

**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
TOWN OF NEEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS**

**Minutes of Meeting
February 25, 2015**

PRESENT: Lita Young - Chair, Gary Crossen – Vice Chair, Robert Boder, Sam Bass Warner, Mark Gluesing, Peter Oehlkers, Reg Foster

ABSENT: Mike Retzky

STAFF: Patricia Carey, Staff Liaison
Kristen Wright, Recording Secretary

GUESTS: Connie Barr, School Committee Representative
Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager
Matthew Borrelli, Board of Selectmen
Matthew Varrell, Director of Conservation
Edward Olsen, Superintendent, Parks and Forestry
Tony DelGaizo, Town Engineer
Gene Bolinger, Weston & Sampson
Dan Gutekanst, Superintendent, Needham Public Schools
Gregory Bayse, Assistant Principal, Newman Elementary School
David DiCicco, Vice Chairman, Park and Recreation
Thomas Jacob, Park and Recreation Commission
David Lambert, Needham Baseball
Jo-Anne Ochella, Community Center of Needham
Paul Siegenthaler, Town Meeting Member

Ms. Young called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM in the Highland Room at Town Hall.

Chairman's Updates:

Ms. Young stated that the proponents from the Chapel Village project have withdrawn their proposal. Ms. Young stated that she with Mr. Crossen and Ms. Carey met with Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager and Dave Davidson, Director of Finance to discuss the Community Preservation Committee's five year financing plan that will be discussed later in the meeting.

Discussion with Proponents

FY2015-2 Newman Athletic Fields & FY2015-3 Eastman Conservation Area – Liaisons – Mark Gluesing and Peter Oehlkers

Mr. Gluesing introduced Edward Olsen, Superintendent from Parks and Forestry and Gene Bolinger from Weston & Sampson. Mr. Gluesing added that prior to this meeting Weston & Sampson had provided answers to follow up questions (*Appendix A*). Mr. Olsen reviewed the both the Newman Athletic Fields project and the Eastman Conservation Area projects, thanking the committee for the previously funded design phase on both projects. Weston & Sampson did the designs, with the working group including Mr. Olsen, Newman Assistant Principal Greg Bayse, Athletic Director Micah

Hauben, Conservation Director Matt Varrell, and Ms. Carey,. Needham resident Gene Bolinger was the project lead for Weston & Sampson. Mr. Olsen stated that this proposal is for construction phase of these projects and they are submitted as two separate construction projects. The Newman Athletic Fields project includes grading the fields, replacing backstops, sodding the baseball diamonds, and seeding the multi-purpose fields. The timeline for this project would be in the summer of 2015 in order to have limited use available for the 2015-16 school year, while allowing other sections to remain offline for a growing season. Mr. Bolinger showed a slide of the proposed construction plan and presented all the elements of both the Newman Athletic Fields and the Eastman Conservation Area. For the Newman Athletic fields he stated that by changing the orientation of the two baseball diamonds, a large 'outfield' space is created which supports the school's main use of the fields during recess and physical education. He stated that improving the grading of the fields is important as these fields are currently closed numerous times throughout the season due to drainage issues. On the Eastman Conservation Project, Mr. Bolinger stated that the loop around the area is long established but currently in disrepair and risky to fully use. This space lends itself to many 'teaching moments' that are utilized both by Newman Elementary and all grades through the Science Center. The teaching areas include wetlands, a rock outcropping, a pond, and a meadow area. It also includes an outdoor learning center. The boardwalks on the trail will be at grade and slightly elevated when necessary. Mr. Olsen added that around the Newman Fields, a walking path will be added. Mr. Warner asked about bathroom facilities. Ms. Carey stated that groups can rent a portable restroom and that a concrete pad for the portable restroom is in the construction plan. Mr. Olsen clarified that the school facilities couldn't be used as it is a safety concern and Mr. Bayse added that many outside user groups use the fields on the weekends when the school is locked. Mr. Boder asked what the life expectancy of the Eastman Conservation boardwalk is. Mr. Bolinger stated that it is proposed to use pressure-treated wood so it is not unreasonable to expect it to last 20 – 25 years. Using this material is optimal to replace certain areas without having to replace the entire boardwalk. Mr. Boder asked if all the trails in both projects would be level and allow for handicap access. Mr. Olsen stated that sand and other components would be used to level the grade. Mr. Bolinger added that they will also add sub-drainage to the field and trail components and that drainage from the school building would also be addressed. Mr. Bolinger stated that the boardwalks and trails would not have railings but curbs to support wheelchair access. Ms. Young asked about using pressure-treated wood that has toxins. Ms. Carey stated that updated pressure-treated wood would be used, and not the former type with CCA. Mr. Gluesing asked about the surfacing on the trails to ensure they are accessible. Mr. Bolinger stated that the trail would be level and the non-board walk surfacing would be stone dust. Mr. Boder asked about the yearly maintenance costs of these projects. Mr. Olsen stated that the current fields are maintained by Parks and Forestry and that the new fields would also fall under their maintenance and be incorporated into their annual budget. Mr. Gluesing asked if the two projects would be built together. Mr. Olsen stated that they would be bid separately and their construction times would be different. The Newman fields could be started in early July and ready for limited school use in September. The fields would not be permitted for use during that school year to allow them to grow but should be available in Fall of 2016. This timeline is best for the growing season and it is the most cost-effective. Ms. Carey added that having the space ready for the school year is important as the school only has one indoor gym and caters 700 students. The space that would be ready in September is also the closest to the school and the best to use for outdoor recess. Mr. Bolinger stated that the proposed timeline for the fields is aggressive but feasible. Mr. Bolinger added that the two projects are very different. The

