



53 RIVER STREET MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 31, 2023
7:00 PM
Virtual Meeting

Present: David Martin, Peter Hocknell, Bill Alesbury, Stephanie Krantz, Ilana Liebert, Lou York, Andy Magee (project manager).

Absent: Bill Klauer, Don Boyle.

1. Opening

David Martin called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM via a virtual meeting with no committee members in physical attendance and broadcasted via Zoom.us virtual meeting platform.

2. Regular Business

- A. A quorum is present.
- B. Notes from the chair – none.
- C. Resident concerns – none.
- D. Status of project from Andy Magee: Transitions that are to occur include a construction manager joining the project (PMA is the firm). Andy's role will begin to diminish during this time as construction and design specialists join the team, bringing the project to the next steps. Working with SLR and Dennis Dale design, they will prepare bid packages set to advertise in ~2 weeks, then they will carry through the bidding phase into construction. All permits are in hand except for the Chapter 91 license (in final review) and the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). The latter has been a struggle; the permitting agent has been unresponsive. A memorandum of agreement (MoA) between the Acton Historic Commission, the Massachusetts Historic Commission, and the ACOE must be in. The AHC approved a draft MoA with some edits which was provided to MHC and ACOE. When the MHC commented on the project they noted they would defer to the AHC recommendation. The ACOE now has the draft MoA, water quality certificate, and the town's permit application. The reason for their delay is unknown; they are not responding to calls nor emails. The Town Manager is exploring what can be done to expedite this situation, including speaking with US Representative Trahan. The Historic District Commission permit has been received allowing for the salt storage shed and



machine shop to be removed. Town DPW came to the site and removed some of the concrete blocks for reuse in town. The remaining material is still on site; Dennis Dale wants to repurpose where possible. The bid for removal of machine shop to base level should go out in the next month or so. It was noted that 1 of the 2 concrete pads over the tail race section collapsed into the tailrace in December; it is hoped this can be cleared soon. We now do have detailed plans for the park (final construction plans), including to the level of individual cost sheets now. Stephanie asked whether the town will mow the park areas designated as lawn. Andy was not sure. Ilana asked about the sections designated as "NM" or "no mow". Concern about poison ivy control. David Martin to follow up. Ilana asked whether Dennis Dale will provide a maintenance plan. Ilana asked about "phasing" regarding the design implementation. The answer is that will be the construction manager's responsibility. Andy pointed out the key item is getting dam removed, then the site grading, restoration of the stream, then building the park itself. The construction bids are for "everything"; i.e. all aspects of the dam removal and park construction. Bill Alesbury asked whether any work can be accomplished without ACOE approval. The answer is that work taking place out of the water can be performed (salt shed, machine shop, etc.). It was noted that the name "Shoddy Mill Park" is not official. The park design plans need to be approved by the Select Board. Possible park names will be discussed at a future committee meeting.

E. "Friends of" example. Bettina Abe pointed out the town does mow town parks and that the town DPW is aware that a park is coming at this site. When the park finally opens, it may make sense to have a "Friends of" table staffed by members of this committee with brochures in hand, etc. Summary of how "Friends of" works from Bettina:

- a. The Friends of the Acton Arboretum, Inc. is a 501(c)3 Massachusetts non profit organization incorporated in the early 1990's ("FAA").
- b. Website here <https://actonarboretum.org/> It's really helpful to have a website, as you can imagine! Ours is managed by a volunteer using Wordpress.
- c. I've served on the Board of Directors since 2005. We are an all-volunteer organization and 100% of donations go to benefit the Arboretum.
- d. Funds have been spent on tree pruning, kiosks, arbors, bridges, boardwalks, trail paving/construction/improvement, installing a well/irrigation system, purchasing tools and machinery, purchasing plants of all types from large trees to little bulbs, signage, capital projects like parking lot installation, special compost/mulch, professional services like certified arborists, benches, picnic tables, tool sheds, etc.
- e. The FAA manages donations from the community.
- f. The FAA's actions and contributions on behalf of the Arboretum are supervised by the Acton Conservation Staff and Acton Conservation Commission. The Select Board also accepts donations, which are enumerated in an annual letter to the Select Board.



- g. The FAA does not have the authority to create policy for the Arboretum, which as a conservation land, comes under the jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission.
- h. The Shoddy Mill Park is a municipal property, not designated as conservation land. All land disturbance activities on the property will be governed by the MA Wetlands Protection Act and the Acton Conservation Commission as well as the Historic District Commission.

F. Approval of the minutes from the 15 NOV 2022 committee meeting: Motion to accept made by Bill Alesbury and seconded by Stephanie Krantz. Voting took place via role call:

Peter Hocknell – Aye
David Martin – Aye
Ilana Liebert – Aye
Bill Alesbury – Aye
Stephanie Krantz – Aye
Lou York – Aye

G. This committee's next meeting is tentatively scheduled to take place virtually on 21 March 2023.

H. Motion to adjourn was made at 7:57 Lou York and seconded by Ilana Liebert. Voting took place via role call:

Peter Hocknell – Aye
Bill Alesbury – Aye
David Martin – Aye
Ilana Liebert – Aye
Stephanie Krantz – Aye
Lou York – Aye

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting:

- Meeting Agenda for 31 JAN 2023
- Draft minutes from the 15 NOV 2022 committee meeting
- Updated draft of Dennis Dale park design: <http://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/Get/Document-85012/01-26-23%20LA%20CD%20REV.%20PLANS%20LP.01%20TO%20LP.09%20%20DD%20INC..pdf>