

Master Plan Implementation Committee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 23, 2014

Members present: Barbara Mee, Mary Wing-Soares, Chris Davies, Ann Chiampa, Mike Speltz, Deb Paul, Mary Tetreau, Tammy Siekmann, Tim Seikmann, Ted Combes,

Members absent: Kevin Smith

Also present: John Vogl, Kirby Wade

Site Walk on Town Common/Town Forest

The committee conducted a site walk on the Town Forest/Town Common starting at 5:30 pm. J. Vogl led a tour through the property. He said that the purpose was to “ground-test” the ideas that had been generated and place them in the context of the forest. He said it was a good opportunity to view sight lines, placement of such things as the ice skating rink and potential trail networks and the ways in which different ideas would relate to each other and existing conditions.

The tour was informal and no decisions were made, with members often in small group discussions. Tour stops and discussion points included:

- Commenced at gravel parking area near the bandstand
- Newly cleared area through stone wall and along Mammoth Road. Discussed use as potential ice skating rink site and lighting needs. Discussed idea of selective cutting along Mammoth Road to increase transparency?
- Newly constructed Town Forest Trail. Multiple stops along trail to discuss signage, trail design and viewsheds plus completed network throughout entire property.
- Orchard vista site; rope swing and benches. Discussed fitness opportunities and possible viewing platform to enhance views.
- Glenwood Cemetery. Discussed example of “cleaned-up” forest in gully/brook area of cemetery. Discussed access into the “backside” of Town Forest and strategies re: invasive plant species
- Orchard edge. Discussed connectivity into Moose Hill trails and Adams Pond trail through woods to 2nd orchard.
- Pond area (Pillsbury Rd) and tree landing area. Discussed potential use as a skating pond, potential trail network and habitat potential.
- Pillsbury Road frontage. Discussed potential for clearing for parking lot. Discussed sightlines and future uses on opposite side of street.

I. Call to Order

The formal meeting was called to order at 7:20 pm.

II. Review of discussion regarding Town Common and Town Forest

C. Davies recounted observations he made during the site walk. He explained that his impression and those around him was that there was consensus on some big ideas but no consensus on specifics as to where things should go. He continued that the Committee needed to hear a professional opinion from park designers or similar professionals. He said our ideas should be the seed. Tim Siekmann cautioned that the Common should not take away from other uses in town, and that there was a place for everything, particularly recreational uses. Regarding accessibility, members suggested adding a bike rack and playground equipment to encourage younger people to use the space.

D. Paul said the Committee needs to identify what is the goal for these spaces? She said the Center should contain uses that are not available elsewhere in town and that some ideas, like a skating rink, may be more easily situated elsewhere. All agreed the goal was to make the town center parcels more accessible and more attractive. That should be the overarching theme. M. Speltz said the goal should be to make this the social center of town. He also said the area should be better landscaped to reflect its importance, per the master plan vision. He explained the vision improved the entry point and put definition into the edges. C. Davies said the Committee should consult with a designer and seek feedback. J. Vogl said there was potential with the Arnett Development Group. He will investigate. D. Paul said that with Old Home Day coming up, this would be a perfect opportunity to get feedback from families as to what they would like to see. T. Seikmann spoke as a member of the Old Home Day Committee and said that people are welcome to “clipboard” during events. Members discussed creating a survey tool to collect feedback. C. Davies suggested J. Vogl should draft an instrument for committee review and ultimately, distribution at the event. D. Paul said the survey should list suggested ideas and have room for people to add their own suggestions. She also said the survey should include an option for “no change”. Members discussed questions, format and distribution options. All agreed to survey on the Saturday. Questions should include “how long have you lived in Londonderry?” “what ideas do you support?”, “what additional ideas do you have?” and, if possible, ask a reaction to the master plan vision graphic. J. Vogl said he would assemble an instrument and distribute. He will work with members to get a booth together for OHD.

A. Chiampa presented an updated plan for trails through the Town Forest. Her plan included trails placed a low grade, to permit accessible, and that meandered through the woods to scenic places, including the seasonal stream. She said her plan could involve some bog bridges to cross the stream but that it would have minimal impact on the forest. She suggested some new ideas to implement might be a labyrinth, “forest houses” and environmental signage. A. Chiampa said she would continue to reach out to personnel at Crotched Mountain for advice on handicap accessible trails.

III. Committee feedback on projects/project tracking matrix

J. Vogl relayed comments from the Heritage Commission regarding the Town Forest discussions. M. Speltz presented the status of Trailways work on the Londonderry Rail Trail. He said the next phase will involve adding safety features to permit a crossing over Rockingham Road. J. Vogl said he is working with Trailways on a grant application to provide funding.

IV. Other Business

No other business. Next meeting scheduled for August 27, 7:00 pm

VI. Adjourn

M. Tetreau made a motion to adjourn at 8:30 pm. Seconded by D. Paul. All voted affirmatively. Meeting adjourned at 9:45pm.

Minutes recorded by John Vogl

DRAFT