Eastman Conservation Area can be done around the needs of the Newman project and there is a separate access to bring materials and wouldn't disrupt the operation of the school. Superintendent Dan Gutekanst stated that this project is important not only to the school but the community. School Committee member Connie Barr stated that the loops around the field areas are great to encourage physical exercise. Ms. Carey added that groups like Relay for Life and the Newman Walkathon would be able to use the walking path for their large group activities. Mr. DiCicco stated that the Park and Recreation Commission fully supports both projects. He added that the Newman fields are the 3rd largest park area and the least booked due to the draining issues. Ms. Young thanked all the proponents for their input.

FY2015-4 Mills Field Park Improvements – Liaison – Reg Foster

Mr. Foster introduced Town Engineer Tony DelGaizo. Mr. DelGaizo reviewed the four parts of the project; the off-street parking, the basketball court, the restroom, and sodding at the field. The off-street parking portion includes creating a horseshoe driveway, and indented parking on Hamilton Road and Ellis Street. Ms. Young asked how many parking spaces this project will create. Mr. DelGaizo stated that this will create 10 on Hamilton, 10-12 on Ellis, and 16 spaces in the horseshoe driveway. Mr. Boder asked if this would be enough parking for this area. Mr. DelGaizo stated that this proposal created the maximum number of parking spaces, without taking elements away from the park. Mr. Crossen asked what the timeline for this project is. Mr. DelGaizo stated that it would be started this summer to have the least impact on baseball and finish all projects in this fiscal year. Mr. Gluesing asked if alternate options for the parking were looked into. Mr. DelGaizo stated that there were multiple designs, some larger and some smaller, but the proposed parking layout was the best fit for the space. Mr. Gluesing asked if there would be improvements to the backstops since parking was near the field foul ball area. Mr. DelGaizo stated that that was not a part of this project. Mr. DiCicco added that the Park and Recreation Commission fully supports this project and these improvements. Ms. Young thanked Mr. DelGaizo for his input.

FY2015-5 Ridge Hill – Student Conservation Association – Liaisons – Sam Bass Warner and Robert Boder

Mr. Oehlkers introduced Matt Varrell, Director of Conservation. Mr. Varrell stated that the funding for this project is to utilize the Student Conservation Association (SCA) for projects at Ridge Hill and for supplies. SCA will spend 10 days at Ridge Hill with a list of projects. The largest part of this project is to create a foot bridge across the stream to connect the Esker Trail to the Loop Trail. Other projects will include removing stumps from the Loop Trail that are tripping hazards, making improvements to the drainage along the trail, and identifying invasive species. SCA comes highly recommended and recently did a similar project in Dedham that included building a larger bridge. The hope is that SCA will be invited back to do more trail work for the Town in the future. Mr. Gluesing asked about how the funding would be spent. Mr. Varrell stated that SCA has a flat fee for 10 days of almost \$7,500 and the remaining funds are for supplies. Mr. Gluesing asked if 10 days would be enough time. Mr. Varrell stated that SCA offers either 5 days or 10 days, and that 10 days would allow for completion of the bridge project and some smaller projects. Mr. Oehlkers asked where the members of SCA would camp. Mr. Varrell stated they would set up camp behind the garage area at Ridge Hill. Mr. Gluesing asked about the timeline for this project. Ms. Carey said that it is a summer project, so space would be

shared with the Park and Recreation program also on site, which would be a benefit., Ms. Young thanked Mr. Varrell for his input.

