

Kelley's Corner Steering Committee

Meeting Minutes – 9 January 2018

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

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

Not Present:

Board of Selectmen: Peter Berry

Town of Acton: Kristen Guichard

Meeting Summary

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 am by Andy Brockway. The purpose of this meeting was twofold: to talk about next steps with Adam Winstanley and zoning changes and to address approaches to articles for Spring Town Meeting.

We moved back and forth in our discussion on issues for the spring and issues for the fall. These minutes do not reflect the actual order of discussion but rather group issues by topic.

Spring Town Meeting and Money Requests

There are two articles scheduled for Spring Town Meeting.

- One article deals with additional funds for engineering services to complete the engineering plans. The total amount is approximately \$350k. This amount is broken into two pieces.
 - An amount of approximately \$140k covers additional work already completed or not yet completed but planned to cover work not known when the engineering project was started.
 - A second amount of \$200k is a contingency to cover the types of expense that often surface in projects like this to bring the plans to their 75% and 100% milestones.
- A second article provides approximately \$300k for appraisal services for all of the so-called takings needed to widen the roadways and otherwise (for example, Community Lane) so that actual construction can take place. Note that these funds are only for appraisal services. The actual purchase of land will be dealt with separately at later dates.

Both of these expenditures will be bonded. This means that each article will require a 2/3 vote at Spring Town Meeting.

Communication

The primary opportunity for the committee to present additional information about the infrastructure improvement project will be the public forum scheduled for 21 March in Room 204 at Town Hall. Kristen volunteered to create a first draft set of slides for this meeting. These slides would include the overall concept and principles for the infrastructure improvement project as well as the changes that triggered the additional costs.

The conversation turned to Facebook and, in particular, groups that focus on issues associated with the town and the schools.

- One group consists of parents with children in the schools.
- A second group includes members of the Asian community.

We realized that even the youngest committee members are not experts with Facebook and other social media channels like Instagram. Kristen pointed out that she and Robert can help on the social media front.

During this conversation, we wrestled about whether we should simply pay attention to the issues being discussed or weigh in with comments, answers to questions, and responses to opposing points of view. We did not reach a conclusion during the meeting.

We also talked about paying attention to Acton Forum, one of the players at town meeting in 2016 when zoning changes for Kelley's Corner were first proposed.

We did agree that we should certainly pay attention to all of these sources of information so that we can anticipate and address issues that might arise this spring at the public forum and during town meeting.

Fall Town Meeting and Zoning Changes

- Andy, Kristen, Roland, and Robert met with Adam Winstanley and Katie Enright the previous week.
- Adam is OK with waiting until a town meeting in the fall to present the proposed zoning changes for Kelley's Corner.
- Stop & Shop is also "OK with this year".
- The committee agreed that we should focus on a meeting in the fall. In particular, the public hearing associated with the 25% plan for infrastructure improvements would have taken place, providing a more favorable context for the zoning changes.

We talked briefly about whether we should still ask Adam to present to the Board of Selectmen. The general consensus was we should continue with such a meeting. In particular, Peter Berry wanted to get a sense of the BoS thinking about Adam's plans.

Peter Berry suggested the 5 February BoS meeting so that the Kelley's Corner conversation did not get lost behind other issues scheduled for earlier BoS meetings.

Andy asked that we think one more time about the details of the proposed zoning changes.

During the discussion about zoning, a couple of other issues surfaced.

- Bob Van Meter wondered about encouraging so-called co-working sites to locate to Acton. These sites allow very small businesses to rent office space and infrastructure (Internet access, printing, etc) for short periods of time without requiring longer term leases or capital purchases.
- Peter Darlow brought up the idea of “flipping the parking lot”. Would it be possible for the committee to work with Verizon and Stop & Shop to switch the current Verizon parking lot located on the corner with parking somewhere else? Such a switch would provide additional property along the street that would allow more creative and more attractive designs for the Kmart parcel. Such a switch would also have no effect on Verizon infrastructure (cables, fiber, etc).

Other Details

Kristen reminded everyone that we need to keep the issue of Article 97 and Great Hill Conservation Land on our radar screen. This issue was described in the KCSC Minutes from 12 May 2017 and repeated in the KCSC Minutes 15 August 2017. Do we need to bring this issue to town meeting?

Next Meetings

Some ambiguity around dates for future meetings was cleared up after the meeting. These minutes contain final dates for meetings, not date ranges.

- 5 February - Adam and his colleagues (Katie Enright, Howard Stein-Hudson, and Barbara Green, Winstanley Enterprises) will make a short presentation to the Board of Selectmen.
 - After the meeting, Peter Berry confirmed the date with Janet Adachi, chair of the Board of Selectmen (BoS).
 - After the meeting, Kristen confirmed the BoS presentation with Adam and they selected a date the following week for Adam and his colleagues to meet with KCSC.
- 13 February - Adam will meet with KCSC at 7:00 am.
- Morning of 22 February - KCSC will meet by itself at 7:00 am to set public outreach timeline for the committee, decide on public outreach methods etc, and delegate tasks.
- Evening of 21 March - Public forum in Room 204 to discuss upcoming articles for Spring Town Meeting and to provide update on Kelley's Corner infrastructure project.
- 2 April - First night of Spring Town Meeting

In Closing

This meeting adjourned at 8:12 am.

These minutes were recorded by Lawrence J Kenah.