

## **Burlington Johnnycake Mountain Park Advisory Commission**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**November 8, 2021**

- **Call to order:**

Meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm. Commissioners present: Tricia Twomey, Robert Dunn, Elizabeth Delano, Christie Dockman, Karen Geitz, Craig Battisto, Joan Mack and Mark Moriarty.

- **Motion to approve the November 1st meeting minutes:**

Liz made the motion, Christie seconded it and all voted in favor.

- **Mission Statement:**

Christie read the Mission Statement.

Mission Statement is to create a feasible and visionary short and long term master plan for the purchased property that provides the multi-generational community of Burlington with opportunities for active and passive recreation. Our recommendations will be based upon considerations and input from our entire community, will support documented community needs, will strive to retain the unique, farm-like character and natural landscape of the property and will be aware of the potential impact to the surrounding neighborhoods.

We endorse the following values:

- Open-mindedness
- Team unity
- Respect for one another
- Commitment to a positive outcome

- **Public Comment:**

Douglas Thompson, 76 Warren Glen

He is the First Selectman-Elect and will be responsible for this project after December 1<sup>st</sup>. He wants to do his due diligence on the project.

Dwight Harris, Charolais Way

He went out and measured the distance for the fields and looked at the wetlands boundary. It's important for the architect to do his due diligence about the property.

Craig informed Dwight that the architect took the wetland information from the original survey done in 2017 by BSC Group.

Dwight asked about public comment in the public meeting. When the public asks questions, will the CM answer them at that time?

There will be a sign up list to speak and the amount of time will be determined by the number of people who would like to speak. Instead of answering each question one by one, the CM will aggregate the questions together in themes and answer them at the end. All info is on the Johnnycake Mountain Park Advisory Commission (current) on the Town's website.

Doug said he has lots of questions about the project and wants to do his due diligence. He is not prepared to move forward on this. This project or master plan is a long way from what the referendum promised. He says it will take several months to go ahead because people have concerns about the process and the cost. This is a huge project and with the cost at \$2.5 million and now it's at \$5-6 million.

Mark said that CM are charged with creating a master plan and delivering it to the BOS. It's the BOS that will implement the plan.

Doug added that he was a big advocate for the creation of the steering committee for the park.

Robert stated that CM committed to a sixty day term for the commission and they are now into for several months. Our charge is to deliver the Master Plan and if you look at the info you can see that CM have done our homework. We deliver it and it's out of hands. CM live in different areas of town and have different opinions about the park, but CM came to a compromised decision based upon due diligence to create the Master Plan.

Doug will meet with Mark and Robert to discuss the park. Doug said that he doesn't mean to intimidate, but he plans to do comprehensive due diligence. He can't say that the park will get done quickly.

Joan said that CM were not given a budget, but were charged to make a recommendation for the Master Plan.

Doug stated that there should have been guidance for the commission about a budget.

Robert said CM were not put in a corner about what we could and could not do. Our work was based upon community input. It may take 20 years to implement the plan. We will deliver on what we were asked to do.

Comments on social media about the Master Plan were overwhelmingly positive. Many citizens said that the plan is awesome and that it reflects what they want.

Mark stated that the park is a \$2.5 million project. The community building was scaled back to \$1 million. The park is economical, with gravel roadways and parking like all the other parks in town and it has less infrastructure.

Doug said that it's up to the BOS and how the plan will be implemented. He wanted this Commission for community involvement in the project.

Tom Zabel (BOS), 10 Windham Lane

He helped to set up the charter for the creation of the Commission. CM have done an excellent job and they have exceeded his expectations. The design is well done. Can the BOS help at the public meeting?

Tom said that the Commission's charter was accepted by all BOS. Each commissioner was accepted for a specific reason. The BOS has supported this commission and project unanimously. The referendum shows that the town wanted the park. The first commission did not fulfill the plan for the project. All people in town want to see something done at the park. They want it developed.

