

Executive Summary

Scope & Purpose

The Town of Winchendon has the opportunity to purchase an approximately 43 acre parcel located at 86 Ingleside Drive. The Winchendon Enhancement Committee (WEC), in recent collaboration with the Toy Town Partnership, has been holding weekly meetings for approximately the last year to create and refine a vision for the property. Through the WEC and the Winchendon Redevelopment Authority, the Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation provided funding for Tighe & Bond to perform a master plan study of the property. This Master Plan contains a description of the existing land use and site conditions, including an analysis of environmental, historic, and cultural resources, and a preliminary structural evaluation of the on-site structures. The Master Plan also includes a zoning analysis and summary of other regulatory considerations that could impact the location of activities on the project site and the allowable uses. The results of this evaluation were used to identify siting constraints and suitable locations for the various types of preferred land uses, including a variety of active and passive recreational uses, community gardens, arts facility, educational and environmental purposes, and public event spaces. A proposed park-wide master plan concept and preliminary implementation and development master plan are presented in Section 8.

Core Design and Planning Principles

The vision for the parcel is based on the Makerspace development model. A Makerspace is generally a community center that combines community, education, and proper equipment to encourage collaboration and creativity. The Master Plan provides for the re-use of the existing on-site structures to provide indoor areas to be used as a community center with gallery space, studio space, and tools for a variety of uses that support artisans, wood working, graphic design, gallery space, and many other uses. The Master Plan also seeks to provide a variety of active and passive recreation areas and public spaces that will bring the community together such as picnic areas, community gardens, athletic fields, walking trails, boat launch area, and outdoor theater. The Master Plan seeks to create an intergenerational space that will promote social interaction, collaboration, and learning for all Winchendon residents.

The Master Plan was also developed in alignment with the community's vision for the Town, as outlined in the Winchendon Master Plan (2001). As described in Section 1.2.2 of the Ingleside Master Plan, the project was developed to comply with the overall goals of the Winchendon Master Plan regarding community values, preservation policy, and patterns of development.

Winchendon's Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) Update (May 2007) was reviewed to determine how the project supports the goals and objectives of the OSRP. As described in Section 1.2.3 of the Master Plan, the project is consistent with the OSRP's overall goals as it will result in preservation of open space, development of a linked system of open space and recreation facilities, and improvement/expansion of recreational facilities and programs. It should be noted that the Town is currently in the process of updating the 2007 OSRP.

Planning Process and Public Involvement

As noted earlier, the Winchendon Enhancement Committee (WEC) has been holding weekly meetings on the project for over the last year to create and refine a vision for the property. The WEC was instrumental in guiding the master plan process to address community concerns and to include the public at large in the process; through development of two community surveys, presentations at multiple public meetings, a social media campaign, word of mouth, press, a Fall Festival and Open House held on September 27, 2014, and the presentation of the Ingleside Project at Fall Special Town Meeting on November 24, 2014. Section 1.3 of the Master Plan provides additional information on these events and the public involvement process.

Existing Conditions

The approximately 43 acre parcel is located off Maple Street/State Route 202 at 86 Ingleside Drive, Winchendon, MA and is a peninsula that extends into Whitney Pond. The southern portion of the property includes three wooden structures: a two-story barn, a garage, and a split level residential structure. The remainder of the property is comprised of undeveloped wooded areas, landscaped and manicured lawn area and paved parking areas and a driveway. Primary access to the site is provided from Ingleside Drive via Route 202/Maple Street. There are also two walking trails on both the east and west sides of the parcel which provides access to the site from Maple Street and Elm Street, respectively.

