

Burlington Johnnycake Mountain Park Advisory Commission

Minutes

April 26, 2021

- **Call to order:**

Meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm.

Commissioners present: Tricia Twomey, Joan Mack, Mark Moriarty, Robert Dunn, Elizabeth Delano, Christie Dockman, Karen Geitz and Craig Battisto.

- **Minutes of March 29, 2021 Meeting:**

Karen made a motion to accept them, Robert seconded it and all voted in favor.

- **Minutes of the Farm Tour on April 10, 2021**

Liz made a motion to accept them and Robert seconded it. All voted in favor except Tricia. She abstained as she was not present during the Farm Tour.

- **Minutes of April 12, 2021 Meeting:**

Tricia made a motion to accept the minutes, Joan seconded it and all voted in favor.

- **Favorite Moments During the Pandemic: (2:26)**

Committee Members (CM) all shared information about their favorite moments during the Pandemic. The goal with this activity is for the CM to get to know each other better.

- **Mission Statement: (8:24)**

Mark 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 Outreach: (10:13)**

Motion made to add Conservation Commission Presentation to tonight's agenda (10:23). Tricia made the motion, Robert seconded it and all voted in favor.

Commission Email (11:02):

No specific emails sent to CM. Tricia received an email from Dr. John Turnier. He wants the Town to only use native plants at JMP.

JMP Resident Survey (11:20):

It closes tonight (April 26th). 852 have responded as of meeting time. Tricia will compile the results and send them to CM. The Commission will go over them at the next meeting on May 10th. The BOS want the park programming results submitted to them at their May 25th meeting. Cost will drive a lot of the programming that CM put on the initial list. Tricia will send CM the straight data. CM need to spend a good amount of time understanding the survey results. They need to summarize it, break it down and be able to explain why and why not they have included certain things in the park.

Items Brought to the Commission (16:03):

There were none.

Presentation by Melanie Wilhelm (Chairperson) from the Conservation Commission (18:04):

(Presentation is on the meeting recording that the public can find on the Town's website for the JMP Advisory Commission.) Tom Finan was present as another representative for the CC.

Highlights: Melanie spoke about the purpose of the Conservation Commission and about JMP as being a crown jewel that can function for everyone in town. She described the Plan of Conservation Development, which is a road map for development in town and that CM should look at it. Other themes she mentioned were: water quality, no pesticides, open space, local resources for information, usage of native plants, ADA walking paths, pollinator pathways, and management of wood areas by foresters. She also listed educational recreation opportunities such as, community gardens, the fishing pond, and signage to educate people about the outdoors. Melanie described Sustainable CT and how CM can incorporate sustainability in this project with recycling, a comfort station run by solar power, composting toilets or solar panels on a pavilion. Burlington received a Bronze Award for Sustainability. Tom Finan added that COVID created more use of outdoor areas and people should be encouraged to see the whole park.

CM asked if the CC had contacts with Master Gardeners and CC will send CM some info. CM also inquired about funding streams. Melanie recommended contacting the BOS to see what's available for grants. Some sources that were mentioned were Green Bank for CT, Sustainable CT, Audubon CT, CLCC, Nature Conservancy and Rails to Trails. This Commission is charged with developing a Master Plan and presenting it to the BOS in September. The CM's charge ends when the MP is completed. Tom Finan has looked into 3-4 Community Gardens in the area. Thank you to the CC for its participation and presentation.

- **Consultant RFQ (43:50):**

The RFQ is out and submissions are due on May 3rd. On May 10th the CM will develop a short list of consultants. Joan and Christie devised a list of seventeen interview questions. They looked at Tricia's RFP from the first design process and used some of those questions. Joan would like to add another question after the CC's presentation: How will this firm incorporate sustainability into this plan?

