



## DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Meeting Minutes

June 8, 2023

7:00 PM

Room 9, Acton Town Hall

**Present:** Peter Darlow, (Chair), David Honn, Richard Keleher, Tom Doolittle, Dean Charter (Select Board liaison)

Public Attending: Michael Chautin, Acton Council on Aging; Dennis Dale, Dale Design (landscape architect for Senior Park); Steve Trimble, Acton Recreation Committee – Senior Park Subcommittee

### 1. Opening

Chair, Peter Darlow opened the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

### 2. Regular Business

A. Citizens' Concerns: None

B. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

- a. Minutes for the meeting of May 17, 2023 were reviewed and unanimously approved by roll call.

### 3. New/Special Business

A. Acton Senior Park: Members of the Acton Senior Park Committee and the design consultant presented the current plans for the park. The committee has taken the preliminary design to the Select Board with a request for \$40,000 to advance into detailed design. The committee has also held public forums to review the design. Their plan is to have construction estimates prepared by this fall; an RFP for a civil engineer to support the park design is in development. The park sits between the McManus Manor senior housing complex and the Acton Dog Park and is being designed to integrate with those projects. The design of the park provides for users of varying ability levels and includes seating, game tables, exercise equipment, raised garden beds which will be wheelchair accessible, and a shaded area with tables. The material for walkways in the park have not been finalized, but stone dust is under consideration. The park is intended for daytime use only; no internal lighting will be provided.

The board asked a number of questions regarding details of the design, and offered



suggestions for enhancements or alternate approaches. These included the importance of providing shaded areas, the integration with the senior housing project (discussions are ongoing), and the style and material of the park amenities. Following the presentation and discussion, the Board concluded that it was comfortable with the design of the park as presented.

Refer to the attached Review Memorandum for additional information.

**4. Adjournment**

At 8:35 p.m. it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,  
The DRB



## **TOWN OF ACTON DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

Review Memorandum: Acton Senior Park  
June 8, 2023

DRB Members in attendance: Peter Darlow, (Chair), Richard Keleher, Tom Doolittle, David Honn, and Dean Charter, (SB liaison).

Proponents in attendance:

Dennis Dale, Dale Design, Landscape Architect  
Stephen Trimble, Senior Park Sub Committee Chair  
Michael Chautin, Council on Aging Board

Documents reviewed (presented by Mr. Dale):

- Site Plan and associated sketches dated June 2, 2023
- Senior Park Design Update 6-02-23
- Senior Park Take-off Main St. Campus Graphic 5-4-23
- Planters & site furniture concepts

The Senior Park is proposed for the parcel of land between the proposed McManus Manor housing and the proposed Dog Park at 352 Main Street as part of the “Main Street Campus.”

The project is not funded yet.

There was extensive discussion regarding whether or not to direct connect with (in lieu of the lack of a direct connection to) the McManus Manor site.

The senior park will be designed for people of various abilities and accessible routes will be provided.

The park will be at the scale of an urban park. Examples were given: Rambler Park and Hyde Park in London.

Features of the park will include:

- Planters: a gardener at NARA Park will maintain them. A herb garden may be included (for seniors at McManus Manor?).
- Picnicking area
- Walking Paths.... appropriately graded for seniors
- Large central lawn for gatherings and for hosting performances
- Areas for Tai Chi and active exercise.
- Porch swings.

Utilities:

- There will be no lighting (there will be a blue light).
- Water will be provided for watering the plants.

There will be a storage shed for maintenance equipment and supplies, tables and chairs, etc.

The large uncolored area on the plan to the left of the park will be a meadow.

It was suggested that rock outcroppings be left exposed, if possible, in addition to the use of stones form the site to create stone walls.

Mr. Dale noted that in his review of the Complete Streets drawing that he received he noted that they show no buffer between the street and the sidewalk.

The applicant is ready to prepare a cost estimate and is getting a fee for civil engineering.

DRB Findings:

- Continue to advocate for the parking lot to be finished in gravel as a more low-key environmental impact and better visual. (Also prefer the same for the Dog Park parking lot as previously advocated). Will reduce the pervious surfaces on the site(s) which in turn will help mitigate the need for water retention engineering.
- Seek a legal resolution to the shared use of the right of way as a drive into the parking lot, in order to reduce the quantity of impervious surfaces and reduce the additional curb cut off of Main Street
- Advocate for a direct connection path between McManus Manor and the Senior Park... integrate more with the McManus Manor landscape concept.
- Provide a shading structure for the picnic area.
- Advocate the integration of a 5ft buffer adjacent to Main Street for the proposed sidewalk extension that the town is separately designing. This is important consideration for safety of the Seniors and Dog Park users. As well it will continue the street edge design concept that is being developed within Kelley's Corner.

The DRB thanked the proponents for the opportunity to review the proposed project. The proponents thanked the DRB for the comments and will consider them as they move forward before the Select Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Keleher, for the DRB