Preliminary Structural Evaluation

A preliminary structure evaluation was performed to assess the condition of the on-site structures and to identify areas that are potentially at the point of collapse and/or are inadequate to provide support for future re-use. Portions of the barn structure are in good, fair and poor condition. Portions of the attic members in the barn that remain in place following a historic fire have some areas of significant char and potential section loss and would require structural calculations prior to re-use. Overall the residence structure is generally in fair condition, though there are portions of the structure that are in good, fair and poor condition. In both the residence and the barn structure, the interior and upper floor elements (with the exception of the barn roof) are generally in at least fair condition with some in good condition at the time of the inspection. Overall, the garage structure is in fair condition, but does have some areas in poor condition.

Generally, the buildings do not appear to be in imminent danger of collapse at this time, but all have items that should be monitored or repaired in the near future. Overall, the structural integrity of the buildings is sound enough to warrant further investigations into possible reuse. Note a change in occupancy use of the buildings would require compliance with the MA State Building Code. Code requirements for existing buildings is such that the structural work for alterations, repairs and additions to existing buildings be designed and constructed in accordance with the code requirements for new construction.

Environmental Conditions and Suspect Building Materials

A field evaluation was performed to observe and evaluate potential environmental impacts and liabilities. Potential Asbestos Containing Material (PACM) was observed in isolated portions of all three of the on-site structures, which is not unusual given the age of the structures. Further investigation of PACM in all buildings should be completed via an ACM survey conducted by licensed personnel. This survey can be limited to the portions of the structures that will be impacted during renovation/demolition activities. A lead based paint

survey is recommended as there are a few locations within the residential structure and the barn that appear to contain suspect lead based paint. Lead based paint that is in good condition is generally not a problem, though deteriorating lead based paint (peeling, chipping, cracked, etc.) should be addressed during renovation activities and/or prior to occupancy. Based on a reported historic water leak within the residence, it is recommended that a mold survey be performed to determine whether there are mold issues within the wall sections which could pose a potential health hazard.

Environmental, Historic, and Cultural Resources

Environmental factors considered during the preparation of this Master Plan include the location of wetlands, regulatory floodplain, rare and endangered species, wildlife, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, drinking water resources, vernal pools, soils, and protected open space. There are no potential or certified vernal pools or areas designated as Priority Habitats of Rare Species or Estimated Habitats of Rare Wildlife within the project site. There are several jurisdictional wetland resource areas located on the parcel, primarily on the eastern and western portions of the parcel. Work activities within these areas will require review and approval from the Winchendon Conservation Commission. Given the large extent of the parcel that is not located within regulated areas, the presence of these resources is not a major development constraint. There are no buildings on or proximate to the project sites that are listed in the National or State Register of Historic Places.

Field Evaluation

A field evaluation was performed to observe existing land cover and vegetation and to identify features that may impact site development. The field evaluation identified a few areas where on-site wetland resource areas appeared to extend beyond the area shown on the MassDEP MassGIS data. Areas recommended for future wetland delineation are described in Section 6. Multiple habitat types were identified within the limits of the project parcel, which encourages species biodiversity. Invasive plant species were also observed in portions of the site. Management against these species is one possible action that can be taken to improve wildlife habitat. Other actions to improve wildlife habitat include the removal of litter/debris along both eastern and western walking trails and shoreline perimeter and planting of native vegetation.

Regulatory Considerations

A summary of relevant regulatory considerations is provided in Section 7 of the Master Plan. In addition to approvals that may be needed with regard to regulated resource areas at the site, this section of the report also addresses potential permitting considerations that may impact site development and use decisions such as zoning, wetlands and waterways, and Article 97.

Master Plan Recommendations

Park-Wide Concept

Generally, the Master Plan proposes reuse of existing buildings as areas that will provide tools and programmatic spaces that will encourage community learning, collaboration, and creativity. The concept also provides a variety of active and passive recreation uses and conservation areas, seeking to minimize disturbance to sensitive environmental resources and vegetation clearing. The park-wide concept is provided on Figure E-1. Active recreation uses are generally located in the northern portion of the parcel and passive

recreation uses are generally located in the southern portion of the parcel in areas with slightly steeper topography. The eastern portion of the site is shown as conservation land or low impact passive uses due to the presence of wetland resource areas. Section 8.1 of the master plan provides a description of the proposed uses and includes a discussion of factors that were considered while siting the various land uses.

