



SELECT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

JULY 11, 2022

7:00 PM

ACTON TOWN HALL, ROOM 204
472 MAIN STREET

I. Regular Business

1. Resident Concerns

Alissa Nicol, School Street – Green Acton Water Committee - Boston Globe reported a PFAS issue in Winchester wastewater treatment plant sludge a source of contamination and questioned if the sludge from the Fort Pond Wastewater Treatment Plant is tested and where it is sent and used for, and influent and effluent discharge is tested for PFAS by the Acton Water District, looked at black earth compost at transfer station which does not use Wastewater Treatment Plant sludge and is tested for PFAS to ensure it is under reportable limits.

Bill Klauer, Piper Road –questioned about the intersection construction at School Street and has not seen any advertisement for it yet.

2. Chair Update/Town Manager Update/Members Minutes

Mr. Mangiaratti thanked town staff for closing out the 2022 fiscal year, achieving many goals, and didn't spend the whole budget. Starting the wastewater solutions and water resources study that is partially funded through ARPA and Town Meeting right away. Noted the new speaker installation in the hearing room.

Mr. Snyder-Grant noted the Acton Climate Coalition has been sponsoring meetings on Wednesdays at 10 AM next to Twin Seafood, next meeting will be about information on electrifying lawn and landscape care on July 12, Acton businesses on July 20, and heat pumps and mini splits from Abode Energy Management on July 27. The Town of Westford is engaging on many climate efforts and initiatives and invited Mr. Snyder-Grant on July 13 to talk to the Westford Climate and Energy Committee via Zoom.

Mr. Martin attended the Asian Festival and was a great event with hundreds of attendees. Attended a groundbreaking ceremony in Maynard for the Assabet Co-Op market and will be part of the Powdermill Corridor Improvement Project. Ms. Nagireddy noted that Jennifer Friedman retired as the West Acton Citizen's Library Director and thanked her for her years of service.

Mr. Charter noted that Larry Kenah recently passed away, and will be missed as a town volunteer. Louise Wojtkiewicz recently passed away who was involved in many activities including the Acton Lions Club, and activities involved in site

preservation. She and her late husband Peter were well-known as operators of the former Watts TV business since the late 1950s.

II. Public Hearings

3. Site Plan Special Permit, #4/7/2022-485, 115 River Street

Mr. Snyder-Grant introduced the application to Board members. Representing the applicants was Jack Darning, project engineer from Howard Stein Hudson, who presented the overview of the proposed site plan.

Mr. Snyder-Grant questioned the number of parking spaces since the office use is within the warehouse, and asked if the number of spaces could be reduced. The project engineer noted that, with the proposed number of employees, the impervious surface also allows for fire trucks to move around. They also indicated they had reduced the total amount of impervious surface. Mr. Snyder-Grant asked if they had excess solar, would they be interested in joining an effort of “banking” energy. Mentioned the memo from the Acton Water District suggesting they reduce the size of the intake pipe decreasing from four inches to one inch, which they are agreeable to. Mr. Snyder-Grant suggests his suggestions be considered as conditions in the decision. Ms. Sauer noted that the trigger for the need for the Site Plan Special Permit application was the increase in impervious surface.

Mr. Martin asked if the applicants had a tenant in mind. The applicants said yes, asked if the storage is for the associated tenant. The applicants said yes.

The applicant also noted that this rehabilitation and development of site would be to meet 2022 standards, they would be controlling all the runoff and going solar. The team put in a lot of work to make this work from an environmental standpoint and the site plan reflects this. The Board of Appeals granted variance in recognition that the site will just be improved.

Bill Klauer, Piper Road – questioned the size of the line for the fire suppression system and to plan for the future with the largest size possible. The applicant mentioned that they made sure that the building impact on the brook would be low and they will put in all typical protection when working this closely to a waterway. They do not foresee any change in traffic on that road. There will be space for parking without causing major impact to the flow of traffic. Erosion control will be addressed, and this construction will be further from the road compared to usual projects.

Planning staff said that the planning division and GCG feel comfortable with approving this special permit on conditions.

Mr. Snyder-Grant moved to approve the permit with the conditions as noted in the July 6 Planning memo and approval includes all the mandatory findings that go along with a Site Plan Special Permit, seconded by Mr. Martin and approved unanimously.

III. New/Special Business

4. Approve FY23 Select Board Short and Long Term Goals

Mr. Charter noted that the Short and Long Term Goals were finalized at the Goal Setting Meeting on June 30th. Referencing the first short term goal of hiring a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer, he noted that the final report from the Collins Center recommends a title of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism Director. Mr. Snyder-Grant suggested changes in language of short-term goal two: to change “investigate a feasibility study” to “plan and start implementing” and removing the term “heating and cooking”. Mr. Charter commented that it changes the goal completely and strongly felt it necessary to “investigate a feasibility study”. Mr. Martin and Ms. Nagireddy commented that to change to “plan on the implementation of”. Mr. Mangiaratti commented that the first step would yield a feasibility study due to the structure of Town Meeting if funding is needed especially if the goal is under one year. Mr. Snyder-Grant suggested “study the feasibility and pilot the implementation of”.

