

Kelley's Corner Steering Committee

Meeting Minutes – 30 April 2018

These are the meeting minutes from the Kelley's Corner Steering Committee of the Town of Acton, Massachusetts. The meeting took place on 30 April 2018 in Room 9 at the Acton Town Hall.

Present: Andy Brockway, Bob Van Meter, Christi Andersen, Derrick Chin, Erin Bettez, Jon Benson, Larry Kenah, Peter Darlow

Not Present:

Board of Selectmen: Peter Berry

Town of Acton:

Jon Benson was recently elected to the Board of Selectmen. He will continue as a de facto at-large member of the committee. We congratulate Jon on his election and new role.

Christi Andersen is the new member of the committee representing the Finance Committee.

Two members of the public also attended the meeting.

- Danny Factor represented the concerns of Green Acton. Danny is also a member of the Acton Commission on Disabilities and he also brought that perspective to the proposed changes to Kelley's Corner.
- Chris Starr is the owner of the corner property where Bueno y Sano is located.

Meeting Summary

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:00 am by Andy Brockway.

This was the first committee meeting after the town meeting where Article 9 failed to reach the required two-thirds majority by six votes.

General Discussion

The discussion that followed was somewhat structured but sometimes moved from one topic to another. These notes organize the discussion points by topic and are not in strict chronological order.

- There is still no date for the 25% review.
- We briefly reviewed the division of responsibility at the state level.
 - MPO oversees TIP funding.
 - MassDOT oversees the design.
- As we have noted at earlier meetings and at town meeting, the 25% plan has already been submitted to MassDOT.
 - People can send comments directly to MassDOT.

- As the public record shows, several people and groups from Acton have already commented on the plan.

Town Meeting Results

The general consensus of the committee focused on three “big things”.

- Bueno y Sano and a significant loss of parking spaces
- Trees, especially along Mass Ave in front of the old high school
- A sense that some members of town meeting felt that the plan was too “car centric”

There were questions about the impact of the town meeting vote on TIP funding.

Chris Starr and Bueno y Sano

Chris Starr's primary interest is the impact of the proposed plan on the corner property. Specifically, one drawing shows only five parking places for the restaurant. While his comments addressed this issue, he raised several other points as well. Please note that these are Chris's comments.

- Despite its name, the approval of the 25% plan by MassDOT is a significant milestone for the project, He (and others) asked what changes could still be made to the design after the 25% plan is approved. They suggested that the 25% plan is cast in stone, very difficult to change.
- Following approval, the town will lose control of the project to the state. In particular, the state will take over the parts of the plan related to Mass Ave (Route 111).
- A two-year construction project will have a big impact on all businesses in Kelley's Corner.
- Chris suggested that there were several small changes, so-called low hanging fruit, that could “be done tomorrow” in lieu of executing the complete plan.
 - Improved traffic light timing
 - Less invasive design for bike lanes
- Chris is assembling a coalition of local businesses. He acknowledged that he and Green Acton shared some of their concerns.

Later in the meeting, Andy Brockway asked about several creative approaches to increasing the parking that is available to Bueno y Sano.

- Could the town work with Bank of America to turn their current ATM location into additional parking?
- Chris pointed out that there is a guardrail that separates his property from the bowladrome. If this barrier were removed, that might allow additional flexibility.

Danny Factor and Green Acton

Danny Factor said that Green Acton was working on a formal response to the Kelley's Corner plan.

- Danny requested that future meetings take place in the evening.
 - The public forum scheduled for 15 May 2018 will take place at 7:00 pm.
- In addition to trees (next section), Danny also asked about the time required to cross the street, especially due to the addition of two left hand turn lanes from Mass Ave eastbound to Route 27 northbound.

Trees

- Danny asked about whether we could host a meeting where each tree destined for removal is discussed.
- Andy asked whether all trees were a concern or only the large trees on Mass Ave west of Route 27. Andy pointed out that the tree situation elsewhere in Kelley's Corner is pretty awful and that new trees will be planted along all of these roadways in the proposed plan.
- Peter Berry asked that Green Acton consider the overall plan. In particular, he asked about the environmental impact of cars idling at the intersection for several light cycles as they wait to drive through the intersection.

Zoning off the Table

As a result of the town meeting vote, Adam Winstanley will not be moving forward with any development plans for the Kmart parcel in the near future. As a result of this decision, there will be no article at Fall Town Meeting related to zoning changes in Kelley's Corner.

In the discussion that followed, someone asked about housing for seniors. Everyone was reminded that Stop & Shop is the owner of the parcel.

Next Meetings

The Board of Selectmen will discuss next steps for Kelley's Corner at its **7 May 2018** meeting. In particular, the BoS will decide whether to move forward with the MassDOT review of the 25% plan.

The KCSC will host a public forum on Tuesday, **15 May 2018**, to discuss the details of the 25% plan that was submitted to MassDOT. Engineers from GPI will also be at that meeting.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

There were no meeting minutes approved at this meeting.

In Closing

This meeting adjourned at 8:18 am.

These minutes were recorded by Lawrence J Kenah.