

Blairhaven Committee Minutes
April 5, 2011

TOWN CLERK
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DUXBURY, MASS.

The Blairhaven Committee held a site visit at Blairhaven on April 5, 2011 at 8 AM and continued the meeting at the Jannetty residence as there was no access to the Blairhaven dormitory. Members present: Betsy Sullivan, Pat Loring, Joe Jannetty, Tony Kelso, Joe Grady, John Brawley, Holly Morris, Michael Gill, Harbormaster Don Beers (ex officio), Peter Buttkus (ex officio).

March 29, 2011 Minutes

Ms. Loring moved to approve minutes of March 29, 2011, Mr. Kelso seconded; 7 approved, 2 abstentions (Ms. Sullivan & Mr. Gill).

Site Plan and Existing Structures

The purpose of this meeting was to address the site plan and the existing structures. Mr. Grady reported that the dormitory has 700 gpd septic system for six bedroom dwelling; rental house on septic pits and could possibly be tied into newer system. Mr. Grady will solicit proposals for site plan of entire property. Pat Loring moved to have Mr. Grady solicit proposals for a survey, Ms. Sullivan seconded, 8 approved.

Mr. Kelso recommended that the buildings be examined more thoroughly and reported that the rental house was the original barn. Mr. Grady recommended that grounds be examined for well site(s) and that they be filled for safety concerns. Mr. Buttkus would like to conduct a thorough inspection with Inspectional Services of the rental cottage. Ms. Morris will contact Herb Ziegler to gain access.

Mr. Buttkus commented that he envisions the entire site as open green space without any buildings. Ms. Loring suggested that the rental house could serve as a natural resource center. Ms. Sullivan added that use of the cottage would discourage unwanted activity. Mr. Grady questioned whether the cottage would have to be ADA compliant. Mr. Gill stated that while he personally is in favor of a "police" presence at the site via the Harbormaster, he questioned where the money would come from to maintain buildings and renovate them to the extent needed to make them suitable for the proposed use by the Harbormaster and Bay Management Commission. Mr. Gill cautioned that CPA funds used for this purpose – a town public safety and administrative function – are probably outside of what is permissible under the City of Newton case. Ms. Morris stated that this was a "grey area" that she thought could be allowed if it serves to preserve the Blairhaven property. There was additional discussion of other properties that had been acquired with CPA funds that had structures on them. Mr. Gill observed that given the public controversy surrounding the vote to acquire the Blairhaven property that the town needs to adhere to the City of Newton guidelines or otherwise be exposed to litigation. Mr. Buttkus replied that the money could come from the town's budget. Harbormaster Beers reported that his department could use the second floor and recommended the use of the first floor to Bay Management Commission.

Conservation Restriction

Ms. Loring distributed copies of the Town Green CR and discussed her approach to drafting purposes and prohibited and permitted uses for CPA and Town CR's. She added that she expects the Blairhaven Committee to participate in this process. Ms. Loring noted that The Wildlands Trust has historically held the CR's, however, it is too soon to discuss this with the Trust. Ms. Loring noted that the CR should also include reference to a permitting process. Ms. Sullivan proposed the ability to have events at the site via a permitting process through the Selectmen, similar to the process used for the Town Green. Mr. Gill replied that he didn't think that a "Town Green" analysis was applicable to this site as this site is not analogous to the Town Green and it was never represented as such during the presentation and vetting of the article. Mr. Gill reported that the neighborhood would not be in favor of allowing events at the site. Mr. Jannetty agreed. Ms. Loring added that any events must not conflict with the use of the landing.

The Committee discussed the "dormitory" building. Given the condition of the dormitory and the cost of renovating/maintaining it, the consensus of the Committee was to recommend razing it, but only after requesting that the building inspector inspect the property to confirm the condition of the property. Mr. Jannetty estimated the cost of razing the dormitory to be around \$20K, assuming no asbestos.

Property Management Plan

Ms. Loring suggested that a CR with a permitting process were sufficient for management of the property. Mr. Gill expressed concern for the ongoing management of the property and asked about the process for clearing of the site and roadside area. He added that he would like to see clearing of the upland area. Mr. Buttkus replied that his department could clear and improve the site by making incremental progress over the course of a couple years. Ms. Morris added that the CPC included funds in the Blairhaven Article for this purpose and for survey work. Mr. Grady recommended a rail fence to restrict car access.

The Committee further discussed whether to allow dog walking on the site. Mr. Buttkus described the problem at other town properties where dog owners used the town garbage cans for their dogs' droppings. Others discussed the mess that dogs were making at Bay Farm and other areas. Mr. Brawley expressed concern about bacteria affecting the shellfish. The consensus of the Committee was that leashed dog walking would be allowed, but efforts would be made to encourage dog owners to use other means of disposal.

Harbormaster Beers reported that certain improvements to the landing may improve access, but he cautioned about the extent of improvements. He added that the Blairhaven Committee may only make recommendations for improvements to the landing. Permits for use of the landing will be considered. Committee members questioned whether it would be prudent to limit access to the Blairhaven site to town residents only.

Mr. Grady suggested that if parking for the landing is allowed on the Blairhaven site, permitting will have to be considered. Mr. Jannetty suggested leaving the landing alone (including its parking) and only allow parking on Blairhaven for access to Blairhaven. Mr. Jannetty further opined that parking is a critical issue b/c parking will drive the use and the intensity of the use at the site.

The Committee recommended surveying of the landing and Howlands Lane to better define the landing area. Mr. Grady will include this with the Blairhaven survey.

The Committee scheduled the next meeting on Monday, April 11, 2011 at 7:30 PM in the Senior Center. Ms. Loring moved to adjourn, Mr. Gill seconded, all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:40 AM.