

Burlington Johnnycake Mountain Park Advisory Commission

Minutes

Special Agenda Meeting

May 17, 2021

- **Call to order:**

Meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm.

Commissioners present: Tricia Twomey, Joan Mack, Robert Dunn, Elizabeth Delano, Christie Dockman, Karen Geitz, Mark Moriarty and Craig Battisto.

- **Minutes of May 10, 2021 Meeting (:45):**

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

- **Talk about your very first job and your first taxable income job. (1:06)**

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 (12:45):**

Robert read the Mission Statement.

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 (13:57):**

No emails to the Commission.

New Resident Survey (14:16):

Tricia will post the survey data and comments on the website on Tuesday. Commission members decided to delete comments #1 and #192 because they were not appropriate. CM will include an asterisk in those comments to explain why they were deleted. Later CM will have to decide to get the park programming details out to the public as well.

- **Park Programming (17:10)**

(Please refer to the Zoom recording to see the park programming ranking results table.)
CM used the old and new Town Survey Results about JMP (data and comments), info from Parks and Rec, the Conservation Commission's presentation, citizens' comments and some sports groups' info and data and came up with their rankings for the different park activities. Rankings were based upon the following criteria:

| RANK | JUSTIFICATION |
|------|--|
| 1 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has Documented Need and/or has Strong Resident Interest based on 2021 Survey and/or basic Park Amenity 2. Consistent with the JMPAC's Mission Statement 3. Meets the Town's intended land use for the property 4. Meets the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) 5. Cost Feasible (either based on Initial Phase Construction Cost of \$1.15M or involves Town Forces/Resident Volunteers) |
| 2 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has Documented Need and/or has Strong Resident Interest based on 2021 Survey 2. Consistent with the JMPAC's Mission Statement 3. Meets the Town's intended land use for the property 4. Meets the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) |
| 3 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resident Interest based on 2021 Survey |
| 4 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not recommended for the JMP Masterplan |

Mark colored the activities with rankings of one and two green, mostly threes and fours were red and some activities were yellow based upon their scores. The goal was to create a final ranking for each activity based upon all CMs' rankings and discussion. This process will allow the CM to devise a clear list of park programming activities. CM can also ask the consultant to look at certain items to see if they are feasible in the Master Plan.

Lacrosse (21:15):

The majority of survey respondents didn't support a LAX field/multiuse field. LAX has a documented need from the sports experts that spoke to the Commission and from the data that Parks and Rec presented. CM discussed a LAX field versus a LAX practice field. A LAX field is designed as a field. It has a base, under drainage and top soil. It has to drain well and be a certain size to be a regulation field. It's more involved. A LAX practice field is not a regulation field and doesn't cost a lot. It would be nice to have two fields. In that way, the LAX team can

use the practice field and wear it out and then play their games on the regulation field. Ultimate Frisbee teams can play on the practice field. A lacrosse field is wider than a soccer field. Other items such as hiking, fitness trails and a dog park were ranked higher than lacrosse. CM need to balance the park programming. They should consider other higher priority areas, but should the lacrosse field go somewhere else besides JMP? Having both fields may change the character of the park. It was suggested to leave off the label "lacrosse" and just call the field "multiuse." The formal lacrosse field should go in and if the practice field can go in without a ton of retaining wall. The consultant needs to see if it will fit in a financially viable way also. Both fields warrant study by the consultant.

Softball (33:19)

Tricia from Parks and Rec said there is a need in town. She recognized that the topography at JMP may not be conducive to a field there. Also, the program is not as big at this time. We can look at other facilities in town for it.

Baseball (34:07)

A field in general is a priority to many people. Soccer, football and LAX can all be on the same field. LAX has nothing. They need their own field. A field can have potential multiuse, but you have to be careful as to which sports you put on the field. For example, you can put LAX, soccer, and field hockey together. It makes sense. Football changes the field. The Town needs to be very clear about that the field will be used for. CM are using all types of data: the old survey, the new survey, input from the community and different organizations. Based upon all that data, a need for a lacrosse field was demonstrated.

