

Thursday, April 13, 2023

Safe Path Meeting

In Attendance:

Committee Members:

Jane Finn
Dick Spaulding
Emilie Spaulding
Pam Stearns
Guy Stearns
Paul Legere
Don Gough

Via ZOOM:

Mary Ann Driscoll
Philip Marcus
Pat Wilson
Tom Maher

Community Members:

Barbara Kutchey
Nancy Vailas
Terry Golter
Leanne Whalen
Chris Whalen
David Flinner
Stacie Flinner

Mary Pat Gibson
Jay Gibson
Jim Ryan
Patti Ryan

4:37 Meeting Called to Order.

I. Review & Approve Meeting Minutes

- correction needed to next meeting date; , change from Tuesday to Thursday
- Paul Legere made a motion to accept March 9 meeting minutes as amended.
Emily Spaulding seconded the motion.

II. Report on TAP

- Jane Finn report that a DOT meeting was held without any New Castle representatives/select persons in attendance because they were unaware of the meeting.
- DOT sent a letter to New Castle Selectboard: road is not wide enough, asked New Castle to take on plowing across causeway to Pleasant Point Drive into Portsmouth.
- Jason from CMA is attempting to schedule an on-site meeting with New Castle Select board, Chris Robillard of DPW, Phil Corbett of CMA in the next few weeks.

III. Report on Commons

- Ben Holmes sent a revised budget to Mary Ann this afternoon. Mary Ann will share with committee.
- This portion of Safepath can now be paid out of the trust fund funds. After reducing sidewalk width to 5' cost estimate reduced from \$194,455 to \$162,224.11.
- Paul Legere noted that we still need a revised number for the section of wooden walkway. Currently we do not have photos of exactly what bridge (walkway/boardwalk) will look like. Paul shared some drawings of similar bridges(walkway/boardwalk)
- Paul offered to take everyone for site visit after meeting to show where bridge(walkway/boardwalk) will be located and the minimization of trees which will need to be cut down.
- Paul also stated that DOT has indicated there is more flexibility on location of handicap ramps. More rock outcroppings can be avoided.
- Chris Robillard has approved 6" wide is OK for plowing .
- Phillip Marcus asked about purposed of pink flags on site. Mary Ann stated they are from the Doucette wetlands survey.
- Mary Ann and Phillip are writing an article for the May edition of the Island Items. Three projects will be highlighted: TAP , Common Section of SafePath, The Big Idea.
- Phillip noted that it is too difficult to find where to donate to Safepath on the Town website. MaryAnn confirmed that the town website is not intuitive and the link to donate needs to be on the Safepath page in addition to the Island items which she and Phillip are currently writing.
- Jane Finn will look into how to change/update the website.

IV. Coast Guard & Land Deal (The Big Idea)

- The Selectboard meeting regarding the Coast Guard Land has been rescheduled from Monday, 4/19 to Wednesday, April 19th at 7 pm in the Macomber room and via ZOOM.
- Land price from GSA (General Service)is \$5 million.
- Purchase will be a warrant article to be voted on at the May 9th evening Town Meeting.
- Warrant article is unanimously recommended by Select Board , warrant article is not recommended by Budget Committee (3-2)
- conversation and speculation ensued regarding warrant article.

Dick Spaulding senses there is a lot of resistance to purchase of land. We need to find a champion for this issue, someone who is willing to speak publicly at Town Meeting and also before. Tom Maher believes we will spend taxpayer money whether we purchase land or not. Taxpayer money will be spent on town legal fees against any developer who buys property. Town purchase of property enables greater flexibility and ability to control issue. If town purchases property it can then place very specific limitations on how property can be used when later sold to developer. Jane stated that Selectboard believes that if town purchase property it allows town a year to explore options.

- It was suggested that Tom Maher be our champion for the land purchase however Tom reminded all that he is the Town Moderator and must take an unbiased stand.
- Mary Ann asked Tom to write down his bullet points and share them with her and Phillip so that they may include them in their Island Items article. This will allow us to get ahead of any misinformation which may be circulating around town.

V. Trust Account Update

- \$242,315.97 in trust account.
- Thanks to Tim Driscoll we are making \$ on interest!
Balance up from \$240,332.52 in March, 2023.

VI. Public Questions and Answers

- Neighbors Mary Pat Gibson, Jay Gibson, Jim Ryan, Patti Ryan, Chris Whalen expressed concerns regarding the conceptual drawings which are available to be viewed at the New Castle Public Library.
- Mary Ann Driscoll re-iterated that these drawings are only conceptual. The committee has not even opened up the plans and looked at them as a group. Jeff at CMA was given a broad scope of work as an engineer to create the drawings. As a committee, we will be reaching out to New Castle residents and issues will be discussed before any action is taken.

VII. Adjourn Meeting

- Phillip Marcus moved to adjourn meeting at 5:30. Phil Legere seconded.
- Next Meeting : Thursday, May 18th 4:30 PM in Macomber Room