Christie asked if there are liability concerns at the park now. Tom said yes. The first part of the project is barn demolition to make the area safe. There are also concerns about the pond. Dwight maintained the property for the town while he was there.

Everything is time sensitive. The longer we wait to begin the project, the more expensive it will become.

Tom said that he will do whatever he can to make it go ahead.

Craig asked what the current BOS thinks of the current design.

Tom said that he watched the CMs' meetings and read all the information and that nobody on the BOS has had any objections.

Christie asked what we will do the public comments after the meeting. Do we incorporate some of the public comments in the MP?

Tom said we may make changes based upon the comments, finalize the plan and present it to the BOS. The final plan needs to be approved by the public. The current BOS' last meeting is November 23<sup>rd</sup> and all the commissioners are invited to attend. The Commission will present the plan to the BOS. If there is anything the BOS can do, let them know.

- **Public Meeting:**

**Mark-welcome and intro**

**Karen –BLT and trails, the history and natural aspects.**

**Tricia- the referendum.** Most questions that have come up are related to the referendum. The PPT for the public meeting should be on our website. The timeline will be visible on the slide with the notes at the bottom.

Commissioners' Introductions:

All CM do something important for the Commission, CM should tell what they do with different perspectives. CM will describe their experience and say what part of town they're from. It's a very eclectic group.

**Christie-Mission Statement**

**Liz-Agenda for the evening.** CM need to put their photo here.

**Robert and Joan- Due diligence and programming.** Community input. Survey. Programming. We should explain programming to the public. We congealed ideas into one cohesive list and

created a priority for items. CM met the intent of the referendum. Park amenities were all considered and debated.

Let people know that all this info will be on our website.

**Brian will do his presentation** and walk the public through the map.

On FB and social media the people are excited about the master plan. We need to keep it moving.

CM have to explain to the public what a master plan is. It's a framework to implement the plan for the next 10-20 years. It is fully thought out. A master plan is a high level design, an overall design, but not with fine level details.

CM will explain Brian's role. He didn't reach out to the public, CM did. We gave him the input from the community and he created the master plan.

The renderings are not ready. Brian will present them on Wednesday night.

#### **Craig- Consultant, cost estimates and phasing options**

Tom Zabel told CM to delete financing since it has nothing to do with what we were charged to do. BOS and Board of Finance are responsible for describing costs and the techniques to create financing. The Town has applied for grants. Tom will form a commission for 501-c-3 for public and private donations for the park. He suggested including our preliminary estimate at \$2.5 million. CM don't have the specifications and costs for the community building. Tom recommended marking it TBD (to be determined). We discussed showing the public options for phases to make costs tangible and to help people understand the reality of costs.

CMs' charge is to develop the MP. We will support the BOS and BOF and how the MP will be phased. Again, Tom said that CM had no budget in our charge. Tom added that we can list future funding sources: annual budget, ARPA funds (for creating economic opportunity), grants, 501-3-c donations, and existing funds. The key is to have the community endorse the MP.

Brian sent us an updated list for costs and the park estimate is \$2.7 million.

#### **Mark-Public Comment**

Set expectations early. We welcome your feedback and questions. Put a sign up list at the door on which people will write their name and address. Tricia will make the list. Some CM will write down the questions and aggregate them into groups or themes. Mark can decide when to respond if certain questions are repeated often. Liz recommended a hand held microphone for people who are mobility challenged. Can we post the sign up list on the screen so people know when their turn to speak is coming?

**Upcoming Meeting:**

Wednesday, November 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm in the library.

Joan will make improvements on the PPT on Thursday.

CM will do a public meeting dry run on Wednesday and they should send their slides to Tricia by Wednesday morning. She can do a final run through by 4:00-4:30.

**Motion to adjourn at 7:55pm:**

Liz, Robert and all in favor.

Minutes respectfully submitted by,

Karen Geitz

November 9, 2021