Ms. Arsenault moved, seconded by Mr. Martin to accept the short and long term goals with the edit changing it to omitting the words “heating and cooking” from short term goal #2 and approved unanimously.

5. Update on the Collins Center/UMass Boston Report on a New Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Role for the Town of Acton

Mr. Mangiaratti updated the Board with the final report from the Collins Center. The 2021 Annual Town Meeting approved funding to study the need for a DEI (and anti-racism) Officer. The Collins Center interviewed 30-40 members of the SB, public, and town staff, considered feedback from the DEIC, hosted three public forums, and made 23 findings and recommendations. Included is a job description for a director-level position that reports directly to the Town Manager and would focus on both internal and external factors. Mr. Charter noted that the report should allow for more input from the community and requested to hold a motion until the next meeting. Mr. Martin, Mr. Snyder-Grant, Ms. Arsenault, and Ms. Nagireddy feel the report should be accepted and voted tonight, and to move forward with advertising for hiring in the next two weeks.

Charlie Kadlec, Paul Revere Road – questioned what the standard non-union salary was for a Director position, why mention in the job description that the Director should be able to work on a budget, and expressed that not many people know about the report

Nijan Ditar – Town Meeting voted for thirty-thousand dollars for the Collins Center and the Town did not approve more than one-hundred thousand dollars, and questioned if the report was accurate of how the library meeting went, and if in FY22 includes funding for this position. Mr. Mangiaratti assured the funding is in the budget for FY23 and the upper range of the salary is one hundred fifteen dollars per year, Mr. Martin added that every detail discussed at the public forums are not in the final report, but the task was to decide how to integrate the position into town.

Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Ms. Arsenault to accept the Collins Center Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Director Report and approved unanimously.

6. Update on Dog Park and Acton Housing Authority McManus Manor Project

Mr. Charter updated the Board on the status of the project on Main Street, which was a short-term SB goal last year. The Acton Dog Park Committee put together preliminary design plans and was awarded a \$25,000 grant from the Stanton Foundation, and plans have advanced considerably with a site visit last week. A decision needs to be made by the Board whether the Acton Housing Authority project will be serviced by septic or sewer as it will impact the Dog Park site. The senior park is looking to expand the design of the dog park to include that site with extended landscaping and walkways to improve the site for the future tenants of the AHA project. Kennedy Landscaping is still somewhat operating on the current site to which the agreement with the town has expired, and will be moving off the site in the near future. As communication between the Dog Park Committee, Acton Housing Authority, the Council on Aging and Town staff continues, the project is anticipated to take at least two more years to complete.

7. Update Regarding West Acton Citizens Library

Mr. Mangiaratti gave a presentation regarding the history of the West Acton Citizens Library, Trustees, and plans for the future. The Trustees will still be a part of the general overseeing of the financial responsibilities. A vacancy exists on the elected Board of Trustees that needs to be filled. The Trustees will solicit interest in filling the vacant seat and meet with the Select Board to appoint a candidate in advance of an election. Notice of such a joint meeting must be posted one week in advance instead of 48 hours. Ms. Nagireddy proposes establishing a timeline beginning with filling the Trustee vacancy by advertising for the open position, conduct a joint meeting with the two current Trustees, and deciding on the best candidate for the position, then define the details of how the Trustees will be structured, how the Trustees will be working with the Branch Manager, and have the WACL Trustees involved with the recruitment and hiring of the full-time librarian. Mr. Snyder-Grant commented on not being able to find a charge or charter for the Trustees, and feels they should be very active in their role. With Mr. Mangiaratti's highlights of their responsibilities it should be drafted into a formal charge, or a list of what the Trustees should be involved with.

Annette Locherie, Windsor Avenue – ran the WACL Tot Time program for twenty-two years and concerned about the role of the Trustees and thought there was going to be a partnership with the Acton Memorial Library Trustees and would advocate for a partnership. The role of the Trustees would be a caretaker for the West Acton Citizens Library.

Dot Curtis, Massachusetts Avenue – commented that the Town Manager's presentation suggests the WACL Trustees would be doing more than what they are doing now. Supports the partnership with AML. Will be sending an email formally notifying the Select Board of a Trustee vacancy.

Lauren Rosenzweig Morton – feels the Board is going forward in a positive manner, supports the partnership with AML.