Implementation / Development Plan

An Implementation and Development Plan for the proposed uses was created to assist in planning site development. The due diligence phase is intended to occur prior to purchase and development of the property and includes completion of a Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA). One category of development (Site Readiness) focuses on preparing the site, identifying and obtaining funding sources, and addressing public safety related improvements. A second category of development includes activities to facilitate passive and active recreation on the site. A third category of development addresses re-use of the existing structures. The Implementation and Development Plan is discussed in its entirety in Section 8.2 of the Master Plan. **It is anticipated that the site will be developed over a period of approximately 5-10 years, though full build-out will depend on available funding. Similarly, development of the above categories will not occur linearly and will likely occur based on available project funding.**

A summary of the Site Readiness activities is provided below.

Site Readiness

The activities included in this phase generally represent activities associated with identifying and obtaining additional funding and minor expenses that seek to improve public safety. The majority of these activities should occur prior to opening the entire park to the public. Activities within this phase are summarized below.

- Signage on Maple Street/Route 202 indicating park entrance ahead
- Vegetation management at site entrance
- Installation of site security measures (access gates)
- Installation of signs at the two walking path trailheads
- Maintenance of existing trail network
- Installation of signage to connect the property to the North Central Pathway bike path and Winchendon's downtown area
- Roadway improvements to Ingleside Drive - If Ingleside Drive is paved and/or widened, it is recommended the Town install a dry line in conjunction with the roadway improvements to facilitate future connections to the sewer system and other infrastructure/utility systems.
- Install dry sewer line along Ingleside Drive
- Gravel Parking Area

Preliminary Capital Cost / Operation and Maintenance Cost

Section 8.3 of the Master Plan provides a conceptual capital cost and estimates of the budgetary costs to operate and maintain the property and anticipated programs. The estimate is broken down and presented in the categories described above. Note that this

estimate is preliminary and should be used for discussion purposes only. The operation and maintenance (O&M) estimate should be refined once the type, location, and extent of the preferred uses have been finalized.

The conceptual project costs are presented on Table 8-1 in Section 8. As shown on Table 8-1 the conceptual capital cost to develop the Site Readiness category is \$487,150 and the conceptual annual operation and maintenance for this category is \$3,650. The conceptual capital cost to develop all of the categories (including design services and contingency) is \$4,355,250.00. **The estimate presented in Table 8-1 should be considered conceptual given the scale of the project and level of detailed development that has yet to occur. Furthermore, note that inflation could increase the conceptual opinion of cost as development of the parcel is anticipated to be phased over a long period of time. It is anticipated that revenue stream(s) will be available to offset O&M costs (i.e. full-time personnel). Lastly, work performed by the Town and/or volunteer groups could reduce the estimate (particularly the Site Readiness category) significantly.**

Potential Funding Opportunities

State, local, and federal grant and loan programs were evaluated to identify opportunities to develop, operate, and maintain the facility. A summary of programs is provided in Table 8-2 included in Section 8 of the Master Plan.

Alternative Revenue Generation Strategies

The evaluation also included alternative revenue generation strategies that could support O&M activities at the site and contribute to the parcel's financial sustainability. Generally, alternative revenue strategies included an evaluation of various opportunities for earned income, sponsorships and philanthropy, and renewable energy. A summary of alternative revenue strategies identified for the parcel is provided in Table 8-3 in Section 8 of the Master Plan.

Makerspace Site Development

The makerspace idea of community participation and cooperation can be integrated into the development and build-out of the property through the involvement of local programs, community service organizations, and education programs to assist in site development activities. Section 8.6 of the Master Plan provides examples of potential community partnerships. In addition to decreasing site development costs, involving the community in the development of the site embodies the makerspace ideal by providing a common interest for community members to organize around and an opportunity for them to learn from one another while working towards a common goal.

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