

Amherst Dog Park Task Force

Minutes – 3/5/19 6:00pm First Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall

Present: Jim Pistrang, Ted Diamond, Dave Ziomek, Jack Jemsek, Nina Allen, Ana Devlin Gauthier

Approved (with typo fixes) March 19, 2019

### **Approval of Last Meeting's Minutes**

Jim suggests we hold off on approving minutes as Mike Liu has to leave by 6:30 so he will go first

### **Design Review**

Mike Liu (Berkshire Design):

- anticipates fence post footings 2ft deep
  - o can't touch cape/need to preserve soil on top
  - o frost may effect how level the area is

Dave:

- -since it's on top of a landfill the land is already pretty settled
- Do we need every post to be this robust?

Mike:

- They'll be 10 ft apart
- It's easier to have a contractor make all of the footings the same rather than have different types/sizes

Jim: Will you be able to use normal fencing on parts not on top of the landfill?

Mike: We don't know exact limits of cap

Dave:

- good question for DEP
- can we just do moorings?

Mike:

- that's why we should have all of the same footings because we don't know exact limits
- the other option is to pour a continuous concrete edge and put posts in there but it'll probably be more expensive

Jim: What will happen if the footings are too deep?

Mike: we want to keep methane down, we don't know what shape the cap's in

Dave: these are risk assessments we need from DEP, going to ask all these questions when they meet

Ted notices new shade structures on design that weren't there at the last design review

Mike:

- we put shade structures on design since last meeting
- we will be able to put them in 3-4ft deep because of their locations in the park
- they're made with 8ft poles on edges and 10ft pole in middle

Ted: what is lifespan on these shade structures?

Dave: We have them at some places like Mill River, if they're stored properly they last years

Ted: Will the town take them down/put them up?

Dave: that shouldn't be a problem

Jim points out that in small dog area there is now a loop path

Mike recommends we reduce pea stone areas to save money

Mike estimates the cost to be at around \$266k right now

Ted: We plan on fundraising \$100k

Mike: The shade structures and sand mounds can be alternates

Ted: Can benches be alternates?

Mike: need to have at lease 3 for Stanton

Jim:

- hopes we don't have to reduce size of park
- reducing pea stone may be a problem because we need it to give grass areas rest

Ted: If there's no irrigation, the grass area may turn into a dirt patch

Ted & Mike discuss possibility of sprinkler system

Dave: We'll have to check with DEP

Short discussion of possibility of above ground sprinklers (because underground may not be possible due to the cap) – we will check with DEP

Jack:

- was just in France and brought pics of granular packed surface he saw at parks there
- asked a maintenance person about how they are maintained (they spray propane on the surface)
- some dog parks in the South just have a soil surface

Mike: the recommended surfaces are mulch, pea stone, or rice stone

Ana: some dogs don't like pea stone

Nina: I agree, in my experience many dogs won't play on pea stone vs. grass

Mike:

- Good to have different surface options
- Would we be willing to reduce the 22 parking spaces to save money?

Ted, Ana, and Jim express that they think 22 is a lot

Dave: if we think about Amethyst and Wentworth on busy days, they do have a lot of cars

Ted: we should leave parking as it is

Nina: we may not need as many parking spots as a trail would

Dave to Mike: send the budget over to me

Dave:

- we'll hold off the change until we talk to DEP
- good news from Natural Heritage:
  - o they're fine with the footprint of the park
  - o they proposed 1 overall permit for the landfills (the solar field and dog park projects) with two phases – one for dog park (phase 1) and one for solar (phase 2)
- we need to go through design review, disability access commission when it comes to things like benches
- the building commissioner is not big on pea stone

Ted: Why?

Dave: From an ADA standpoint

Dave: thinks Conservation Commission process will be minimal

Dave & Mike discuss whether Conservation Commission will need RFO (request for determination)

Dave:

- the park isn't on wetlands because it's on a landfill so we should be okay

Mike says the plans are about 80% ready to submit to Stanton

Ana: are there any abutters? Are we anticipating any issues?

Amherst Woods residents could, but we shouldn't have any issues

Mike: it's far enough away from residences that there shouldn't be problems

Dave anticipates Amherst Woods residents will be curious about the project

Ted: is the kiosk not included in the bid?

Mike: no, the owner (not Stanton) is in charge of that

Ted: what's the cost of a nice one?

Mike: \$5k-\$6k

Dave says more

Ted: who's designing?

Mike: you can probably pick something from a manufacturer, they're usually customizable

Ted: we will look up kiosk options at a future meeting

Jack inquires about methane – how much of a risk is it?