Most of the town wants passive recreation at the park. The Town doesn't have a baseball field. It needs to be considered somewhere. Baseball is a community need, but the park is not the place for it. Other activities had a higher response than LAX on the survey. Some of the unmet needs are swimming (33%), outdoor concert venue (41%), dog park (35%), playground (33%), community garden (24%), outdoor pavilion (46%) and then LAX is at 20%. LAX is the lower quadrant of survey results, but there is a documented need. That's the difference. While Lacrosse only has 20% of the survey results, that 20% represented 100% of LAX program that responded and supported it in the survey. With swimming the Town has Foote Rd. pond. There is nothing for LAX. CM propose the LAX practice field as an active recreational activities. Town is not asking consultant to plan for a softball and baseball fields at JMP. Soccer practice can be in the multiuse field.

Football:

No

Volleyball Courts:

No, not right now and maybe they can be added later.

Basketball:

No. Half-court basketball is very popular. Parks and Rec recommends that they improve the courts they have. The BB courts don't fit in with the aesthetic vision and there is no data.

Tennis:

No

In conclusion, the CM will ask the consultant to look into including a LAX/multiuse field at the park.

Passive activities (48:10)

Hiking/Walking Trails: Yes. Highly rated on survey.

Pool/Aquatics (48:19) Lots of people expressed interest in a pool. It doesn't fit into the vision for the property. 33% of the survey respondents said it is an unmet need. It is not cost feasible. It's a big unmet need, but not at JMP. The Town has the pond at Foote Rd.

Mountain Biking (52:15):

No.

Community Garden:

Yes

Fishing:

Yes

Ice skating:

Yes.

Playscape/Playground (54:59):

Yes. Some CM were concerned about the playscape appearance on the property. It can be done tastefully and it can blend in. The cost is anywhere from \$250,000 to \$450,000. Do we put in a basic playscape or a better design? It needs to be visionary. CM talked about using the dead ash trees from eastern end of the park for a sustainable playscape.

Snowshoeing:

Yes

Spray Park:

No. It was included with playscape in the survey. 40% of respondents said yes to the playscape/spray park. It's too expensive.

Disk golf:

No. not at this time. A lot of the good disk golf courses go through the woods and they are not overly expensive. The consultant needs some creativity to put it in. It would be a use for the

eastern lower area through the forest. It may not be practical. It may eat lots of space for other park programming.

Park Amenities (1:05:50)

Building for Parks and Rec:

It would be great to include this in the Master Plan, but it wouldn't be included in the initial development phase because of cost. It could add to the park immensely.

Open Air Pavilion:

This is very popular with the survey respondents. The question is how many structures can we afford? At the meetings, the public asked to keep a barn. If the town puts in an open air pavilion, it needs to be one that represents the character of the area. In phases down the road, the Town can consider building a community space that can be rented out and provide additional areas for town activities. It can be used as part of the music venue as well. Build the open air pavilion in the first phase and plan for a closed in structure for the future that can be added to the pavilion. What is the documented need for a building for Parks and Rec? Parks and Rec has a difficult time scheduling activities. It can't use the schools for camp. Also most of the activities aren't in appropriate spaces and it would be nice to offer the use of the building to outside groups. Town meetings take precedence over P and R activities and the activities are often cancelled. P and R struggles to find space. It'll be hard to defend a building without a documented need. Tricia from P and R knows there is a need because she does the scheduling for activities. Does the Town need a place to picnic vs a place for programming? Does it need an enclosed building vs an open air pavilion? The consultant can include them in the MP. A space will have to be saved for an enclosed building.

Will the Town store some maintenance equipment at the farm? The same building can be used for that, just not as part of the first phase. It's a consideration that gets into the MP. The equipment that will be stored there is for farm use. There are other Town facilities that have storage for the equipment needed in those areas. A building adds more complexity to the planning as far as parking, sprinklers, and restrooms. The consultant should mark off the land so it can be done in later phases. We need long term visionary planning.

Trash:

Public Works likes the concept of carry in/carry out. The Town should provide some form of recycling and garbage receptacles there. If you have a dog park, you have a waste management issue.

Rentable building:

No. For the reasons stated above.

