



53 RIVER STREET MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 20, 2021

7:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

Present: David Martin, Stephanie Krantz, Peter Hocknell, Lou York, Bill Klauer, Ilana Liebert, Bill Alesbury, Don Boyle, Matthew ‘Selby’ (Staff), Doug Herrick (AHC).

Absent: None.

1. Opening

David Martin called the meeting to order at 7:02 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. Citizens’ Concerns – none.

C. Approval of the minutes from the 02 March 2021 committee meeting: Motion to accept as corrected made by Lou York and seconded by Stephanie Krantz. Voting took place via role call:

Peter Hocknell – Aye

David Martin – Aye

Stephanie Krantz – Aye

Ilana Liebert – Aye

Lou York – Aye

Bill Klauer – Aye

Bill Alesbury – Aye

Don Boyle – *had not joined the meeting at the time the vote was taken.*

D. Archeological Investigation Update: Gray & Pape were onsite Tuesday-Thursday last week. Approximately 4 test holes were dug. The town will be providing backhoes to remove asphalt next week when the investigation is scheduled to continue Tuesday-Thursday. For now, due to tree growth and other obstacles, Gray & Pape must choose areas to excavate and study based on accessibility. Doug Herrick took some photos of the pits and described them to the committee. The soil present was almost “spongy” in



its consistency due to wool and clothing deposits. Buttons were discovered and articles of machinery and building foundations were unearthed.

- E. Letter to the site neighbors: A letter containing site updates will be drafted. Selby informed the committee that graffiti at the cinderblock building has been discovered, along with evidence of fires being lit. The building has since been resecured. Acton Police were on scene last Tuesday to investigate. Some personal items were recovered at the site. The stockade fence will be removed this spring. A temporary construction fence will eventually be erected during construction. Bill Alesbury asked what it would cost to remove the cinderblock building now. Selby estimates \$150K due to difficulty accessing the site and the resource areas that are present. The site has been posted; the letter to neighbors should include a reminder the property is off-limits to unauthorized personnel.
- F. Regarding the \$100K Dam & Seawall Grant application for design and permitting; Selby anticipates hearing back by this coming Friday. For the rest of the construction grant funds, Selby estimates hearing by mid-May.
- G. Lou York's presentation "Shoddy – From Noun to Adjective": Shoddy results from recycling old used clothes, rags, fabrics. Believed to have originated in the Bately / Dewsbury area of England. Benjamin Law credited with inventing the process, which consists of rag picking > bundling/shipping > sorting > feeding the rag picker > mixing/carding/looming to produce the shoddy cloth. Wool was desired but linen and cotton also were accepted. Short fibers derive from the rag machine; long fibers from virgin wool. Long fibers are preferred for durability. It is thought that the 53 River Street mill produced both virgin and shoddy materials, and that it was an "extract mill" at one point. After the fire of February 1951, some of the site materials are still there.
- H. This committee's next meeting will take place virtually on 18 May 2021 at 7 pm.
- I. Motion to adjourn was made at 7:54 by Bill Alesbury and seconded by Lou York.
Voting took place via role call:
Peter Hocknell – Aye
Stephanie Krantz – Aye
Ilana Liebert – Aye
Lou York – Aye
Bill Klauer – Aye
Don Boyle – Aye
Bill Alesbury – Aye
David Martin – Aye

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting:

- Meeting Agenda for April 20, 2021
- Draft minutes from the March 2, 2021 committee meeting
- Lou York's PowerPoint presentation "Shoddy – From Noun to Adjective"