

Winchendon Community Park Infrastructure Committee February 10, 2021 Minutes Zoom Meeting

Committee Members Present: Dave Romanowski, Ken LaBrack, Jane LaPointe
Town Representatives: Steve Delaney, Linda Daigle

Meeting called to order at 10 a.m.

Administrative

Linda will check Town Bylaws and rules regarding John Deline's interest in joining the Committee

Business

1. The committee provided Steve, the Interim Town Manager, with an update on the Park, including its evolution and the ideas behind it.
 - To date, it has been up to the committee to propose and find the resources to get needed work done. This is proving a struggle. There is a need to consider how to better organize for the park - to clarify joint responsibility -for this town asset
 - Discussed the need to coordinate and communicate and allocate resources. i.e. how get approval for DPW help; potential line item in town budget
 - The Robinson-Broadhurst Community Forum wanted a project that would bring people and organizations together. This continues to be a challenge; communication and volunteerism. Too often, it's the same small group of volunteers and too many silos.
 - The committee looks to establish a Friends of the Park (volunteers and donations)
 - In the past, there was a Cohesion Committee in town to help coordinate work, volunteers, etc. It's possible that the propose Master Plan Implementation Committee could produce needed results
 - Steve talked about growing pains and the need for transitions. He suggested Endicott Park in Danvers as a possible example. He also noted the common theme of New England towns working to reinvent themselves and determining what will make a specific town, Winchendon, successful. He noted the Master Plan and the critical need for a vision of where we are going.
 - Need creative thinking on how to market the amphitheater and generate revenue and also for the park, to consider its long term use and revenue generating potential (for the park as well as the local economy), i.e. bike path links within town, central MA, NH, etc.
 - Need to establish a revolving fund or enterprise fund, a revenue stream for programs (programming committee), and a subsidy as a line item in the town budget.

- Need a town department to take ownership of the park with the committee(s) as advisors
 - Need to identify and act on how the park can contribute to the financial position of the town
 - Friends of the Park can be critical in making this happen, as would a Recreation Director
2. Committee provided Steve with background, update and pending actions regarding the Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation project
- The Foundation would like an update on where we are in this project and next steps. Steve will request this from Suresh, the OPM. They would also like information on who will manage, maintain and operate the amphitheater once construction is completed and it's open for use. (2022)
3. Next Steps - a blueprint for the Park
- Steve will include this topic on his next department head meeting .. in an ideal world, how would we handle this .. as a first step
 - The committee will have the same conversation at its February 22nd meeting. This meeting will start at 5 p.m. so that it can adjourn by 6:30 p.m.
 - The committee and town manager will meet again on February 25, 10 a.m. to debrief on the results of these meetings

Meeting adjourned at 11 a.m.

Next Meetings: Monday, February 22, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. and Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 10 a.m.

Agenda will include

- Updates on some or all of the above, as available

Approved: February 22, 2021