



53 RIVER STREET MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

DECEMBER 21, 2021

7:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

Present: David Martin, Peter Hocknell, Lou York, Bill Klauer, Bill Alesbury, Ilana Liebert, Stephanie Krantz, Don Boyle, Andy Magee (project manager), Dennis Dale (landscape architect).

Absent: None.

1. Opening

David Martin called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM via a virtual meeting with no committee members in physical attendance and broadcasted via Zoom.us virtual meeting platform.

2. Regular Business

A. A quorum is present.

B. Notes from the chair – none.

C. Resident concerns – none.

D. **Review + Discuss dam removal progress:** Dennis Dale has joined the project. Jim Murac, Andy, David, Tom Tidman, Dennis Dale, Barbara Rhines (Acton Cultural Resources representative), all performed a recent site visit. Debris cleaning is needed and is beyond the scope of town DPW. The river water is flowing over the top of the dam at present; a surprise given not a lot of recent rainfall. The pipes at the bottom of dam and tailrace are showing lower flow amounts than expected, suggesting the debris issue is getting worse. Tom Tidman interviewed several firms equipped to handle debris removal and one has been selected. He was told that we need a crane to remove material and that the material cannot be removed until the river level drops, thus posing a dilemma. It was also noted that 3 Norway maples growing in the top of dam must be removed. More debris in the dam leads to increased levels of sediment as well; should resolve once debris is removed. Lou pointed out this debris removal recommendation was made by GZA back in 2018. Town is inspecting the dam every 3 months. Bill Alesbury asked whether it is worth acting now to mitigating what appears to be an increasing hazard. Andy indicates the engineer is monitoring the dam's condition. In terms of dam removal



status, the plan to keep certain aspects of the dam was taken by Andy to AHC and HDC and both voted unanimously to proceed as Andy indicated. With Dennis Dale now on board, he will create a base plan of the park (a canvas in essence); this will then be taken back to AHC + HDC, then to public meeting for comment, shopped to such committees as Transportation, Iron Works Farm, etc. to solicit input, then Dennis will go and design.

- E. **Review and discuss upcoming park design:** Site consists of 8 ruins of buildings + structures. Andy reviewed what was presented to AHC/HDC (captured in last month's minutes). Particular areas of focus (from 60% design plan): Site Grading – once dam is breached, need to recreate the flood plain from elevation of 165' to 163' to allow for 100 year flood plan. In terms of the Parking Lot location and size – 13 spaces suggested initially and its locale is in flux. At 60% design, it was placed 55' from the treeline and 80' from site boundary. Possibly shift to the east? Is 13 spots too many? Perhaps trim this number back to 9 or 11? Possibly allow overflow parking on grass (level grading at site). If so, the drainage plan will need to be changed. Stormwater management (as drains from parking lot) option for artificial wetland possibly. Open Space area (a.k.a. "The Mound") is currently covered with knotweed, contains a lot of fill, rubble, etc. One option is to smooth this down, but that will lead to an excess of material having to come offsite. Andy suggested that it should come down, as this allows for better access (a sidewalk of sorts albeit not paved). There is a possibility there is dam section buried under the mound; unearthing this could prove interesting. The town is looking at options for sidewalks on River Street. One option is making River Street one-way from School to Chadwick. Sidewalk design is currently on the house side of the street (not the river side). Archeologists will be onsite during excavations. Ilana inquired re: granite curbing repurposing. Lou and Stephanie echoed the suggestion of reducing the number of paved spaces. Bill Alesbury asked whether The Mound materials could be repurposed to shore up embankment and extend the sidewalk on the river street side. Bill Klauer indicated that the pile of dirt is sitting on the former loading dock. Trucks dumping coal backed on to the platform and unloaded into the pit where the salt shed is now. The second floor shipping area was also at the upper level on the back side. As he recalls, there were steel railings on both sides of the platform. He doesn't think there is any coal in the pile, as Lazaro placed all that material on the top to keep people out of the area. David asked the group whether there would be a benefit to offering solely parallel parking, should River St be designated as one-way. The consensus seems to be the idea is interesting, but would depend on several factors (road width, etc.). It was noted that bicycle parking should be considered. Along with alternatives to hard paving (pervious). One issue with that approach is that when DPW sands it, the pavers become clogged over time. Andy is most interested in "big ticket design options" at this point. More detailed design considerations (whether to include restrooms, etc.) are intended for the next phase of design. Dennis will have design ideas for parking lot concept & location, and he is working on incorporating historic aspects. Questions that will be considered include using the Raceway as a walkway, providing more of a choreographed experience? Planting design challenges? Maybe adding interpretive elements? Off-leash dog play? It was noted there are 18 parking spots at the Hosmer House plus an additional 2-3 spots



