you'll make a financial commitment to us this year.



Holliston:

Paul Saulnier

Summary of Current Projects

Hopkinton:

Matt Zettek
Treasurer

***Participation in Water Studies:** Large scale housing developments are either planned or are in progress in all of our core towns. Our local zoning and state legislation just assume that there is enough drinking water available for any sized project in any town or city. In cooperation with local Boards of Health (BOH), Upper Charles is lobbying for meaningful enforcement of water conservation by the state Department of Environmental Protection and for legislation that enables local BOH's to restrict water usage during times of drought.



Medfield:

Bob Macleod
John Thompson

***Expansion of Recreational Trails:** In Holliston and Medway, funds from the Community Preservation Act are being used by local citizens to improve trail systems in those towns; specifically, the **Upper Charles Trail** and the 250' long boardwalk over **Chicken Brook**. In Dover, Upper Charles continues to work with the **Friends of the Dover Greenway** to garner support for the creation of a recreational trail in that town.



Medway:

Jim Wieler
Chairman
Paul Atwood

Millis:

Anne Rich
Clerk

Natick:

Kathy Rehl

Sherborn:

John Higley
Steve Violin

***Land Conservation Projects:** We continue to work with others to permanently protect the 103 acres of the **Norfolk Hunt Club** land in Dover and Medfield. Another project involves the preservation of 21 acres in Dover (the **Porter Trust** land) along the Charles River that can only be described as an "Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty." We provided technical information to one of the owners. The Dover Land Conservation Trust led the \$2.2 million fundraising campaign to which Upper Charles contributed.

***Encourage Use of Land Trust Lands:** This year we co-sponsored a 7k Trail Run with the Friends of Holliston Trails. The event was a huge success with several hundred people running in our Wenakeening Woods and along the Upper Charles Trail.

Summary of Past Projects

***Lobbied the State Legislature to Pass the Community Preservation Act (CPA):**

Upper Charles spent many years contacting our state legislators to pass the CPA in 2000 that enables town meetings to pass local legislation that raises funds to purchase open space, create affordable housing, and protect historic buildings. With our help, the towns of Holliston, Hopkinton, Medway, and Millis adopted the CPA.

***Creation of the Upper Charles Trail:** In 1996, Upper Charles Board President, John Thomas, envisioned the creation of a circular recreational trail totaling 26 miles in six neighboring towns in our region. While Upper Charles got this project started, local towns (Holliston, Milford, and Sherborn) are seeing it to completion and have acquired 14 miles of abandoned railroad beds to date in various states of improvement courtesy of CPA and other governmental and private funds.

***Preservation of the Medfield State Hospital Land:** In 2002, the state closed the mental hospital located in Medfield and Dover. Developers made proposals to turn the land into hundreds of units of housing and even a private golf course. Upper Charles funded a hydrological study that highlighted the importance of water availability on site. Upper Charles Board Members from Dover, Medfield, Millis, and Sherborn spent many years on the multi-town Medfield State Hospital Re-Use Committee and nixed all these development schemes. In 2003, the Dover-Sherborn Regional Schools purchased 37 acres of the former hospital land, later the state turned over 145 acres to state conservation agencies, and finally in 2014, the Town of Medfield acquired the remaining 80 acres. Additionally, water rights to Farm Pond in Sherborn were extinguished.



***Acquisition of Open Spaces:** Over the years, Upper Charles has worked with local governments and other land trusts to raise money in order to preserve the following properties that we now own or co-own:

Wenakeening Woods (109 acres) in Holliston and in Sherborn, the **Humphrey Land** (80 acres) and **Wilson Farm** (42 acres). In addition, Upper Charles lobbied the Town of Natick to expend \$1 million in public funds that enabled The Trustees to acquire **Pegan Hill** (48 acres) in Dover and Natick.



In sum, our projects are complex, long term, and involve extensive effort to pull off. We hope that you will contribute to Upper Charles this year so that we can continue to support local land conservation initiatives. Thanks!

Upper Charles Conservation Land Trust Inc. is a 501 (c) (3) public charity per the IRS. Your donation is fully tax deductible. Thank You!