

MINUTES
FIELDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MAY 29, 2014 7:30 PM
900 MAIN ST ROOM 229
MILLIS, MA 02054

ATTENDING:

David Baker
Charles Aspinwall
Andrea Wagner
Richard Nichols
James McKay

Marc Prufer
H. Robert Yeager
Meg Wilkes
Nathan Maltinsky
Steve MacInnes
Catherine MacInnes

Ms. Wagner called the meeting to order at 7:33 PM. She outlined the proposed budget submitted by CDM-Smith and the \$150,000 appropriation at Town Meeting. The costs going forward include preliminary design at the high school fields, geotechnical work, survey work and environmental work at the High School property, town park area, Oak Grove farm (OGF) and Cassidy field.

Mr. Baker submitted a proposed draft of short term and long term objectives. (see attached) and suggested that the committee not wait long to move toward the long term objectives.

Ms. Wagner inquired about the requirements for procuring a contract for these services. Mr. Aspinwall said that he reviewed the options with town Counsel Mark Reich earlier that day and in counsel's opinions bids or RFP's are not necessary. Mr. Baker suggested that we look at going out for proposal on our own for the sub consultant such as the survey, geotech, & environmental. Mr. Nichols pointed out that the committee lacks the expertise to do the preliminary design. Mr. Baker suggested we take a two track approach with asking for a proposals from CDM for prelim design and the sub consultants but also get a proposal from CDM for them to develop a spec the town would use to go out for proposals for the sub consultants. Mr. McKay said that we could

use that approach to feed information to CDM they would use in the preliminary design but perhaps at a lower cost. Mr. Aspinwall expressed a concern that in not using CDM for the entire project that we would not meet our goal of completing the review in September. Procurement of sub consultants could take a month.

Mr. Nichols said that CDM's final cost estimate did have a hole in it that was not easily explained at town meeting and that we need to make sure the next set of estimates are tight. Mr. Aspinwall added that the next set of estimates must also contain the operational costs as additional funds will be needed to maintain the fields once they are built. Mr. McKay added that the schedule that was developed having final design for OGF soccer fields and the Clyde Brown School (CBS) fields would have minimized disruption to playing schedule and that we need to accommodate that moving forward. Mr. Baker added that the committee could do internal work on policies & finances while the consultant does its work. Ms. Wagner asked Mr. Aspinwall to meet with CDM and get proposals for the next Field Committee meeting on June 12, 2014.

Mr. Prufer spoke to the committee about the Historical Committee's concerns on the fields at OGF. There are foundations on the property of old barns & farm buildings that hold historical value and the grade on the field on the right of the OGF house means that extensive cuts & fills would be needed. The Historical Commission does not object to more fields at OGF, just in the proposed location near the farm house. He stated that there were some inaccuracies represented by CDM relative to their meeting with the Historical Commission and was concerned that CDM did not consider the OGF Master Plan. The Historical Commission contends that it was the intention of the town to preserve the majority of the land on the OGF parcel for open space. It is arguable that pursuant to our Zoning Bylaw that no more active recreation space should be allowed on the OGF property. Other locations including the Ridge St area are more suitable for athletic fields. He suggested that a soccer field be built in the current location of the lower baseball fields, that fields would be better located at the northwest area of the property.

Mr. Aspinwall asked if Mr. Prufer could transmit exact questions and concerns to the committee. Mr. Prufer also said that not all the minutes of the committee were online. Mr. Prufer provided a page and a half list of comments and questions. Ms. Wagner said we would transmit these to CDM-Smith and have the consultant read the comments & questions & be prepared to address them.

Mr. Prufer said that the OGF Master Plan was developed in 1987 and is on the Historical Commission website. The Historical Commission does not feel they were adequately briefed when the project went forward to final design at OGF. Relative to

due diligence, Mr. Prufer asked what % of recreation land do we need for our population? What standard is applied here?

Mr. MacInnes noted that the OGF master plan was completed by Suzanne Thatcher Welch in 1987. There is no record that it was adopted. The OGF commission did recently consider additional fields to the right and rear of the farm house. However they proposed 6x6 fields. That plan came off the table when it was learned the OGF commission could not use their maintenance funds for capital projects.

Ms. Wagner addressed the need for more fields. She stated that the previous field committee documented the need for additional and more flexible fields; they are in the condition they are in because they are overused.

Mr. MacInnes reported that the OGF commission is ok with two fields oriented north south, smaller 6x6 fields, with no trees cut.