Craig said that CM don't need that many questions for an interview, usually the direction of the conversation will lead to an understanding of the firm. Depending upon how many firms apply, CM will adjust the time frame for the interviews from 15-30 minutes. CM can give the firms the questions ahead of time and they can adjust their presentations to address them. Clearly CM need chemistry between the firm and the Commission. At the end of the presentation there should an opportunity for questions. Craig and Mark will work on Scope of Services. The consultants can give us a fee proposal with their presentations.

- **Project Schedule (52:14):**

The BOS accepted the September 14th due date for the Master Plan. CM will submit their for park programming list to the BOS on May 25th.

- **Park Programming (53:13):**

Tricia spoke about the Town's need for space for indoor programming. There isn't a lot of space available on a regular basis. Parks and Rec can use the TH Auditorium, the Senior Center after 4:00pm and the schools for some activities related to the students. Finding spaces for the right time is difficult. Town meetings take precedent. At times there is no availability for programs or they need to offer activities at weird times. There is availability for one day programs, but not for a whole year or seasonal. P and R needs a community room and the bigger, the better. It would be used throughout the year, so it would need to be heated. If the building has a big room, it can be cut in half and used for two activities at the same time. Having an indoor space at JMP would be very beneficial and the Town can use it for rentals. Gymnastics is outside right now and then it's crunched imbetween activities. Exercise classes have difficulty with scheduling. P and R couldn't run a book building program because it couldn't get consistent space. Sports programs have a challenge in getting space for meetings too. It's an important consideration, but an expensive one. It's important to design a building that reflects rural character. Other parks have buildings that are important parts of the park programming.

BOS wants action on the park this year and CM can give a recommendation for Phase 1 that would show an actionable plan and some progress on the park. This may include taking down the existing barns, establishing temporary parking and putting up signage for the park. If all CM want the barns to come down, CM can recommend that to the BOS on May 25th.

Craig made a motion to recommend that the Town take down the existing barn structures right now. Joan seconded it and all voted in favor.

CM talked about the dangers of these buildings to the public. It'd also be great to have a rendering of the Master Plan up there so the public can see it. There is quote of \$75,000 to take down all three buildings and remove the foundations. CM also discussed if some of the materials in the barns can be reused. CM would like to get into the barns before they are torn down to see what's reusable in order to preserve the rural character. Also, the Crew Team will store their boats in one of the barns until the fall. We can make a recommendation to get in and look at what CM want to save to reuse in the park and then they can take down buildings on the Town's timeline.

- **Upcoming Meetings (1:17:35):**

April 26th – Conservation Commission

May 10th – Consultant Shortlist

May 24th – Consultant Interviews, Park Programming Complete

June 8th – Consultant Recommendation to the BOS

Sept. 13th – Masterplan Recommendation to the BOS

CM discussed the amount of time for interviews (30 minutes) and how to have them all during one meeting. They want to have a meeting dedicated to park programming separate from the interviews.

Craig asked if CM can do a Google Doc to come up with a list of program functions based upon the data with a list of priorities. CM can share the final document with design professionals and then take it to the BOS. All CM would be able to work on the Doc to access it and edit it simultaneously. CM are making recommendations for park programming and prioritizing it for the BOS and then the BOS has to decide what to implement.

CM decided to add a Special Meeting on May 17th to discuss park programming. Tricia made the motion, Christie seconded it and all voted in favor. Consultant interviews will be held on May 24th.

- **Next Steps (1:30:51):**

Park Programming and Goals

Indoor Recreational Space

These were discussed above.

- **Public Comment(1:31:21):**

Limit three minutes per person. CM may or may not have discussion after. Commissioners may make comments at the end of public comment. No members of the public made comments tonight.

Craig will provide Google Doc to CM in which they can list programming and prioritize it. This is important an important productive tool. In order to discuss programming at a meeting, CM will have to look at data, input it on the Google Doc and prioritize it. Craig will send the Google Doc to Tricia who will help to get it out to all CM.

- **Meeting Adjourned at 8:39 (1:36:42):**

Motion to adjourn was made by Craig, seconded by Tricia and all voted in favor.

Minutes respectfully submitted by,

Karen Geitz

May 2, 2021