Dave:

- will ask next week at DEP meeting
- they frown on subsurface utilities in general (from liability standpoint)
- if we're filling to the degree we're filling why can't water line live between cap and soil?

Mike:

- that's what I'm imagining
- we need to ask DEP about piping – about ground piping may not cost much

Ted wants sprinklers

Dave:

- First choice would be underground sprinklers, second choice above ground
- Maybe the sprinkler heads can be detachable

Jim: where are we at right now and when's the next step going to happen?

Mike will send document of latest design scheme

Jim: how close are we to submitting to Stanton?

Mike: possibly as early as next week, want to wait for meeting with DEP

Dave:

- Let's shoot for a week from Friday 3/15 to submit to Stanton
- Board processes by latter end of March
- Would be good to put out to bid now, when contractors aren't booked up for the summer yet
- It's not a super big job for contractors
- Will dogs have a slope to run up?

Mike: yes, it'll be like a gentle bowl

Ted: is the pea stone area rather flat?

Mike:

- yes, there's about a 2.5 foot change from one end to other
- the pea stone might migrate a little
- Stanton says the slope should be a max of 3% and 2.5 ft is definitely under that

Ted recommends buying more gravel so that the area is level

Mike:

- That probably will only add about \$200-\$300 to budget
- Does town own topsoil?

Dave: no

Ted: does everyone agree on adding more pea stone?

Everyone agrees.

Mike Liu has to leave.

### **Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting**

Jim: any comments?

Jack says we discussed 15-16 parking spaces at meeting but today there were 22

Jim: we did discuss 15-16 parking spaces so the minutes are correct

Dave takes a minute to ask member of public in attendance if she has any questions, then lays out where we are in the Stanton process

Jim:

- informs us that Kaye has decided to remove herself from committee
- Now that we're down 2 members (Kaye and Nina as a voting member) we may need to start looking for more

### **Web Page Status**

Jim:

- Made it so there are no longer ads on the site
- Now amherstdogpark.org redirects to our page
- Asks members to suggest content

Ana: can we add some pictures?

Jim: will change domain name so it doesn't have "wordpress" in it

Ted: who's making changes to the website

Jim: Jack and I

Jack: Facebook is more effective than website

Dave: we should probably update the Town of Amherst Dog Park Task Force website to reflect changes in members

Nina: I know it says that I'm not a voting member, we just need to take Kaye off

Jim: do we have a list of applicants for the Task Force that weren't appointed?

Dave: yes, we can look at that

### **Fundraising Campaign Status**

Ted:

- Made minor changes to fundraising letters
- Pricing- now graduated low to high
- Changes based off what we discussed last meeting
- We should identify people who will donate and put together a package of what we need donated and go out and ask for money
- We should figure out what businesses and assign someone to solicit
- Not sure about how to go about this because we don't really know how to separate the private vs. public stages of soliciting

Ana: can we put something in the Gazette about it?

Ted: that may be too public, good for next phase

\*Jim informs us that Ellen apologizes for not being at the meeting, had to go to son's 7<sup>th</sup> grade orientation.

Ana: how do we locate donors?

Jim: it's tricky because of the public vs. private phase issue

Ted: is there a list of people who have dog licenses in Amherst that we could look at?

Dave: that is a public record so yes

Jim will get that and send out to the task force

Ted: next meeting we can go through list and ID who we know

Dave: do we have a way to electronically donate money?

Ted thinks we should wait for second phase for that

Ted: my wife suggested we put up some sort of fire hydrant shaped structure in town or on dog park site showing our fundraising process

Ana & Jim express interest in that idea

Dave: we should put up a sign on site as well – something like “future home of the Amherst Dog Park”

Ted: should we put something in Gazette about Stanton Grant?

Dave will have a mock-up of sign and he'll bring it to the next meeting

Ted: it's very important to get budget by the end of March

Dave:

- Some of it is up for us to decide – like shade structures and such
- Stanton has advice about alternates like these, we can always go back for the maintenance grants they offer to put in stuff like this
- Shade is big though, people want/need that

Jim: do we send Stanton budget when we send design in for review in a week and a half?

Dave: yes

Jim: for now, put those things as alternates rather than getting rid of them altogether

Dave: we want to send Stanton something that they will cover

Ted: when will we have updated budget?

Dave: After we talk to DEP

Jim: do we need to meet before sending plans and budget to Stanton?

Dave: yes probably around the 18<sup>th</sup> of March

Jim will make doodle poll

Ted: do you think we should reach out to prospective members before next meeting?

Jim: has to check with Paul Bockelman

Ted: they could still come to the meeting as public

Dave can only do Tues or Wed March 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup>

Jim: next meeting will be final design meeting

Move to Adjourn: seconded, unanimous.