Miram Lezak – AML Board of Trustees (commenting in a personal capacity) – the collaboration of staffing between the two libraries opens up many more opportunities and possibilities in West Acton and their Trustees.

Terra, West Acton – feels that people should have been notified regarding the title change to Branch Manager. Feels the librarian should report to the WACL Trustees for policy matters much like the AML Library Director reports to the AML Trustees. Supports the idea of a partnership with AML. Requests respect for the WACL Trustees.

Bill Klauer, Piper Road – suggests the Board consider raising the number of the Trustees to five.

Mr. Charter suggests filling the Trustee vacancy and proposed a joint meeting in August toward the end of the month, and to continue to look to fill the position of the librarian. Mr. Martin suggests writing up a charge, or a list of responsibilities, for the WACL Trustees.

Alissa Nicol, School Street – concerned that the role of a Library Trustee is covered under state law and the Massachusetts Association of Library Commissioners. Suggests consulting with Town Counsel before drafting a charge.

8. Presentation from Housing and Climate Justice for Acton

Jennifer Morazes and Madeline Cruz presented the Board with a report on their findings from canvassing renters in Acton (held 251 conversation with residents in over 15 buildings), 73 renters (23%) raised 141 concerns regarding their current living conditions, threats to health, safety, and accessibility, general maintenance concerns, and concerns on costs, with recommendations moving forward.

Requesting the town enable a fair housing and renter bylaw with support staff to represent Acton renters. Other recommendations included improving hotline service, scheduling routine building inspections, and having programs/more resources that allow for building upgrades

Board members thanked the presenters for their work put into the report and asked that report be made public so people can read it. Discussed exploring what we can do to address the issues and action items raised in the report.

9. Discuss Safety Measures on the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Regarding Bicyclists and Pedestrians

Presenting recommendations for improving the safety of the use of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail was Paul Malchodi, Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. Mr. Malchodi informed the Board that signage may not improve the individual user behaviors of the rail trail - however, the slower users have the right of way. The suggestion for a simple common rules sign is a result of a multi-town agreement. The FBFRT will sponsor a common rules meeting and is willing to purchase and pay the installation of common rules sign along for the entire trail.

One concern is about how those rules would be enforced. Requests that Acton participate in the upcoming multi-town meeting.

Ruth Rin – pedestrian that was hit by a bicyclist on the BFRT, felt the presentation was over-complicated and that the town should install “yield to pedestrians” signs on the trail

Tom Rin – husband of pedestrian victim, feels that the solution to prevent accidents requires common sense, not engineering solutions, and that bicyclists can’t keep traveling in herds and that there should be a separate lane for them

Amber Klauer, Piper Road – questioned if the blinking lights turn on automatically; Mr. Malchodi confirmed that they are. Mr. Mangiaratti will speak to Public Works Director Corey York about the unified signage request moving forward.

Emily Tiller, Westford Select Board member – expressed that nobody is trying to minimize what happened to person affected by the bicycle accident and agreed the presentation was very long, the BFRT will pay for signage and suggested that bicyclists make a noise or blink lights when passing pedestrians

10. Approve Amended Town Manager Contract

Mr. Mangiaratti requested that a sentence removed by Town Counsel regarding volunteering not be removed in section 1A (last sentence). The revised, amended contract was not received prior to the Board meeting and will therefore be voted at the next Select Board meeting. Mr. Martin feels strongly to have that line in the final version. The vote will be deferred to the July 25th meeting.

IV. Consent Items

Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Mr. Snyder-Grant to approve consent items 11-22 inclusive and approved unanimously.

Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Ms. Arsenault to adjourn and approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 10:30 PM.

Documents Used

- Agenda, Select Board, July 11, 2020
- Site Plan Special Permit Application #4/7/2022-484, 115 River Road
- West Acton Citizens Library Presentation
- Housing and Climate Justice for Acton Presentation
- Presentation from Friends of Bruce Freeman Rail Trail
- Meeting Minutes, May 9, 16, and June 27, 2022
- Executive Session Minutes, June 6, 22, and 27, 2022
- Request for Use of Town Road, Ride to Defeat ALS
- Request for Use of Town Road, Ride for Liv – Run for Liv
- One Day Alcoholic Beverage License Application, Jessica Geraldo
- One Day Alcoholic Beverage License Application, New England Malayalee Association
- One Day Alcoholic Beverage License Application, Vikas Lal

- Adopt-A-Street Program Application, Rahul Mhatre
- Accept Gift Memo from the Recreation Department from Neeza Thandi Dated June 24, 2022
- Accept Gift Memo from the Recreation Department from Kristen Koehler Dated July 5, 2022
- Sign License Application Reimbursement Request Memo from the Planning Division Dated July 6, 2022