

## **Ingleside Utilization Committee**

### **August 7, 2018 Minutes**

Present: Dave Romanowski, Dawn Bilodeau, Keith Bussiere, Ken LaBrack, Jane LaPointe, Marcia MacDonald

Absent: Guy Corbosiero, Greg Vine

Guests: Rick Lucier, Dylan Romanowski, Tony Ruschioni

Meeting called to order at 5:37 p.m.

### **Administrative**

New members: The IUC welcomed two new members: Keith Bussiere and Marcia MacDonald who each spoke about their interest in serving on the IUC.

New meeting dates: The IUC agreed to move future meeting dates to the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month, starting August 27, 2018.

**Action:** Jane will notify Linda and Lindsay so the town calendar will reflect this change

Approve minutes: July 10 2018

### **Updates on July Activities**

#### **Community Kickoff & Community Action Days**

Committee members briefly reviewed and commented on the July 14 and July 28 Community Kickoff and Community Action Days.

Turnout was lower than hoped for and yet those who did participate were enthusiastic about the Park and accomplished much more than what had been planned.

- Keith noted these were tough weekends due to vacations. He has spoken with people who want to get involved
- We need to be more effective at communicating what we're doing: Facebook (replace the Ingleside page with the Winchendon Community Park), website (improve the IUC use of our links on the town website), newsletter, papers, BOS public comments, etc.
- An action list for committee members and volunteers was identified

Notes and observations from July 14 and 28 for future actions or consideration will be posted for IUC members and stewards via google docs

### **Exit Road Update**

Ken provided an update on the first Community Workday, which took place this past Thursday.

Next Community Workday will be this Saturday at 9:30 a.m. Stewards will have 3 chainsaws. Volunteers are asked to bring loppers and to help with the removal and stacking of brush (for chipping by DPW) and logs.

Construction of the exit road by the DPW will be delayed until 2019 due to a shortage of personnel in the department.

**Approved:** IUC voted to keep all remaining material, wood and chips and to have the Committee decide on their use in the Park or disposition.

### **Time sensitive/upcoming priorities**

#### **August 10, Friday, noon – NQTA & GRIT**

A member of the GRIT organization will visit the Park with NQTA to be introduced to our Challenge Mobility Trails and the concept of using our Park for a Challenge Mobility Day. Committee members are encouraged to attend if possible and to help spread the word

#### **September 8, Saturday, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. - Opening Day**

Purpose is to get more people visiting the Park and walking the trails. As noted by the Gardner News reporter – “once people see what this is, they’ll be hooked”. We also anticipate that people who visit on the 8<sup>th</sup> will help to spread the word about the park and the opportunities to visit and/or to volunteer among their families and friends.

The focus of activities will be on the trails and self-guided walks to see what is currently available and what could be available. We will use signs and “sites/sights to see” cards to help people to more fully appreciate the experience of being in the Park. We may also use this day to begin to educate people about glossy buckthorn – why it needs to be removed and the potential for restoration.

We will use this opportunity to:

- Survey and listen to people about their reactions to the Park and their ideas about what they would like to do at the Park and how they would like to make use of the Park – its land and buildings.
- Ask people to sign up with their contact information for updates, newsletters and to volunteer
- Provide cards with contact information on the Park and IUC: Facebook, email, website, etc.

Communication, getting the word out about this day, is key.

We will have water, soda and trail snacks available.

An Action list for committee members and volunteers was identified

### **Meeting with the Conservation Commission and Conservation Agent**

Dave has requested that the IUC be on the agenda for the next ConCom meeting (August 16, 7 p.m.)

Our goal is to have the ConCom walk the Park trails, see first-hand the land and its potential for the town and to work together as partners in the development of the land, particularly those parts of the Park that are identified as wetlands.

### **Ongoing Trail Maintenance**

The importance of sustaining the interest and momentum from the July 28<sup>th</sup> Workday volunteers is critical. Two community workdays have been scheduled for August

- August 11, 9:30 – exit road clearing
- August 25, time TBD – to prepare trails for the Opening Day and to continue with Buckthorn removal at priority sites.

Dave will follow up with the town hall and Barbara Anderson to secure the two transfer station stickers for the WCP.

Communication and getting the word out about these workdays is critical.

- A calendar for community workdays will be created, along with Facebook event postings and heavy use of word of mouth.
- Nancy and Tracy Monette have also offered to call volunteers who have already signed up to remind them of these opportunities

An Action list for committee members and volunteers was identified.