FY2015-6 Canoe Launch Improvements – Liaisons – Sam Bass Warner and Robert Boder

Ms. Young stated that the proposed funding is for the design of this area. Ms. Carey stated that the project would look to renovate the hard packed surface parking area and path to the Charles River that would allow for a natural entry in to the water, including possibly widening the path to allow trailers with small boats and pedestrian traffic. Ms. Carey introduced Selectman Matt Borrelli. Mr. Borrelli stated that small boats can weigh upwards of 150 lbs. and that the path would need to allow enough access to the water for these boats on portable trailers but prevent larger boats. Mr. Borrelli stated that this project is supported by the Board of Selectman as a part of their goal to create more access to the Charles River, as access is limited in Needham currently. Mr. Crossen asked how much parking would be included in the project. Ms. Carey stated that 12-15 cars could fit without trailers. Mr. Warner asked where the funding would go specifically. Ms. Carey stated that a consultant would be used to design the space and do the application for Conservation Commission permitting. Mr. DiCicco stated that the Park and Recreation Commission unanimously supports this project and hopes to increase programming utilizing this site. Ms. Young thanked the proponents for their input.

FY2015-7 Rail Trail Improvements – Liaisons – Sam Bass Warner and Robert Boder

Ms. Carey introduced Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager and Tony DelGaizo, Town Engineer. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that this project has quickly developed in the last 8-9 months. The Town has been working with the Bay Colony Rail Trail Association (BCRTA) and they have been responsible for increasing interest to this project and gathering volunteers. BCRTA has been fundraising for this project and with those funds paid for the design of the trail and donated \$115,000 to the Town to continue this project. The funding being requested for this project is to ensure that phase 1 of the project can be completed and any funds not used would be returned to the CPC. A bid recently went out for the removal of the rails and ties from the existing railroad line. Mr. DelGaizo believes it will be approximately \$35,000 to remove the rails and ties before any construction is started. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that after the rails and ties are removed they will use a front end loader to make the trail walkable until phase 2. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that this project is still awaiting \$70,000 in funding from the state. BCRTA has an additional \$50,000 to fund privacy mitigation.. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that Needham is one of few towns that has retained the traditional cross bar signs and it is in the plan to reuse these signs for the Rail Trail. There is also planned grading at street crossings to show the trail crossing. Mr. Boder asked about parking for this trail. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that there is parking at High Rock Street at the beginning of the trail and they expect to add more off-street parking at a later phase. Mr. Boder asked if the trail would allow Cross Country Skiing. Mr. Varrell stated that the trail could be used for that purpose. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that no motorized vehicle would be allowed on the trail, but horses may be permitted. Ms. Young asked if Dover was moving forward on their Rail Trail. Ms. Carey stated that they are waiting on their study and in the meantime watching Needham's progress. Mr. Boder asked about using historical signage along the trail. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that the original design incorporated historical features in a later phase.. Mr. Gluesing asked about the materials to be used on the trail to make it level. Mr. DelGaizo stated that in phase 1 they would have to back blade certain area to level the surface, and during construction, it will be a stone dust surface. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated the Town did the wetland flagging and the design work. Mr. DelGaizo stated

that they worked with Conservation, ensured ADA compliance, and used DEP best management practices during the design of the trail. Mr. Gluesing asked about the timeline of this project. Ms. Fitzpatrick replied that work would begin this spring on the removal, and it is hoped that the construction phase can be done during the calendar year. Ms. Young thanked the proponents for their input.

Proposal Review:

FY2015-1 Rosemary Pool – Liaison – Gary Crossen

No additional information was provided on this project.

FY2015-8 Chapel Village at Needham Center – Liaison – Mike Retzky

As stated previously in the meeting, this proposal was withdrawn by the proponents.

Five Year Financing Plan.

Ms. Young stated that she, Mr. Crossen and Ms. Carey met with the Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Dave Davison to discuss the projected 5 year financial plan. Ms. Carey provided a draft of the plan and stated that the appropriation for the Eastman project was missing from this draft and the Chapel Village project was included, which will now be removed. The plan includes a place holder for small projects and a projection for Rosemary Pool construction, including the cost of bonding.

Next Steps:

Ms. Young reminded the members that the next meeting will be the Public Hearing on Wednesday, March 11th in the Selectmen's Chambers. Liaisons should prepare a short summary of the projects. Ms. Carey noted that in past hearings, the liaisons introduced the project and the proponents presented the projects in more detail. Ms. Carey stated that the Needham Channel will be filming the hearing. Ms. Carey and Ms. Wright will send out postcards to all Town Meeting Members and legal notices will be placed in the Needham Times on February 26th and March 5th. The vote on all projects will take place on March 18th. Town Meeting will begin on May 4th.