Crew Boat Storage (1:29):

No. They are currently storing their boats in one of the structures on the farm. This storage does not fit into the vision for the property. The Town wants to build a structure to store their equipment, but there is a better spot in town to store equipment. There is no percentage in the

survey about crew boat storage. It was not included as a question, but there was a reasonable amount of comments about it.

Park programming is for the immediate need and not storage. It's not feasibly doable. There are things in town that are a need, but don't fit into the vision for the park. A storage area where Barn C is takes up some of the prime property where a lacrosse field can be placed. There is a better spot to deal with equipment storage.

Bathroom Facilities (1:42):

Portapotties are not visually good. Should the Town look at composting toilets? If the Town adds a building, it can put in restrooms down the line in future phases. This decision is contingent upon other considerations. Portapotties actually work. Kids can run in from the playground. Maintenance. Who takes care of the restrooms? Public Works. People complain about portapotties. Just putting up a bathroom, doesn't make sense. Bathrooms can be opened and locked on a timer from a phone for the public to use them. The BGSA has bathrooms with their fields and public works cleans them. The coaches have the keys to open them. Bathrooms don't have to be in phase 1.

Forestry Considerations:

The dead ash trees in the eastern end of the park need to be addressed.

Specialty planting areas:

The Town should only use native species and designate certain fields for wildflowers.

Field Usage:

CM and consultants will have to decide how to use the open fields: wildflowers, parking for big events, hay, etc.

CMs' design comments (1:53):

Pine Trees:

Some CM want to take them down because they are not in good shape, but they provide shade, visual field and a wind break for snow drifts in the winter. Is there someone that can assess them? Pete Picone, DEEP biologist, recommended replacing dead trees little by little with new ones.

Right of Way:

This right of way into the park is located off of Mountain Top Pass and goes between two housing lots. In the design, the consultant should find a way to make this entrance look like part of the park. May be we should not use it at all. The only other access to the park would be by the pond. Also, this right of way allows people from the Tunxis trail to walk uninterrupted to Massachusetts. We should consider the neighbors who are upset with having trails go by their yard.

Fencing (2:01):

The fencing is a hot topic because the neighbors look at it all the time. The Master Plan has to address it. Is there a need for the fence? Its condition is going to get worse and worse and it will cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to replace it. It is a design consideration that identifies JMP. Let the town decide how to handle it.

- **Interview Questions (2:05:17)**

The questions Christie, Joan and Karen worked on look good. Tricia sent the invites out to the firms and told them that the interview questions will be sent to them. Then the firms can include the answers to the questions in their presentations. Christie and Joan felt that they didn't need to send the second set of questions out in advance. Will CM have a sheet to check that the firms have answered the interview questions? It's probably good idea. Is there an interview scoring process that CM can use from the first design process? Yes, Tricia will send it to Christie. Each firm can have forty-five minutes: 25 minutes for their presentation, 10 minutes for follow up questions and answers and 10 minutes for CM to discuss the firm. Tricia will send out the ranking questions for the interviews in advance. Our recommendation is due at after our next meeting in June.

- **Project Scope of Services:**

Craig will work on the Scope of Services for Wednesday.

Tricia will send the firms the questions and park programming list on Tuesday and the scope on Wednesday.

Consultant interviews will be scheduled for 6:-00, 6:45 and 7:30. CM will hold the interviews in Executive Session. It will not be recorded and there will be no minutes. The interviews will be virtual. CM can ask for a second in person interview, if necessary.

- **Upcoming Meetings (2:19):**

May 24-Firm interviews

June 8- Firm recommendation for BOS

We can use special meetings for future meetings as they are needed. Our regularly scheduled meetings are the second and fourth Mondays. It's very important to have the date presented the week before. Mark can send out draft meeting dates to see if they work for everyone. Craig asked if Tricia can get the CAD design that was created with the first design process. She will check with Ted.

- **Urban Mining:**

Mark spoke to the BOS about the idea. They are a company that goes into old structures and devises ways to reuse the materials that are there. (Mark would like to set up an onsite design charrette meeting with the consultant.) Craig and Karen expressed an interest to attend that meeting.

- **Public Comment:**

No public comment.

- **Motion to adjourn at 9:29.**

Liz made the motion, Joan seconded it and all voted in favor.

Minutes respectfully submitted by,

Karen Geitz

May 22, 2021