

Minutes for St. George Fort Point Ad Hoc Committee Meeting held on Thursday November 12, 2020

Attendance: Members: Ken Oelberger, Tim Polky, Jerry Hall, John Falla, Dale Pierson, Tom Gorrill, Guests: Doug Beck-Outdoor Recreation Supervisor for Bureau of Parks and Lands; Mark Deroche- Recreation's Northern Parks Regional Manager for Bureau of Parks and Lands

Announcements: None

Modifications to Agenda: Ken noted he would like to talk about the Town newsletter and website communications

Approval of October 29th, 2020 Minutes: The minutes of October 29th were approved as distributed.

Old Business

Alternate ROW - Tim said Richard Paulson has not been available to meet to discuss granting a right of way due to health issues. Dale will check with a son to see when Richard might be available.

RFP Reposes for Survey and Design - Tom said that the Ad-Hoc Committee was fortunate to have two good proposals from qualified consultants. Both Consultants attended the mandatory pre-proposal meeting. He said he thought that Gartley and Dorsky was more detailed. They included a preliminary wetland survey, included that a permit by rule would be required to be within 75 ft of the water on the State property, provided more detail on the bridge crossing, and included the environmental permitting. The CES proposal included identifying the wetlands but not permitting them. Tom said this appeared to account for the difference in the proposed fees. Ken pointed out that Gartley and Dorsky also included coordination with Towns 4 Trails and had contacted Erin Amadon in preparing their proposal. Dale said we could check with CES to confirm they had not included permitting in their fee. Ken noted that permit application fees were not included in the proposal. Tim said both consultants were qualified but that he felt Gartley and Dorsky's proposal was more detailed. Jerry stated he is concerned with the fee of \$22,350. He felt the selectman and voters would be concerned with approving this amount of money especially with no guarantee that the grants will be awarded following the surveying and engineering work. Ken suggested that the Town could approve the \$22,350 with the understanding that private funds would be raised by the Committee to defray a portion of the cost. He said hopefully some money could be raised before the Special Town meeting and that this would be discussed later in the meeting agenda. The consensus of the Committee was that the Gartley and Dorsky proposal should be accepted if we proceed with the project.

Fundraising - John said he has not received any further donations beyond the \$500 he reported at the last meeting. He said the grants he is considering have an extended timeline and require documentation of public support which could be done though meetings to present the UA project. He said the Solid Waste Committee had success with their initiatives by having a table at town meetings with educational material. He

suggested the warrant include wording authorizing the Town to apply for and accept grant money and accept private donations and to use those funds toward this project for engineering and design in order to address the concerns the Selectman and Budget Committee may have. The Committee agreed it would be beneficial to obtain written pledges prior to the special town meeting. Dale said we need to come up with positive materials in the near future including why the project was initiated and the current proposal. John said the Historical Society monthly and Town newsletters could ask for written pledges. Dale suggested the CDC could help as well as the Library. Ken suggested Ben Vail via Parks & Rec newsletter could help as well.

Conversation with Bureau of Public Lands- The Agenda under old business was suspended when Doug Beck and Mark DeRoche joined the Zoom meeting. The Committee had sent Doug several questions in advance of the meeting. The questions and responses were as follows:

Question 1. The Maintenance Agreement between the Town and the State -We are planning a Special Town Meeting for December 14th and the warrant for the meeting is required by November 30th. The substance, if not the final agreement, is needed for inclusion in the warrant. Could you send us a sample agreement in advance of our meeting so we might review it and be prepared to discuss it with you on November 12th?

Response: Doug said that the lease agreements are generic, -generally that the municipality will maintain the access and facility. Mark said it will be a simple agreement with the Town requiring the Town to mow the lawn, pick up litter and uphold the historic integrity of the site. Mark agreed to get a sample agreement to the Ad Hoc committee by November 19th.

Question 2. How the combination of the two grants would work - At the site meeting held in September the approach using the RTP Grant to provide the match for the LWCF Grant was discussed. We wish to get a better understanding of how this would work, the timing required and the respective Town and State responsibilities.

Response: Doug responded that the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and Recreational Trail Program (RTP) can be used to satisfy the required funding match for each other. However, he said it is logistically challenging because the LWCF application is due at the end of May and the RTP application is due at the end of September. He said relying on the RTP to match the LWCF could be viewed as a weakness in the LWCF since it is relying on a yet to be determined funding award. He said it would be even more of a weakness if we were to file the RTP first and rely on the LWCF fund for the match which would be filed the following September. Doug acknowledged the committee member's concerns that it would be a tough sell to the Town Select Board and the voters to spend the upfront money with a risk that the applications for grant to fund the project may not be awarded.

Doug suggested that delaying the applications a year may give the Town and BPL more time to explore options to reduce the cost to the Town for survey and engineering. He suggested that Larry Johannesman, a landscape architect from the Maine DOT, may be willing to design the parking lot and related access. Doug agreed to contact Larry to see if he would be willing to help. Doug asked Tim if the DOT had any issues with the access within their ROW. Tim responded that he had a preliminary meeting with the DOT and the preliminary indication was that there were no issues.

Doug also said that a boundary survey may not be required, since there is no transfer of property proposed. Doug said the 6F line, the area protected for permanent outdoor recreation, required for the LWCF program, does not require a boundary survey and, in lieu of a survey, the Town could be conservative in setting the boundary to be sure the boundary is on Town land. He said "best practice" would be to have a survey but it is not a deal breaker. He also said that a Professional Engineer's (PE) stamp would only be required on the bridge since it is a structure, but that may be able to be done after the project is awarded. He said a PE stamp would not be required for the path itself and we could use Town's 4 Trails work. Jerry asked if the survey cost could be included as a cost in the Application and Doug said he would check if that was possible. It was also asked if the Town could apply for an RTP grant to get started and then apply for the LWCF. Doug and Mark did not recommend this because of the opportunity to leverage the local and RTP grant in the LWCF application. Doug said that the LWCF grant could be awarded and set aside pending the RTP award.

Question 3. ROW to the site -We believe the state currently has a ROW agreement with Richard Paulsen for access to the State property, but we have been unable to locate a copy of this agreement. We hope the State can provide a copy from their files.

Response: Mark said he is researching this

Next steps - Discussion following Doug and Mark's departure from the call- Dale said his office has had good dealings with Larry Johannesman, the landscape architect from Maine DOT and Tim agreed that there is no harm in hearing what they could do, although there was concern expressed that involving MDOT may complicate the process. Jerry feels that a critical issue is the concern that Richard Paulsen has with the increased foot traffic. Dale agreed to reach out to his son Richie.

The Committee members were concerned with proceeding just using tax maps for the 6F boundary. John pointed out that the northern line of the property was already surveyed as part of the subdivision and that all we really need a survey for will be the Paulsen side.

John suggested that the best course of action may be to delay the project for a year to allow more time to obtain donations and work with Richard Paulsen. He doesn't think we are ready for a public hearing. The Committee agreed, but postponed making a decision until their next meeting on November 19th.

Communications- Ken will try to prepare an update for the upcoming issue of the Town's newsletter but will finalize the material after our next meeting. Ken said that materials associated with the Ad-Hoc committee will be added to the Conservation Commission's page on the website and accessed through the index on the CC page.

It was agreed that Tim will let the engineering firms know that we will be making a decision on how to proceed at our next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:30.