underneath the lawn. The Trustees of the Reservation often have overflow parking spots as well. The town of Burlington has a recreation area with very simple bathrooms. One option might be to install a gate across the parking area (dusk to dawn) if needed in order to maintain security. Mill cornerstones containing plaques with pictures of the mill was raised as an idea.

- F. **Andy's CPC presentation:** An “open house” pre-filing event was held recently to discuss the proposal to seek funding for the Architectural Monitor and Tail Race preservation aspects. No questions were received. Subsequently, Andy filed on 15 NOV for this plan. The CPC met last week internally. This committee’s formal presentation to CPC will take place on Tuesday, 08 FEB 2022. Andy was tasked with providing this committee with a copy of the CPC presentation. Bill Alesbury raised a question -- each of the 4 previous submissions to the CPC were under the name “53 River St”. This time, the submission was under the Town Manager’s name, and we haven’t had visibility to the application. Andy asked about this; it was determined to file through the Town Manager due to the construction-based nature of this particular application. This funding cycle, 15 applications were received totaling ~\$3M where only ~\$1.6M in funding exists. This committee’s current application is listed at \$182K. It was pointed out that we’ll need to talk to the Conservation Commission due to the stream relocation. The Tailrace cost estimates were prepared by SLR, but it was noted that they aren’t a construction company. Bill Alesbury asked how solid are these estimates? Leveraging of funding from other sources will be pursued; M&M estimated \$1.4M for dam removal (dam and park elements). Other funding options, such as the matching grant, was already put to use. Additional details will help the strength of this application. This is the 3rd or 4th year where applications have exceeded the available funding amount. Bill Alesbury recommended preparation of a multi-year plan for anticipated funding requests. Alternate funding sources – ARPA, Dam + Seawall grants, town budget, etc. will all be considered to fund the project. The goal is to have permitting complete by early summer to allow construction to proceed by end of summer. However, it was remarked by Andy that this is a complex project to permit.
- G. Approval of the minutes from the 02 NOV 2021 committee meeting: Motion to accept made by Bill Alesbury and seconded by Bill Klauer. Voting took place via role call:
Peter Hocknell – Aye
David Martin – Aye
Lou York – Aye
Bill Klauer – Aye
Bill Alesbury – Aye
Ilana Liebert – Aye
Stephanie Krantz – Aye
Don Boyle – Aye
- H. This committee’s next meeting is currently scheduled to take place virtually on 18 JAN 2022 at 7 pm.



- I. Motion to adjourn was made at 8:39 by Lou York and seconded by Bill Klauer. Voting took place via role call:
- Peter Hocknell – Aye
 - Lou York – Aye
 - Bill Klauer – Aye
 - Bill Alesbury – Aye
 - David Martin – Aye
 - Ilana Liebert – Aye
 - Stephanie Krantz – Aye
 - Don Boyle – Aye

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting:

- Meeting Agenda for December 21, 2021
- Draft minutes from the November 2, 2021 committee meeting
- Andy Magee slide presentation entitled “Shoddy Mill Historic Area Park: Preliminary Design Considerations”
- 2022-CPA Application-Town of Acton_Shoddy Mill_11-15-21