

Approved Minutes for St. George Fort Point Ad Hoc Committee Meeting held on Thursday, November 19, 2020

Attendance: Members: Ken Oelberger, Tim Polky, Jerry Hall, John Falla, Dale Pierson, Tom Gorrill, Guests: Larry Johannesman-Landscape Architect, MaineDOT

Announcements: None

Modifications to Agenda: Jerry suggested we take up consultant selection after the discussion of the Alternatives

Approval of November 12th, 2020 Minutes: Jerry said that under the “next step” heading on the 3rd page, the wording “to the whole project” should be deleted in the next to last sentence. The minutes of November 12th were approved unanimously with this modification. (Jerry moved, Dale 2nd)

Old Business

Alternate ROW- Dale has made to calls to Richie Paulson but has not heard back. **He will continue to reach out to him on this issue.** Jerry suggested that some of their concerns are obvious, and we should be thinking about how to address them in developing the project.

Fund Raising- Ken reported that Steve Walker said that Maine Coast Heritage Trust will contribute \$10,000 to the project. After learning that the engineering budget was \$20,000 to \$25,000, Steve said he would see if the contribution could be increased to \$15,000. Dale asked if MCHT would still contribute if the project were delayed a year. Ken responded that he understood that MCHT was aware of the risk that the grants might not be successful, but not of a potential delay.

Ken reported that he had a conversation with Alvin Chase, president of the Georges River Land Trust (GRLT), who was excited about the project. Alvin said there may be some unused money in some project accounts that may be able to be transferred to the Fort Point project. He will check with Executive Director Meg Rasmussen, his board, and the donors and get back to Ken. Ken said GRLT was interested because the project is part of the Jones Brook trail system.

John reported that the Historic Society has received an additional pledge of \$1000 toward the project.

Maine DOT Design Assistance- During our Zoom meeting on November 12th, Doug Beck of the BPL suggested that Maine DOT’s Landscape Architect Larry Johannesman, may be able to help the Committee design the access and parking lot. Doug had suggested this would help reduce the Town’s up-front design costs if Larry was willing. Larry joined our zoom call at 9:15. Larry said he has significant design experience helping communities with similar projects such as areas along scenic byways and helping Towns and non-profits with grant applications. Larry said he could help us by completing a sketch of the parking area, advising on ADA issues for the parking lot, coordinating with Maine DOT staff and reviewing the grant applications. He said he will

not do the engineered drawing for the parking area. He also said he has experience with interpretive signage. Larry said his time could be credited toward the in-kind match for the grants. Larry wants to do a site visit and the Committee said **Tom will be the contact for coordinating his site visit and the timing of his services**. Larry said if the project needs interpretive signs, he has good contacts with graphic designers. Larry suggested another funding source for the Town could be the National Park Service (NPS) Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance. Julie Isbill is the contact. Larry will send the contact information to Tom, **who will follow up with Julie**. Larry asked if we have a map and if the trail is listed on the Trail Finder website. Ken explained that the trail is not listed. Larry emphasized the need to meet with the abutters, and then the public, early in the process. He said this process can help us make better decisions.

Larry left the conference at approximately 9:50 and a committee discussion of the role Larry could have in the project followed. Jerry commented that Larry ties in well with Maine DOT and the preliminary layout of 8 to 10 parking spaces. Jerry said it could help the grant process if we could get him to be a proponent.

Spectrum off-line- Tim and Dale lost their Zoom connection during the conversation with Larry and the meeting was interrupted briefly until they were able to rejoin by phone. Ken summarized the conversation with Larry to them.

Discussion of Alternative Approaches to Complete the Project- A discussion of alternatives ensued centered around the alternatives that Ken had distributed by email on November 18th.

John said we need to hold a conversation with abutters, and get promotions going. Ken discussed the dates under the “current plan modified” alternative; LWCF filing due the end of May and RTP is filed in September. John asked what the options would be if we can’t meet these dates. Ken said it is an annual application process and the next application deadlines would be a year later. Jerry said we will not be ready for a public hearing on December 14th. Jerry said he is in favor of the “current plan modified” because it allows us to do abutter outreach and fund raising before asking for the Town to approve the concept. Tim commented he supports modified plan. He said the Maintenance agreement could be approved as part of the annual town meeting in May. The Town has a standard article for accepting grants which is also acted upon at the Town meeting. John said he also favors the “current plan modified” alternative since January is a bad time for a special town meeting and delaying until May will allow time to develop public support as well as the design for the town meeting. Tom suggested doing wetlands now. Tim agreed that getting the wetland done now is a very good possibility. Tom pointed out that the weakness cited by Doug Beck at our last meeting, of relying on the RTP grant to match the LWCF application, does not go away with the “current plan modified” alternative. Dale feels the State should be motivated to approve the funding for UA access to Fort Point and that UA should be emphasized in the application. Jerry said there are several possible outcomes in the process; one application could be approved and not the other, or neither. Ken said Steve Walker suggested asking for letters of support from our legislative representatives. The

committee unanimously decided to pursue the “current plan modified” alternative and to utilize the “Fall Back Plan” if the grant applications for the “current plan modified” are not successful.

DOT Parking- Tim said that Brian Reeves, Maine DOT District Engineer, has responded that they think that work in the DOT right of way may be able to be addressed with a limited license agreement similar with what they do with picnic areas adjacent to roadways. Tim has requested a sample agreement.

Next Steps- Tom recommended a meeting with abutters as a first step. Jerry concurred and said we need to have a small setting. He suggested early December. The committee selected December 12th for an onsite meeting with the abutters. **Ken will work with the Town office staff on the list of abutters and sending out the notices.** That would enable an early January meeting with a wider audience. The draft Newsletter text that Ken distributed prior to the meeting will need to be revised. John suggested the second paragraph be revised to say “the Committee plans to hold public information sessions in the coming months to receive input”. He also suggested inserting an appeal for pledges in the last paragraph. **Ken will update the PERT chart.**

Survey & Design Consultant Selection - The consensus of the Committee at the November 12th meeting was that the Gartley and Dorsky proposal was the most complete and should be accepted if we proceed with the project. Dale said we should be up front with the potential reductions in scope of work and ask input on how it affects their proposal. Ken said he would like them to start work on wetland delineation soon and begin the rest of the work on February 1. He said there are adequate funds in the Conservation Commission’s budget to cover the wetland delineation effort. Ken also noted that the wetland delineation would need to be done for any trail improvement effort we pursue. **Jerry agreed to arrange for this to be added to the Selectman’s meeting on November 30th for approval.** The survey requirements were discussed. Jerry emphasized the need for a survey of the southern boundary as soon as possible. **It was agreed that Tim will let Consultants know of their selections and then Tim and Tom will coordinate with Gartley and Dorsky on the revised scope and timeframe.**

State maintenance agreement- Near the end of the meeting Tom received and email of a draft maintenance agreement which he will distribute to the Committee.

Next Ad-Hoc Committee Meeting- December 3rd.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:40 AM