Minutes: February 11, 2015: Mr. Gluesing made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2015 meeting, and the motion was seconded by Mr. Warner. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Adjournment: Mr. Gluesing made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Crossen seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Wright
Recording Secretary

MEMORANDUM

TO: Ed Olsen
FROM: Gene Bolinger + Brandon Riley
DATE: February 23, 2015
SUBJECT: Responses to CPC Questions + Other Posed Questions

1. What are the lengths of the different types of pathway surfaces within Eastman – and what are the different types?

Summary of Pathway Types

- 535 LF elevated boardwalk on helical piers
- 615 LF at-grade boardwalk on sleepers
- 640 LF aggregate trail surfacing
- 1,790 LF total length of the accessible trail system including the dock area

Boardwalks vary in width between 4' and 6' within the Eastman Conservation Area. The elevated boardwalk will be comprised of pressure treated lumber, and is it proposed where the accessible trail crosses into and through wetland resource areas. In essence, elevated boardwalk replaces the limits of boardwalk that presently exist in a degraded condition. The boardwalk on sleepers is constructed approximately at grade and this system is to replace and expand upon the simple board planking protocol that has been employed recently through wet, but frequently trod pathway lengths.

The remainder of the trail will be constructed at a width of 5' with compacted aggregate trail surfacing. The compacted aggregate trail surfacing is comprised of a crushed schist material (like stonedust) and has been successfully installed at many accessible trail locations, including the Broadmoor Wildlife Sanctuary in Natick, MA.

2. Is there a sense of cost difference between doing the boardwalk linear as opposed to "meandering?"

We anticipate the cost premium for the curvilinear boardwalk to be slightly more expensive than the typical straight boardwalk. The boardwalk framing for either design concept is identical. The curvilinear appearance will be achieved by overhanging the deck boards past the framing and trimming to achieve the curvilinear shape. Extra cost is expected for additional waste of deck material and the slightly more complicated and time consuming cutting/trimming. Over the entire length of the boardwalk system,

the additional cost is estimated to be in the \$10,000 - \$20,000 range. Note that the boardwalk price estimates have been guided partly by the actual recent bid prices received for the Ridge Hill project, and therefore we believe these to be on the conservative side.

We do believe that the curvilinear boardwalk system is likely to be a signature and therefore defining element within the overall design. There is also the potential that this more costly approach could be identified as a bid alternate.

3. What is the reason for increased cost from original cost?

We believe there are probably many factors that have caused the estimated cost guidance for improvements within the Eastman Conservation Area to increase, including the following:

- The original cost guidance was established prior to the development of design development and final design documents, and as such was a less refined estimate.
- The original cost guidance is now many years old, and costs have increased.
- In order to minimize impacts to wetland resource areas, the lengths of boardwalks have been increased and an extensive boardwalk on sleeper detail has been established to replace a simple plank system within wetland resource areas. The boardwalk on sleeper detail extends over 400 feet where there was no such system in place previously.
- The outdoor classroom has been added as a scope item at the request of Newman School educators. It is believed that this space can serve as a vital teaching node within an outdoor setting, and provide teachers an opportunity to outline expectations for tours of the Eastman Conservation Area in advance of setting out on that tour.

4. Where could cost cutting occur if needed?

The trail area improvements between the rock outcropping and upland meadow area could be deleted to save costs. The project could still provide an accessible route to all teaching moments, but the full trail loop is not realized under this scenario. The outdoor classroom could also be deleted or reduced in scope, (reducing walls, switching the concrete path to asphalt or less expensive material, etc.) in order to reduce costs.

5. How many kids use the Eastman Conservation Area?

Approximately 800 children attend the Newman School. The outdoor classroom and the associated Eastman Conservation Area improvements will greatly benefit the school community by offering outdoor teaching nodes and by enhancing all environmental educational offerings, particular all Needham Science Center programs.

The Needham Science Center, based at Newman School serves all K-5 Needham Students. 2,643 students were enrolled within these grades during the 2013-2014 school calendar year. Each student within the system stands to benefit greatly through the dramatic ally enhanced boardwalk and trail system upgrades.

The Eastman Conservation Area also becomes an attractive addition to Needham's park, open space and trail system with use expected by other residents of the surrounding neighborhood and greater community throughout the year, when school is not in session.

6. Could Eastman Conservation Area improvements be bid with Ridge Hill to save money?

It seems difficult to gauge the level of potential cost savings that might be yielded by bidding the Eastman Conservation and Ridge Hill improvements together. It is possible, although unique and separate geographic settings may negate this to some extent. Some savings might be yielded in relation to sheer volume of work. More helical piles, more board feet of certain boardwalk elements and installation efficiencies that might be discovered or otherwise garnered as work progresses could benefit cost. To gain further insight into this, we would have to reach out to prospective contractors for additional advice.

If requested, we can provide plans of the Eastman Conservation Area improvements, including boardwalk details, for additional review and comment.

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