



Task Force (TF) Meeting, August 15, 2018 - Meeting Notes **Held at Park and Rec Office, Pump House**

Member Attendees: Denise Beall, John Burke, Leah Chester-Davis, Janet Makee, Ellyn Baeszler, Alice Sudduth, Gary Fagan, Heidi Dietrich, Dave Cable (note taker)

Staff and Consultant Attendees: Gary Fankhauser, Kathryn Spatz, Leslie Willis

Denise reviewed the August 7 presentation to the Town Board. The purpose of the presentation was three fold: 1. Update the Board on the Task Force, including our organizational structure, goals, and work and progress; 2. Request clarification and modification of the Task Force's charge / resolution; and 3. Request funding for the Task Force activities. Denise reported that the presentation was well received and it accomplished the goals.

The budget and resolution clarifications presented to the Board will be considered at the Board's next meeting as part of the consent agenda.

Leah provided an overview of the results from Survey #1, providing specific data and charts of the results. Survey #1 was available to the public for about 2 weeks, and 348 web based responses were received, along with 1 paper response. The response rate was about 3%, considered good and statistically significant.

Highlights of the survey results include:

- 55% of respondents had visited the site
- Over 80% of respondents highlighted natural spaces as most desirable, followed by Reflective spaces and Gathering spaces.
- On-line input is preferred for future surveys
- Most learned of the survey from town communications

All the raw survey results are available on Center Stack. The results of Survey #1 informed the approach and content of Survey #2.

Leah discussed Survey #2 which capitalizes on the natural space options and the use of photos to help users identify preferred options. Survey #2 will launch publically this Friday (Aug 17) and will be available for 2 weeks. TF members were encouraged to share the link.

TF members were asked to sign up for upcoming public outreach events, and a sign-up sheet was distributed. There was some discussed about enlisting non-TF members to help with event representation, with an emphasis on the importance of TF members attending the three planned public meetings.

Dave provided a summary of his recent meeting and site visit with Gene Vaughan, a former Duke Energy biologist who is knowledgeable of dams, ponds and related natural areas. Key points of the meeting with Gene are as follows:

- The dam and pond are probably resources worth saving and enhancing

- Potential amenities for the pond, should it be improved, include: wood duck boxes, turtle basking rafts, pier, osprey nests, fishing areas
- Ponds attract wildlife and people
- Dam issues:
 - Infrastructure is impressive – installed in 2012+/- - dam, spillway, drain line
 - Brush along bank needs to be removed soon / immediately
 - Is \$60,000 a permanent fix?
 - Breach must be repaired
- The pond water is stagnant, lacks oxygen, and is too shallow (hot)
- A track hoe can be used to clean out and deepen the pond which will enhance it greatly and may require a permit from DENR
- Pond setting is special

The recommended steps forward and fundamental issues to be addressed early include:

1. Assess Repair Proposal: Is the \$60,000 repair cost and related plan adequate to permanently repair the dam? Third party engineer to assess? Have to get this right.
2. Engage a hydrologist: Expert to determine the water budget for the pond basin and whether the pond can function well 365.
 - How often is the pond drained and can we calculate water exiting? I checked with Jesse on this and we will be alerted when it is drained next
 - Is there a spring feed and does it run year round?
 - Or is the feed solely storm event driven?
 - What is the pattern of flow during storm events?
 - Can the flow be enhanced somehow?
 - Is the pond an important storm water shock absorber?

The TF agreed to move forward with a hydrology study of the pond basin. Gary endorsed this and agreed to be on point for the RFP process. Dave agreed to connect Gary with Gene to help frame the RFP.

The TF discussed the possible need for environmental assessment(s) of the land. There was discussion of rumored historic contamination of both the land and the pond. Mike Minette was consulted about a Phase I and his initial opinion was that a Phase I was probably not warranted because the town already owns the land (most Phase I's are done in advance of a property transfer to ID liabilities). John will follow up with Mike. The issue of possible contamination of the land and the need for study remains unresolved and open for further discussion.

Kathryn asked the group to make best efforts to clarify the budget needs prior to Aug 23 so that any modification in the budget request be considered at the next Town Board meeting. Gary indicated he would seek to receive estimates as quickly as possible on needed survey and hydrology work.

Dave provided a brief update on the Real Estate Group activities. Previously, the Planning Staff had suggested that Park use of the land may require special review and approval. That issue has been resolved thanks to Kathryn's efforts - park use is totally consistent with town zoning, and land use classifications will not be an impediment to park use. The legal documents on the properties provided by Cindy have been reviewed and are unremarkable. The Group is working on assessment of surrounding lands, and is slightly behind schedule on this task.

Alice provide an overview of the Research Group's progress. Alice is compiling a master presentation with all the information gathered and she encouraged TF members to provide photos and key information from other parks. She also discussed benefits of non-profit management of park spaces, such as conservancy partnerships. Many parks are managed and maintained via conservancy partnerships with endowments, some with mechanisms to generate revenue from events and other sources. The Research Group has made excellent progress in compiling ideas and examples of park alternatives for consideration.

The TF discussed our preparations for the first Park at Beaty public meeting (September 17). The group discussed the overall structure of that meeting which may include:

- Overview of the TF and its charge
- Overview of the property
- Survey results and TF findings to date
- Break out groups to seek input from the public

Next meeting of the TF is scheduled for September 5, 2018, at 6:30 pm, at Town Hall.

The meeting adjourned at about 8:15 pm.