

Kelley's Corner Steering Committee

Meeting Minutes - 8 October 2014

These are the meeting minutes from the Kelley's Corner Steering Committee of the Town of Acton, Massachusetts. The meeting took place on 8 October 2014 in Room 204 at the Acton Town Hall.

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm by Andy Brockway.

Present: Andrew Brockway, Bonny Nothern, Eric Solomon , Larry Kenah, Margaret Busse, Peter Darlow, Rob Bukowski

Not Present: J D Head

Planning Department: Kristen Domurad-Guichard, Roland Bartl

Other Attendees

The Cecil Group team was represented by:

- Steve Cecil - The Cecil Group - Project Director
- Ken Buckland - The Cecil Group - Project Manager
- Jason DeGray - Greenman-Pederson, Inc - Traffic Engineering

Vincent Cuttome, an owner of some of the Kelley's Corner property, and Kat Hudson, vice chair of Acton 2020, attended the meeting along with three additional visitors.

Meeting Summary

This meeting addressed four subjects.

- Feedback and reactions to the 16 September 2014 public meeting
- Introduction to Zoning
- Process for Traffic Improvements
- Town meeting and proposed zoning bylaw changes

Meeting Minutes (1)

Minutes from two earlier meetings were approved.

- 13 August with several edits
- 10 September with one minor edit

Public Meeting Results (3)

A public meeting was held on 16 September 2014 to bring people up to date on progress to date and to ask for feedback on proposed improvements to traffic congestion and overall layout of Kelley's Corner.

The slides that were presented at this meeting can be found at

<http://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/View/Collection-6469>

Committee members estimated that there were between 50 and 60 people at the meeting. Conflicts with several back-to-school nights might have had an effect on overall attendance. Everyone agreed that the quality of the discussions on the breakout sessions was high.

The consultants delivered their meeting summary to the committee in the form of a letter that we then discussed at length. A copy of the letter can be found at

<http://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/Get/Document-48450/2014-10-08%20MEMO%20Alternatives%20and%20Choices%20Workshop%20Results.pdf>

Circulation and Roadways Alternatives

People especially liked the Balanced Network approach partly because it addressed traffic problems while remaining somewhat modest in scale.

Streetscape and Landscape Alternatives

People seemed to favor a hybrid approach.

- They liked the Civic Character approach very near to the center of Kelley's Corner.
- They liked the Informal Character elsewhere.

Zoning 101 (4a)

Ken Buckland presented an introduction so that everyone on the committee had some understanding about both the principles and mechanics of zoning.

- Zoning cannot force redevelopment. It can only guide development that actually takes place.
- Zoning standards should be a low bar.
- Uniformity is very important.
- Non conformity is a very big deal.

Transportation Improvements (4b)

Jason DeGray described next steps on the traffic front.

- Next steps include an advanced design and a civil engineering survey.
- We need to engage with MassDOT because they are an important player in whatever happens to the roadways in Kelley's Corner.

Roland recommended that the committee provide an update to the BoS and encourage that the BoS send a letter to MassDOT. Such a letter would elevate the importance of our efforts in the eyes of MassDOT. The committee then formally recommended that the BoS write a letter supporting the proposed transportation efforts.

- The committee will write the letter. Andy Brockway will present the letter to the BoS at a future BoS meeting.

The committee unanimously recommended that the Cecil Group and Jason DeGray (GPI) engage with MassDOT and start the civil engineering survey.

Town Meeting and Proposed Bylaw Change (5)

Current town zoning bylaws allow drive through access for banks and prohibit it for everyone else. A recent town meeting discussed allowing drive through access for other businesses but that earlier proposed change failed.

This proposed change is more limited in scope, extending drive through access for pharmacies and only after obtaining a special permit. The question before the committee at its October meeting was whether the committee should support this proposed change.

Some committee members were opposed to the proposed change. Others did not take a position on the article but felt that the timing was at odds with the committee's plans to deliver a package of proposed zoning changes for Kelley's Corner sometime in early 2015.

The committee finally concluded that we would recommend deferral of this proposed change until the rest of the KCSC zoning recommendations were delivered.

In Closing

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 pm.

These minutes were recorded by Lawrence J Kenah.