Ms. Wilkes inquired as to whether survey would be done on the entire OGF property to enable field to be put elsewhere especially the Ridge St. side. Ms. Wagner replied that the committee does not support fields on the Ridge St. side so survey of that area is not anticipated.

Ms. Wagner said that an extensive study of field use was done by the previous field committee and there is no doubt that additional, more flexible fields are needed. It was noted that potential Lacrosse leagues were told they could not use the fields due to overuse. Moreover, Town Counsel reviewed each property and stated that additional fields could be built at OGF.

Mr. MacInnes said that the OGF commission has identified the area to the right of the house as a location for more soccer fields. It is constrained by wetlands, and tree lines. Development of the Ridge St. side would require parking on that side. He suggested that anyone interested in the foundations on the right side should have them radared as soon as possible.

Mr. Yeager said that he learned recently that fields in Medway cost over 4.2 million dollars. The town is already heavily in debt and it would be a burden on those with a fixed income to pay for more fields. He questioned why the walking paths are so wide. Moreover, there are maintenance costs associated with synthetic turf fields; there are problems with bacteria and fungi growing in these types of fields and the product is a liability. They will leach chemicals into the water table and only last eight years.

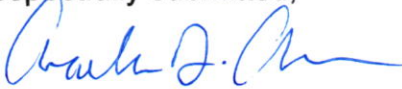
Mr. Baker responded that it's the committee job to research these issues. If artificial turf fields are not maintained they can be a problem but if properly maintained they offer more flexibility in use.

Mr. Yeager pointed out that the costs of these new fields would fall on just 3200 households and the costs are onerous. Turf fields can lead to infections and are costly to maintain. Mr. Baker said all these things will be looked at.

Mr. McKay made a motion to approve the minutes of April 24th and May 1, 2014, Mr. Nichols suggested that his name be added to the attendee list of the April meeting and in the last sentence of the May meeting Ms. Wagner sentence in the last paragraph was not completed and he seconded the motion with those corrections, vote 4-0 in favor (unanimous).

At 10:00 PM Mr. Nichols made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. McKay, vote 4-0 in favor. Ms. Wagner noted the next meeting was May 12, 2014 at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Charles J. Aspinwall

Draft

Millis Fields Committee

05-29-2014

Short term objectives:

1. Wetlands flagging and Soil borings:
 - a. High School track area
 - b. High school practice field area
 - c. Town Park-pond area
 - d. Oak Grove expanded fields area
 - e. Clyde Brown Rec field
 - f. Cassidy expanded ball field area
2. Update Survey to locate wetland flags and test pits/boring information
3. Meet with Millis Con Com and MADEP-Regional Office
4. Concept planning for High School track facility & softball field & expanded parking
5. Concept planning for regulation baseball field at Town park, including relocated tennis courts, two outdoor basketball courts, and expanded parking
6. Concept planning for Cassidy ball fields and associated parking
7. Concept planning for expanded Oak Grove Farm parking

Longer term objectives:

- a. Finalize preliminary designs
- b. Collect pricing/estimates based on agreed final designs
- c. Review timeline to implement construction (scheduling impacts to existing users)
- d. Review & make recommendation on future Millis Fields organizational structure
 - a. Central scheduling
 - b. Fees, Revenues ;
 - c. Financing options & use of existing revolving accounts
 - d. User policies, field rules and regulations
 - e. Maintenance/operations/staffing
 - f. Department land swaps
 - g. Any required legislative action
- e. Finalize a Master plan document for presentation to Selectman, School Department, Finance Committee, DPW, OGF, various user groups, Millis voters.
- f. Community Outreach prior to Fall Town Meeting (**Monday, Nov 3, 2014**)
 - a. Millis websites (Town and School)
 - b. Millis Cable TV
 - c. Football, Soccer, Baseball, Basketball, Tennis users – 1 on 1 briefings
 - d. Lions Club, Seniors, Home School, Parents

It seems a forgone conclusion.

- 1 I have some questions relating to the FAC findings and recommendations. I see from the FAC Meeting Notes that on MAR 20th
- A. That, "At OGF 2 soccer fields were added northwest of the farm house."
 - B. "He questioned whether the town should add a plan to pave Island Road as there will be an increase use of the OGF site."
 - C. "Mr. McKay said that he liked the layout of the soccer fields at OGF." " He questioned if Con Comm needed to classify OGF as previously disturbed area and what could be located within 200 foot limit of the riverbank. He noted that these new fields at OGF could have an impact on the demand of use of the town park."
 - D. **Most concerning is this:** "Mr. Adelsberger noted that earlier in the evening the MHC indicated a preference for soccer fields and the location rather than baseball fields."
"He noted that a traffic plan or study should be done of whatever sites are chosen."
END OF DISCUSSION of March 20th.

