

02 January 2019

**53 River Street Master Planning Committee Meeting
Acton Recreation Center Building**

53 River St Committee members present:

Peter Berry
Bill Alesbury
Lou York
Peter Hocknell
Bill Klauer
Bob Whittlesey
John Cook

Meeting called to order at 7:02 pm.

Citizen's concerns: None

Miscellaneous:

Michelle Holland has resigned from the 53 River Street Master Planning Committee.

Stephanie Krantz has gone through the VCC vetting process and has been approved to join. That leaves 1 more opening available on the committee.

Peter Hocknell had his Committee Recruitment PSA film shoot on December 21. A "draft" version should be available approximately 2-3 weeks from then, and will be posted on Youtube.

Fun Historic Fact: Peter Berry discussed John Francis "Honey Fitz" Fitzgerald (former US Congressman and mayor of Boston) and his wife Mary Josephine "Josie" Hannon, and their strong connection to South Acton.

December 5, 2018 Minutes approval: Motion to approve made by Bill Alesbury; seconded by John Cook. Unanimous approval.

GZA Dam Safety Report:

Bill Alesbury asked that, based on the report, should we take steps to make the dam as safe as we can now:

Recurrent Maintenance Recommendations:

GZA recommends that the owner arrange for the following actions, which generally do not require engineering design, to be performed at the dam

- 1. Remove vegetation, sediment, and debris from spillway and approach area.*
- 2. Remove vegetation, sediment, and debris from primary and secondary low-level outlets.*
- 3. Provide signage to prevent and deter public access to the dam for public safety.*
- 4. Monitor the multiple deteriorated portions of the dam.*

The question was asked -- what is the town's liability here?

How will the Emergency Action Plan (EAP) be funded?

- Emergency Management is under the purview of Mark Hald (Assistant Town Manager). Peter Berry to follow up with Mark.
- Noted that GZA's proposed \$15-20K EAP development pricing exceeds the total annual emergency management funding budget.

Lou York's Scope of Work:

Lou's draft document was reviewed and discussed. The proposed area extends from Erickson's dam to Lawsbrook Road. What effect this area size will have on the Hydraulic & Hydrologic (H&H) costs remains to be seen.

Community Preservation Act Funding:

11 CPA proposals were submitted to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC). The question was asked -- how much over or under the total available funds do the 11 proposals represent. The answer was not known at that time.

Department of Ecologic Restoration (DER): Status update – Selby informed the committee that we were not selected as a priority project; ours lacks ecological impact compared with other proposals.

Bill Klauer asked – since the dam was rebuilt in 1935, and now that the floodgate is open, how much larger of an opening would be required to mitigate failure risk? He offered using the arched bridge seen from behind the South Acton Congregational Church as guidance.

CPC Application next steps?

We had produced our initial proposal before we had the benefit of the detailed GZA report and Lou's scope and cost estimates. Based on an estimated \$65K for H&H and \$10K for the archeology study, the result is \$75K.

Selby will amend the proposal, taking into account Town Counsel's recommendations, and increase our ask of the CPC accordingly.

When would the actual work transpire?

The CPC application needs approval at the April Town Meeting, then the RFP process is about 1 additional month.

EAP development – likely not eligible for CPA funding.

Instead, the funds are likely to come from Town Manager Emergency budget.

Upcoming meetings of note:

16 JAN 2019 – Our next 53 River Street meeting. We can get time with the Conservation Commission (~30 minutes). This meeting will likely be held at Town Hall in Room 9.

24 JAN 2019 – CPC meeting 8:20 PM at the Acton Memorial Library.

Lou will present our proposal to the CPC. He will have a draft slide deck ready for our 1/16 meeting.

Recommended: ~10 minutes worth of slides and allow for ~10 minutes of questions.

Annual Report

To be ready for the 1/16 meeting (Peter Berry)

As a committee, we need to present an update to the Board of Selectmen in the February timeframe. We can use our annual report presentation as a guide.

It was suggested having a property use restriction codified by a vote at Town Meeting. It turns out that Lazaro didn't want to wait for an April vote back in 2016; hence free cash was used to purchase the 53 River Street property versus CPA funds (they didn't want to fund out of the budget cycle).

Affordable Housing discussion:

Based on the site size, 12 housing units suggested as a maximum.

However, based on the Walker property and 446 Mass Ave, in order to be 100% affordable 31 units minimum are required, due to a financing mechanism.

Numbers are on Docushare.

These are the key contacts to have our next housing discussion:

Kelly Cronin
Nancy Tavernier
Bob Whittlesey
Peter Berry

Acton Conservation Trust:

Sue Mitchell-Hardt is the contact.

Bill Alesbury & Selby suggest there is not a need for this at this juncture, as the land has already been acquired.

Next Steps / Jan 16 meeting (tentative agenda):

What can be done now at the site?

Raceway fill in options?

Permitting concerns?

Lou's presentation review.

For our February 6 meeting – the affordable housing discussion is tentatively to be scheduled then. Selby suggests this take place prior to town meeting to try and alleviate confusion.

Citizen's follow up concerns?

Kathy Acerbo-Bachmann – wait to rule out any site options/restrictions until all studies' results are in?

Peter Berry reiterated our position is to restrict the property uses to those that are CPA fundable. However, we intend to have a decision upfront on housing (whether to keep as an option or rule out).

Move to adjourn:

Lou York motioned.

Bill Alesbury seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.