Dawn informed the IUC that the Masons Lodge will be at the WCP on August 19<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m. to stain the picnic tables that were built by Dave.

### **Critical/time sensitive planning, organizing, coordinating, communication**

#### **Stewardship – trail maintenance, clearing; buckthorn**

Trail stewards are leaders who will organize workdays for specific jobs or sections of trail and will manage groups of people who volunteer for this work. Initial focus is on trails – clearing, improvements, maintenance and on buckthorn removal. Stewardship will be developed or expanded for trail signage, benches and for the buildings.

IUC approved the appointment of Rick Lucier as chief steward who will provide oversight of trail conditions in the Park and will coordinate with steward leaders on work needed.

Steward leaders, i.e. Keith and Tony, will work to:

- Establish a community calendar and emails for volunteers. (Note: Nancy and Tracy Monette have offered to call people on the volunteer list in advance of workdays)
- Email the IUC 24 hours in advance of work being done at the Park
- Track volunteer time and any in-kind donations. An easy and effective way to do this will be developed/piloted .. spread sheet, diary in the barn

We anticipate that the best way to plan and organize stewardship and workdays will evolve with time and experience. The IUC and its stewards should seek out advice and examples from other communities who have already established stewardship programs, guidelines and policies. Acton is one such community. Examples will be posted to the IUC google docs.

The idea of having local organizations or businesses adopt a trail was raised; perhaps to provide trail, Park signage.

Stewards have been asked to identify/recommend equipment and supplies that the IUC should acquire for the maintenance of the Park. NQTA may have recommendations. Related articles will be posted to the IUC google docs. (Note: articles on trail design, construction and maintenance will also be posted for those who are interested in supplementing what they already know or will learn from NQTA)

Buckthorn identification/tagging, removal and restoration plan will be needed. Information and examples from other organizations will be posted to the IUC google docs)

### **Park Usage – get WCP used and valued by variety of people**

NQTA has advised from their experience that building trails is a critical first step and that getting the trails used also requires planning and implementation. Hence, their focus on action-adventure days.

Marcia and Jane will set up an initial Park Usage meeting/conversation and recruit people in town and from the NQTA to develop ideas for a range of activities that would engage a variety of interests, people and organizations across our community – i.e. events, activities, education, recreation, culture/history, community, etc. The initial focus will be on things that can happen at the Park, on the land and eventually in the buildings. In the interim, while planning/waiting for building access and use, we will consider activities that may also link the Park to other town buildings and resources (i.e. Library) Disc golf was identified by Tony as something to study and evaluate.

The goal is two-fold and will evolve:

1. To enlist WCP usage stewards who can recommend to the IUC, priorities to pursue and policies and guidelines re Park usage. And, who can help to plan and mobilize participation in these activities

2. To build a network of partners and collaborators – individuals and organizations – working together to develop and deliver activities that are wanted and used by a variety of our community members.

Dave recommended that IUC members review the Ingleside Master Plan prepared in 2015 by Tighe and Bond – in part to identify what aspects of use are still relevant and what we may want to revisit in our planning, i.e. avoid redundancy of outdoor and indoor facilities that are available elsewhere in town.

## **Topics for next meeting(s)**

### **Outreach & Communication**

An outreach action list was created for core outreach initiatives: website, Facebook, Courier Column. Marcia and Tony have experience and skill to bring to these needs. At a future meeting, the IUC will revisit and expand on these initial steps.

- Actions: schedule a meeting to identify key actions and responsibilities for: getting word out: newsletter, mailing/volunteer list, FB, website, etc
  1. Purpose: recruit new IUC members and stewards/reliable volunteers for trail work, outreach, usage, etc.
  2. Need a few dedicated and skillful people to focus on this: who, how engage

### **Topics – for future/upcoming discussion and decisions**

- a. Barn: access, preventative maintenance, brush removal
- b. House: post tenant – access, utilities, security etc.
- c. Security: Tenant caretaker, Cameras, Police
- d. Community gardens (separate or part of usage?)
- e. Revisit use of land and buildings re WCP purpose and community impact. Plan for grants, partnerships, volunteers: build resources
- f. ADA compliance. What are the opportunities, requirements, constraints, etc.?
- g. Trail signage, seating, kiosks, maps
- h. Picnic areas
- i. Parking
- j. Fitness trail
- k. Other ?

**Adjourned: 7:34 p.m.**

**Next Meeting: August 27, 5:30 p.m.**

Note: Prior to posting the agenda, Dave will send to IUC members and ask for items to add.

**Approved: \_\_August 27, 2018**