

23 JANUARY 2014

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

BOATHOUSE/HAINS PARK IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE

2nd FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM, OLD LYME MEMORIAL TOWN HALL

Present

BR Bonnie A. Reemsnyder (Acting Chair)
GH Greg Hack
PG Paul Gianquinto
PF Paul Fuchs
KB Ken Biega
SS Skip Sibley
PC Phil Carney
RR Rob Roach
BS Brian Schuch (Acting Secretary)

Absent

JP John Parker

CALL TO ORDER > **BR** 7:32pm

#1 INTRODUCTIONS

BR outlined the contents of our folders, including the inclusion "Summary from Cathy Frank", a brief history of the boathouse (the sheet is marked with a pink post it). **BR** identified the ownership of the Boathouse as an issue that will need to be addressed in order to comply with the terms of the Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant. **SS** added that, Step 1: District 18 will need to release the Boathouse and Step 2: Old Lyme will need to accept the Boathouse. **BR** stated that all documentation regarding the STEAP grant is kept in the binder, which stays at Town Hall. **SS** described the quality of a STEAP grant as having a comparatively plain, straightforward process.

#2 REVIEW CHARGE OF THE COMMITTEE

BR described the relationship of this body to the Board of Selectmen (BOS),

and emphasized the importance of information reaching the BOS in a timely manner. **BR** noted the bullet points of the “Charge of the Committee”, found on the reverse side of this meeting’s Agenda.

PF asked if this body would eventually serve as the “Building Committee”, or if a separate body would emerge to cover that scope. **BR** responded that the issue would be discussed and is TBD by this body. **SS** added that in other projects, the members of the initial committees later morphed into the Building Committees, in a natural progression.

BR described how State \$ will need to be approved by a Town Meeting. **BR** provided a rough outline of Phase 1: RFQ & subsequent Plans & Specs, followed by Phase 2: Town Meeting.

SS described that if the project is completed, for instance, \$50K over budget, providing the Town with a reasonable explanation would likely result in a reasonable accommodation.

#3 REVIEW HISTORY OF BOATHOUSE

<see packet>

#4 DISCUSS DEVELOPMENT OF PLAN FOR BOATHOUSE

PC asked what the role of the Department of Public Works would be. **BR** responded that DPW is a small team, and advised against additions to their workload.

PC asked if this project would accept private donations. **SS** stated yes, and any contribution would be tax deductible.

PC asked what lifespan would be expected from the improvements. **BR** stated that the STEAP grant does not contemplate a “Phase 2”, although the components of the project can be phased.

PC asked if the new boathouse will be expected to meet year round training needs of the rowers. General consensus of the body was that, with the current budget, indoor winter training facilities are out of scope. **SS** stated that equipment from the former local rowing club, SECRC, might be donated to this project. **PF and GH** expressed interest in this equipment for immediate

use by the rowing program.

PG asked if additional grants or money could augment this project budget.

BR cited a Letter to the Editor which faulted this STEAP grant for not directly impacting a greater segment of the population. **BR** described the approach of the STEAP program as intentionally fine grained, and provided the example a second STEAP grant which is directed at Soundview.

GH asked if the project is intended to expand the use of Hains Park for activities other than rowing. **BR** responded that the only organizations currently managing use of the site, and ongoing maintenance, are rowing and a community garden. **BR** stated that this project should have no impact on the garden.

SS thanked **GH** for his time invested in the writing of the STEAP grant. **GH** stated that the size of the rowing program is limited by the site/boathouse.

PC asked about parking and if the basketball court was used. **BR** replied that her knee jerk reaction is to keep the basketball court, or relocate it. **PG** suggested that the basketball court be treated as swing space for event parking. **RR** described the parking accommodations during regattas as “jammed”.

PC inquired about how easily trailers, Region 18’s as well as visiting teams, are able to access the site. General consensus was that there is room for improvement.

RR recounted the fate of the Lake Breeze restaurant which, years ago burned down on the site. A waitress who re-entered to call for help was overcome by smoke and did not survive.

PG asked if additional land could be acquired. **BR** responded that it would be an uphill battle. **PF** noted that the land north of the boathouse is screened from abutters view by existing trees, and might be a possible place for additional storage.

PC asked if the project will accommodate kayaks. **BR** answered no.

PG inquired about other user groups of this site. **SS** described the site is used as a Town Beach, with lifeguards, and the importance of this parcel to the general population.

PC asked if there is any presence on the site of previous use, or any reason for site remediation. The general consensus was negative. **GH** described the need for dredging near the docks. **BR** identified dredging as requiring special procedures, additional cost, and Army Corps of Engineers involvement, and introduced the idea of treating the dredging issue separately.

PC inquired if any opposition to the improvements project had arisen. **BR** described the project as a good investment. **SS** responded that he was not aware of any specific opposition. **SS** compared the public interest to that during the Town Woods project, which was generally positive. **RR** noted that this project may have the opportunity to improve the waterfront, and address sanitary concerns, including earaches, and the water quality, especially during August. **RR** described a cleansing water flow near the swimming area that has been compromised by weeds. **SS** stated that an RFP concerning the weeds is currently out, and a solution appears to be on the horizon.

PC noted that the rowing program attracts regional rowers, and asked if any other towns are contributing \$. **RR** responded that reciprocity had been achieved since Valley hosted Region 18 football players.

PC cited a boathouse which was sized at 400% of capacity, and this project soon became full. **BR** advised that if \$478K feels low, a Sub Committee could be tasked with exploring additional sources of funds. **PF** recommended that approach. **PC** noted that, in previous boathouse experience, contingencies have arisen. **SS** was optimistic that cost could be controlled well on a glorified shed.

BS introduced the issue of the relationship of Hains Park to the street corner, and nearby businesses. **BS** observed that rowers circulate frequently between the boathouse and the nearby businesses, and questioned the merit of the existing chain link fence. **BR** identified the street crossing as a safety concern, especially for adolescents.

GH inquired about the timeframe for the docks. **BS** recognized the docks face a special regulatory process, and would benefit from a head start.

PG asked how construction would be affected by seasonal activity at the site. **RR** answered Nov 15-March 15. **PC** asked which season was more important; Spring or Fall. General consensus was that Spring season has

priority. **BR** identified the condition of the docks as a safety concern which should be resolved first. **RR** clarified if the \$ could be spent on the docks now. **SS and BR** responded yes. **PC** described a \$5-10K dock project he had been involved in, and offered to provide details.

BR presented three sub-committees: RFQ, DOCKS, and OVERVIEW. OVERVIEW would be tasked with outlining the general timeline for the project. **RR** advised reaching out to local partners now, including Erik Block Builders.

PG questioned the \$9K “Clerk of the Works, add’l Architect Fees” line item in the STEAP grant. The general consensus was that the \$9K was a preliminary estimate, and may be subject to change.

BR asked if anyone minded if their application information was distributed to the body, prior to Officer Elections. No objections.

#5 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

[tabled]

#6 OTHER BUSINESS

BR reviewed some housekeeping issues, including FOI, publishing minutes within 48 hours, brief minutes, her audio record of each meeting, and agendas.

PF offered to give anyone a tour of the boathouse.

PC inquired about the Emerson Family. **BS** stated that he had met a daughter, perhaps Jennifer, once, and will try to find her contact info.

BR summarized:

DOCKS	GH RR PC
RFQ	KB BS
OVERVIEW	PF PG BS

No objections.

BR polled the room and set the next meeting for 10 FEBRUARY 2014, 7:30pm, same location.

#7 ADJOURNMENT

MOTION> **BR (BS)** 9-0 8:53pm