

Winchendon Community Park Infrastructure Committee February 25, 2021 Minutes Zoom Meeting

Committee Members Present: Dave Romanowski, Ken LaBrack, Jane LaPointe, Dylan Romanowski
Steve Delaney

Meeting called to order at 10:06 a.m.

Business

1. Dave Romanowski provided a summary of the Committee's 2/22 meeting.
 - a. Topics for discussion include; amphitheater events and maintenance; Park infrastructure; events and activities outside the amphitheater
 - b. Resources required for the above include:
 - Security of the park, amphitheater and events
 - Town resources; most pressing is DPW assistance with the Elm Street Trail - bridge/culvert blockage - the trail is the main walking access to the amphitheater
 - Volunteer system; Friends of the Park to help with: revenue generation, maintenance, event help
 - c. The Park has grown beyond the scope of a group of volunteers. There is a need for an executive director type of position.
 - As the Park grows, there should be more community involvement and input into uses
 - Question of how to get the Town Manager and BOS to help build/secure needed resources
 - The Town has no budget for parks, including the bike trail, Grout Park, GFA Park, Legion Park, VFW Park. Yet, there is a need for help and coordination with the Town
2. Discussion - comments from Steve Delaney
 - a. We are in a stop gap period - with the question of how to maintain and fix current needs. This stop gap period/year should be used to come up with a plan to put something in place that is more permanent - that will need dedicated funds.
 - Departments have a lot on their plates; it's difficult to add to their work. Their response to supporting the Park isn't "no"; it's "how"?
 - b. There is a need to build a constituency for support for funding; a constituency of people who love the park and will support it - on the next budget round and for grants
 - It should be high on the new Town manager's agenda to maintain and capitalize on what we have

- Goal: will need seed money from the town to start programs that can drive revenue into an enterprise account for the Park. This account or fund needs to be authorized at Town Meeting
 - There was a brief discussion on the need for structures in town to focus on economic development.
 - Steve will pull together his thoughts on paper over the next two weeks and get back to the committee
- d. Discussion on two amphitheater related topics:
- Demolition permit for the house has been approved. There is a question of what can be salvaged and what to do with these items and any funds from selling them. It was agreed that a walk-through to assess salvage value should be done after the asbestos abatement work. Because this is town property, any funds would be deposited into the general fund. Steve will check to see if the committee can request these funds for the Park.
 - The Town Manager agreed that the Committee would send a request to the Fire Chief requesting that the Committee be notified, through Dylan Romanowski, when the Department was scheduling drills or activities at the house/park
 - Public meeting for abutters and others re: amphitheater use. Discussion: to hold this meeting/gathering on site at the Park in May, when it's warm and dry - with appropriate distancing, etc. We would use this opportunity to provide information on the amphitheater, walk the site, answer questions. Also, consider: walk the trails, activities for families, children, food?, etc. This could also be an opportunity to recruit Friends. Consider recording the amphitheater review so that it could be shared.
 - We will contact Tiffany Newton, chair of the Park Programming Committee to collaborate on this event

Next Meeting: Monday, March 22, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

Agenda will include

- Updates on some or all of the above, as available, plus updates on items from January 25th and February 22nd minutes

Adjourned: 11:10 p.m.

Approved: March 22, 2021