

## **Minutes from Friends of Auerfarm SP meeting on 1.25.17**

Attendees: Floyd Bagwell, Jr., Stephen Bayer, Jennifer Cushman, Gene Ellis, Eric Hammerling, Robin Kreisberg, Nick Miller, Vikki Reski, Beth Schiro, Christopher Shepard, Linda Vossen and Guest (I did this from memory, so please accept my apologies if I missed anyone)

After reviewing the examples of other Statements of Purpose and excerpts from previous meetings talking about the various values of Auerfarm State Park, Hammerling encouraged a discussion of “What” a Friends Group would do, without getting into the “How” it would be done. Although we have been using the short-hand of Auerfarm State Park or Auerfarm SP, it is formally the [Auerfarm State Park Scenic Reserve](#).

Stephen Bayer suggested that we should talk about the “Why” proposition first. Following are some of the notes I took on the “Why” for a Friends group:

- DEEP is understaffed and needs help/support
- Local involvement personalizes the experiences of visitors
- Friends group is best to facilitate local partnerships
- To celebrate the beauty of place
- To sustain special aspects of the Reserve
- To promote engagement with community
- To introduce people to the outdoors in a non-overwhelming way
- To advocate for proper investment in public lands/natural resources
- To celebrate unique festivals connected to the land such as an Apple Blossom festival
- To encourage opportunities to partner with 4H, Wintonbury Land Trust, Boy Scouts, etc.
- Support a place where people can get away from the daily grind, escape, & unwind
- Serve as a voice for the Park
- Increase visibility of the Park

After that discussion, Christopher Shepard facilitated a brainstorming session whereby attendees wrote ideas for the “purpose” of the Friends of Auerfarm State Park on post-it sticky notes that were then organized by 13 categories (to be further consolidated later).

In talking about “next steps” for the group, Hammerling asked for volunteers for the following activities:

### **Scouting of a Trail Connection to MDC/Metacomet**

- Jen C, Robin K, Vikki R, Beth S., and Eric H. volunteered

### **Wordsmithing of Statement of Purpose**

- Stephen B, Robin K, and Eric H volunteered

The group ended by talking about models for a Friends Group. Christopher suggested that a good first step might be for CFPA to be a fiscal sponsor for the Friends similar to what CFPA provides for the

Friends of Goodwin Forest and the Connecticut Land Conservation Council. Eric suggested that he would follow-up with his Board of Directors (who would need to approve of the concept) and would provide the Fiscal Sponsorship Agreement that CFPA has with the Friends of Goodwin Forest.