



53 RIVER STREET MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

AUGUST 18, 2020

7:30 PM

Virtual Meeting

Present: David Martin, Bill Klauer, Peter Hocknell, Lou York, Bill Alesbury, Ilana Liebert, Matthew ‘Selby’ (Staff).

Absent: Stephanie Krantz, Don Boyle.

1. Opening

David Martin called the meeting to order at 7:33 PM via a virtual meeting with no committee members in physical attendance and broadcasted via Zoom.us virtual meeting platform.

2. Regular Business

A. A quorum is present.

B. Citizens’ Concerns – none.

C. Election of committee officers: Peter Berry is no longer a member of the Acton Board of Selectmen; David Martin has been appointed as the BoS liaison to the 53 River Street Committee. For the position of Committee Chair, David Martin was nominated by Lou York and seconded by Bill Alesbury. Voting took place via role call:

Peter Hocknell – Aye

Bill Alesbury – Aye

Bill Klauer – Aye

Lou York – Aye

David Martin – Aye

Ilana Liebert – Aye

D. Peter Hocknell nominated Lou York for the position of Committee Vice-chair and seconded by Bill Alesbury. Voting took place via role call:

Peter Hocknell – Aye

Bill Alesbury – Aye

Bill Klauer – Aye

Lou York – Aye

Ilana Liebert – Aye



David Martin – Aye

- E. Peter Hocknell was nominated for the position of Committee Clerk by Bill Klauer and seconded by Ilana Liebert. Voting took place via role call:

Peter Hocknell – Aye

Bill Alesbury – Aye

Bill Klauer – Aye

Lou York – Aye

Ilana Liebert – Aye

David Martin – Aye

- F. Approval of the minutes from the 21 May 2020 committee meeting. Motion to approve made by Bill Klauer, seconded by Bill Alesbury. Voting took place via role call:

Peter Hocknell – Aye

Bill Alesbury – Aye

Bill Klauer – Aye

Lou York – Aye

Ilana Liebert – Aye

David Martin – Abstain

- G. Permitting update:

- a. The Environmental Notification Form (ENF) was submitted to MEPA, comments were due in July. MEPA gave us their record of decision, and the committee's request for a waiver was approved.
- b. The next round of permit filing to be submitted this month includes the 401 water certification form, Chapter 91 form, Chapter 253 to the Office of Dam Safety (ODS) and the Army Corps of Engineers. The Mass Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) prefers to review the applications ahead of the town's Conservation Commission. A Notice of Intent (NOI) filing is expected by the end of October in order to allow for a public hearing in November. The 53 River Street Committee is scheduled to provide an update to the Acton Historic District Commission (HDC) Sept 22 at 7:15 pm.

- H. AHC / HDC / PAL feedback:

- a. Letter from the Massachusetts Historical Commission: in short, they are asking for project MBUAR, AHC, and a PAL re-do of the cultural resource assessment (complete).
- b. Letter from the Acton HDC: suggests that the PAL report mentioned locations of former industrial buildings. Recommends additional investigation for other structures that may be on the site. Selby obtained a day rate for subsurface imaging scan, however anything under the main slab of concrete would be extremely difficult to detect due to the likely presence of rebar, etc.
- c. Letter from the Acton Historical Commission: site investigation and preservation needs to be addressed. Recommends cutting down existing vegetation and then



conducting excavation. Lou York pointed out that subsurface radar may be of limited utility here, as the upland area is mostly paved and likely will contain rebar, which can obscure the imaging. Any exploratory digging would have to be contracted out. The town can theoretically take down vegetation to better expose the site. AHC indicated their desire to keep artifacts, etc. Bill Klauer mentioned that Lazaro dumped extra asphalt there and it is possible there may not be much rebar. The question was raised how this additional work impacts the overall dam removal schedule. Selby indicated that the earliest the dam removal can likely occur is 12 months from now. The Dam & Seawall Grant program has not issued RFRs yet. From the existing funding sources, we may have funds for Landscape Architects (LA) to craft the final park design. Selby will seek multiple LA's, but we do not have to follow procurement 30B for this service.

David Honn commented that the AHC and HDC are preparing a joint memo in order to get on the same page. Highlights of this include: 1) the physical excavation may aid in the park design 2) public outreach needed in order to get the park design project off the ground, and this can be challenging via Zoom calls 3) The committees need a written plan for the park design 4) The designer for physical conceptual design does not necessarily have to be part of the engineering firm 5) a historic park LA should also have an exhibit designer, historian, and graphic designer.

Doug Herrick, Bill Klauer, and Selby met to consider creating a working group for park design. Lou York asked that discussion regarding the formation of any working group be tabled until we can all review the charge for this committee.

- I. CPA applications for funding are due in November. Selby wants to submit an RFP for architectural and park design work, and further consider what else we need to ask for, such as being able to better meet historic preservation. It is not desired to ask for the full cost of dam removal to come from CPC funding. David Martin pointed out that CPC may be looking to appropriate funds for historic preservation work. May be worth considering.
- J. The desire to preserve historic features must be balanced with the fact that the dam is currently in a hazard state and under consent order by the ODS. ODS states that after dam removal, there must be 0% impoundment at 100 year flood level. The DEP review of the ENF included commentary that the current channel is undersized, and that even though the southern wall is stable, the northern wall should be evaluated for removal in order to properly restore flood plain safety. FEMA + NFIP regulations also require the final dam removal design must comply. Ecological restoration and safety are the first priorities for dam removal.
- K. Next committee meeting scheduled for October 6 at 7:00 pm; possibly earlier in September if needed.



- L. Letter to downstream abutters status: Selby suggests the committee send out to abutters in October after our next committee meeting. The Dam & Seawall Grant has applications due in July. In June, Selby did not see requests – the Project Manager said our project is in line with what they are typically looking for. RFRs likely available towards the end of summer.
- M. Motion to adjourn was made by Lou York at 8:38 pm, seconded by Bill Klauer. Voting took place via role call:
- Peter Hocknell – Aye
 - Bill Alesbury – Aye
 - Bill Klauer – Aye
 - Lou York – Aye
 - Ilana Liebert – Aye
 - David Martin – Aye

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting:

- Meeting Agenda for August 18, 2020
- Draft minutes from the May 21, 2020 committee meeting
- #16225 - Final DROD River Street Dam Removal – ACTON.pdf
- #16225 - Final EENF River Steet Dam Removal - ACTON SKT signed.pdf
- 53 River Street Historical Review Letter 8-18.docx
- 53 River Street MEPA Comments.pdf
- 53 River Street MHC 070120.docx
- MEPA Letter 53 River Street Dam 7-9-20 Final.docx
- Nema Letter 53 River Street Dam 071020.pdf
- River Street Dam Removal PAL Revised Technical Memorandum.pdf