I was at the meeting with Mr. Adelsberger -- the first and only one, and I can tell you unequivocally that the MHC did not tell CDM Smith that we agreed that Soccer Fields should be placed behind the Farmhouse at OGF! Furthermore, we asked -- I asked Mr. A. what the status was and he responded that they had not looked at more than putting an overlay over an aerial photo of the farm fields in question. That they had not done any amount more than that! We were given the impression that the study itself was conceptual -- not PRELIMINARY DESIGN! Identifying sites. Can you show me the proposal RFP? What exactly was the scope of the services provided to date? Exactly how many meetings have there been since the consultant has been hired? I counted and have come up with a total of EIGHT (8)! Additionally, there have been a total of Eight other meetings discussing the fields since January of 2013 to present! That's 16 meetings. Incidentally, most of these meetings there have not been affirmative votes taken recommending any particular sites for fields. If there have -- show me the minutes.

Then, 7 days later, on March 27th there was a FAC Public Meeting where the following statements were made:

- A. **"It was stressed that the different "concepts" that they will show tonight are not set in stone and that CDM Smith is looking for input from the...townspeople through the online surveys."**
- B. "That the priorities are making their (CDM Smith) final recommendations to the FAC and it is hopeful that this will be on the Spring 2014 Town Meeting Warrant."
- C. "Town owned property that has been considered are: Dewy, Casidy, OGF, Clyde Brown, Town Park, Sisto, Middle/HS, village, Pleasant St. It has been determined that both Village and Pleasant ... require act of legislature to allow recreation facilities."
- D. "CDM is meeting with Con Comm on March 31st... to discuss different scenarios and get their insight on some of the properties, such as the High School and Cassidy."
- E. **Very importantly: "The consultants are planning to address the FAC with a draft report which would include costs for the potential new fields. Once the FAC has had the report presented, the Bd. Of Selectmen would be next for a presentation."**

Not sure if the FAC met between March 27th and April 28th - no meeting minutes are available on line.

On April 28th, at a joint meeting between the Fields Advisory Comm. And the Board of Selectmen, (2 weeks before the

- A. "CA and IM of CDM Smith presented various scenarios of where, what needs to be done and how much money different aspects of new fields would be."
- B. "Their **CONCLUSIONS** were arrived at after many meetings with the FAC, various users...and many public meetings. At this point they are seeking the BOS opinion in order to move forward."
- C. **They also recommended natural turf fields at OGF, by the farm house. One would be 8 v 8 and one 11 v 11." BASED ON WHAT????**
- D. BOS passed motion to fund FINAL DESIGN at OGF.

Now, maybe I missed something, but as of that meeting on April 28th, no in depth discussion with Con Comm or other boards had taken place to discuss cut and fill topographical info (non-existent), wet land information (non-existent), parking and traffic (non-existent), zoning assessment (non-existent), historical/archaeological study (non-existent), etc., etc. -- Question: How do you recommend final design when the most work that had been done was an overlay of two soccer fields on an aerial photograph that clearly shows the fields on a hill and where much of the land falls within the Title 5 Buffer zone, 500 year flood zone, and DEP approved Water Resources Zone II area?

- 2 Has the FAC or their consultant looked at the following:
- A. Millis Master Plan of 2001? Plan at OHF goes contrary to the recommendations and findings of that study which was much more exhaustive than the CDM Smith effort.
 - B. Millis Historical Commission Master Plan of 2014? This is an historic site.

- C. The Oak Grove Farm Master Plan, dated April 1987?
 - D. The Millis Zoning Code? What is the Definition of Active and Passive Recreation? Has an official determination been made by the Zoning Enforcement Officer (MG)?
 - E. Millis Demographics? Isn't the population that would use the soccer fields flat line? Aging population?
 - F. Millis By Laws? What is the charter of the OGFC? Or the FAC? Who makes the decision over where to put new fields?
- 3 What standards have been used to formulate the official commissioned fields report?
- A. National standards? How much active vs passive recreation should a town the size of millis have per 1000 residents?
 - B. How much parking should there be per field type? Restrooms?
 - C. How many players per sport per household?
 - D. What is the demand for other recreational activities in Millis --active and passive -- other than Soccer, etc.?
 - E. Run off - water contamination issues -- fertilizer? Pollution from users?
- 4 Did FAC or consultants look at other areas at OGF other than next to the farm house? Where are those studies?
- 5 What are the base documents examined? Topographical surveys? Wet Lands Mapping survey? Parking and Traffic