

Burlington Johnnycake Mountain Park Advisory Commission

Minutes

May 10, 2021

• **Call to order:**

Meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm.

Commissioners present: Tricia Twomey, Joan Mack, Robert Dunn, Elizabeth Delano, Christie Dockman, Karen Geitz and Craig Battisto. Mark Moriarty entered the meeting at 7:30.

• **Minutes of April 26, 2021 Meeting (:43):**

Christies made a motion to accept the minutes, Tricia seconded it and all voted in favor.

• **Talk about your favorite place as a kid that wasn't your house (1:24)**

Committee Members (CM) all shared information about their favorite moments during the Pandemic. The goal with this activity is for the CM to get to know each other better.

• **Mission Statement (8:02):**

Robert read the values.

Mission Statement is to create a feasible and visionary short and long term master plan for the purchased property that provides the multi-generational community of Burlington with opportunities for active and passive recreation. Our recommendations will be based upon considerations and input from our entire community, will support documented community needs, will strive to retain the unique, farm-like character and natural landscape of the property and will be aware of the potential impact to the surrounding neighborhoods.

We endorse the following values:

- Open-mindedness
- Team unity
- Respect for one another
- Commitment to a positive outcome

• **Public Outreach Efforts (8:08):**

Commission Email:

The Commission didn't receive any.

New Resident Survey (9:40):

All Commission members have accessed the Google Doc. CM's rankings for programming are due on May 14th. CM may add any categories they want. The goal is to input ideas before the May 17th meeting to discuss the final rankings for park programming at that meeting. The ranking criteria helps CM to acknowledge activities from the survey and identify what is practical

from the financial standpoint. It's important that all CM use the same criteria which gives the process a more defendable rationale and it helps to remove personal bias.

From the 2017 survey to the 2021 survey there are some significant differences. With the top priorities, there wasn't a huge change. The written comments the public provided were more detailed and CM were not surprised by the comments people made. CM concentrated mostly on the responses from Burlington residents. Robert discussed the trails and how he doesn't see a lot of people on them. Karen mentioned that the Town needs signage to draw people into the park. The trails need to be universally accessible (ADA) to all: elderly, handicapped and parents with strollers.

Robert sent CM a comparison of the two surveys. One different item was the outdoor pavilion that was not listed in 2017. Quite a few people mentioned the music venue because Burlington loves its Music Fest. Many people said to have a MF a couple of times a year, keeping in mind the park's neighbors. Most respondents want the farm to stay preserved. CM also discussed the idea of community gardens. How much acreage do they need? Can they be on a slope? Does the Town have enough community interest to have the gardens work? Community gardens were mentioned in both surveys at 24%. Liz added that Burlington doesn't have a lot of apartments and condos. Most people have homes with some land where they can plant a garden in their side yard. She's surprised at the request. People like the community aspect to these kinds of gardens. If CM recommend community gardens, the Garden Club will need to be involved for the gardens to be successful. The Town needs to place parking near these gardens so the gardeners will be able to transport their water and equipment easily. Also, if the gardens are not successful, there is not much lost. CM will have to reach out to other towns to see how they do their gardens. (Mark came in at 7:30.)

Seventy-three percent of the survey respondents said that they would be willing to raise taxes to support the park, but in the comments many expressed strong disapproval about paying additional taxes. Their comments didn't represent the majority. It's important that CM pay attention to the data numbers and not the comments. The Town will use the surplus funds for the initial phase and it won't require extra taxes to support it. It's similar to an annual expenditure expense.

- **Clarification on Items Brought to the Commission (36:24)**

None were brought up.

- **Consultant RFQ & Procurement (36:25)**

Consultant Shortlist

CM had to look at five firms and they chose the top three. CM will hold interviews with these three firms during an executive session on Monday, May 24th. This meeting will not be public. CM will hold a special session or additional meeting on Monday, May 17th to devote to park programming. Tricia explained how the first design commission held interviews. They interviewed all seven firms that handed in an RFP and had a second round of interviews with the

three finalists. CM need to figure out how to run the interview process and have ample time to talk between firm interviews.

Interview Questions – Christie & Joan and Interviews on May 24th.

Christie and Joan will come up with the questions for the interviews. Karen made revisions to the questions from an earlier draft. Mark made a great point that CM had already received some of the info for the interview questions in the firms' applications. CM can provide starter points for the interviews. The firms should also be allowed to ask CM questions. One or two CM can ask the interview questions and use ten minutes after the interview for additional follow up questions. CM will have the RFP and just interviewing three firms allows each firm more time. Forty-five minutes seems reasonable. The principal person and project manager will be there. Project manager is the primary designer. It's their job to sell their firm to CM. CM may want to talk about a firm's presentation before they go on to the next interview.

The CM prefer to do the firm interviews in person. Tricia said that the Town is not allowed to do public meetings yet. CM want to talk to Ted about it. It also would be easier to start the interview meeting at 6:00 pm instead of 7:00 pm. Will the consultants have an issue with an in-person meeting?

Project Scope for consultants to base their fee on.

Mark, Craig, and Tricia will work on this.

- **Upcoming Meetings (1:01:45)**

Urban Mining:

This company will evaluate the structures and see what materials can be reused in the park. He does deconstruction instead of destruction. It will probably cost a \$1,000 to hire this company to consult. Material reuse will add to the narrative of preserving the farm. Also, it can save the Town money for park programming development. He can make benches and signs out of preserved materials. Does the Commission know what will be staying at the Farm? The tenant has until May 23rd to vacate and remove materials.

DEEP Rec Trails Grants for This Year:

They are available this year. Mark described the hiking trails and signs project for the Farm to the DEEP person. Mark will get more information after a CT Greenways Alliance meeting.

Process for Park Programming Decisions:

By May 14th, all CM should complete their rankings and comments on the Google Doc. CM will go over the programming at the May 17th meeting. If CM put in a comment, they should include their initials.

Upcoming Dates for Meetings in June:

CM will work on the future meeting dates at the next meeting on May 17th. As the CM set their meeting dates, they have to keep in mind when consultants will need to meet and when the BOS meet.

- **Public Comments (1:17:53):**

No public comments.

- **Meeting adjourned at 8:22:**

Robert made the motion, Christie seconded it and all voted in favor.