

## Meeting Minutes (Rev 2) Roberts Field Advisory Council

Date: March 11, 2021; 7:00pm

Committee Attendees: Bill Askenburg, Elisabeth Bobrow, Marcus Bush, Barry Jefferson, Adelle Stavis

Other Attendees: Ted Lutter, Chelmsford IT (for survey support), local resident (unknown)

Next meeting target: TBD

Marcus called the meeting to order, presented the PowerPoint agenda, and noted that the meeting was being recorded; there was no public input

There was a review of RFAC members. It was noted that Justin Whitehouse has not been attending meetings. Marcus asked Barry to reach out to Justin to see if he really wanted to participate or step aside so that someone else could take his place.

The first reviewed topic was the survey which was developed to gather park usage data in order to support funding for enhancements and also to help the committee stay centered on how the park was serving the public. The survey was created in Microsoft Forms by Ted Lutter who presented the mechanics of activating it and returning data to the committee through a spreadsheet and other means. Marcus pulled up the survey to show the committee how it looked.

Adelle gave some background on the demographics information and how important it was to show how the park usage aligned with the governor's funding to support disadvantaged communities. She went on to say that capturing zip codes was the best way to acquire this information in the survey. Zip codes would tell us how far we're drawing people from and how regional we are. Asking people to provide their income range, however, is discomfoting – both to us as a committee and to people completing the survey. This information, for purposes of supporting grant applications, can be adequately derived from zip code data.

Marcus walked us through the survey. Adelle indicated that she would need this information during the last week of April to support her lobbying efforts. If successful, we could be awarded enough money to cover the entire costs of the pond dredging efforts.

**It was discussed and decided to run the survey from 5:00am March 14<sup>th</sup> to the end of the day (midnight) April 24<sup>th</sup>.** This would yield 6 weeks of survey data and provide this in enough time for Adelle to conduct her lobbying efforts. Bill also recommended that we access the data after two weeks to get a sense of whether people's responses are really giving us the information we need.

In response to a question from Marcus, Ted will send out a QR code that can be used by people to use their phone cameras to access the survey.

Barry asked about how we are going to advertise the survey to the community. Ted suggested that we contact our town manager, Paul Cohen, to let him know we've created a survey and request that it be publicized through the town website. He added that having the QR code [on a poster] at the park's bulletin board would also be helpful. Adelle added that getting permission from the coffee shop – "The Shack" – to post it there would be helpful. She said that she would try to put it on the town "Chelmsford News" Facebook page and explore other Facebook sites as well. Elizabeth added that KJ's Caffe and

other shops in town would be good targets. The Chelmsford Public library, other town news group Facebook pages, and Roberts Field pages were also mentioned.

Adelle motioned that the survey be considered acceptable and publicized as it stands. The motion was approved.

The discussion turned to creating some posters. Barry turned to Bill for his expertise in designing and creating these. Bill said he would create the design for 8.5 x 11" flyers and Adelle offered to help with the text. Marcus said that he could do the printing and Adelle added that she had a laminating machine that would provide better protection than plastic covers.

Discussion turned to the mechanics of advertising on out-of-town Facebook pages; these will tell us how regional we are. Elizabeth said she would connect with some Billerica mothers to help get some of this information.

Adelle said that she is working on a separate shade grant that is due around the end of November. It requires that we document a one-year effort of sun safety programming, which could include signs about sun safety. The sunscreen safety campaign launched a year ago along with the first shade structure may be sufficient for this.

Adelle raised having the playground added to various lists, such as those for handicapped playgrounds.

Marcus provided a recap of the meeting he and Barry had with the DPW regarding the location so the exercise equipment and the new shade structure. He said that Steve was very flexible about both of these. It was noted during the discussion just how far the construction projected into the trees in the lower left (south-west) corner. Barry said he will try to obtain and integrate Steve's latest plan with the model to get a better sense of this. Bill said that he thought the trees targeted for removal and preservation were consistent with Jim [Martin's] plan.

Bill raised the need to have Steve's plan show the protected trees in the south-west area where construction would occur, and also along the pond-side shore. [Barry is waiting to receive this from Steve.]

Adelle raised the idea of walking the area to help visualize where trees would be removed and also to verify that after removal there would remain a sufficient sound screen for the abutters. There was a subsequent discussion about how even today abutters could both hear and see activities at the park. The concern now, however, is that with the baseball field moved even closer to the edge of the park, this could become a problem. This led to the idea of sending abutters an invite to the next meeting so that they could ask questions about the proposed changes. This in turn led to the idea of having a site walk that the abutters could attend.

Then the committee moved and approved the location of the exercise equipment as shown on Steve's plan. [This plan has station 2 shown closer to the pond rather than the location near the ball field home plate that was chosen later.]

The committee then went to a discussion about possible locations for the pond-side pavilion. It was decided to place and orient the structure as shown below with the path running on the pond side. [Steve later verified that the path was permeable and could run inside the 100 ft. buffer line. He said that he would place the pavilion as close to the pond as the wetland zones allowed and run the path, which has less restrictions, on the pondside of the pavilion.]



It was noted that Steve's original plan had a smaller connector path running along the pond up to the nature area entrance path at the north side of the pond. His current plan no longer shows this. Bill indicated that he is no longer a fan of the connector path; that we have too much going on already. It was decided to get input from Steve as to what was doable and why his latest plan no longer showed the path. [A follow up communication with Steve led to the information that this path would not fit with the tree protection zone and the no disturb wetland buffer.]

The above discussion led to another one about how the pathing in Steve's latest plan differed from the original plan and the model. Specifically, the paths from The Shack to the field and toilets is quite different. This is something that we will need to bring up to Steve at some point in the future.

The next topic was Adelle telling us that the commonwealth government site contains a list of handicapped accessible playgrounds. She said the list expands outside the confines of Boston. She suggested that we should get Friendship Park added to their list. Elisabeth added that [www.accessibleplayground.net/united-states/massachusetts/](http://www.accessibleplayground.net/united-states/massachusetts/) was also a site with similar information. Bill suggested that, in pursuing this, to use the Chelmsford DPW as their contact. Elisabeth added that disabilityinfo.org was a similar site that should be looked at. Bill suggested that we check the Chelmsford town website for a possible Friendship Park landing page.

The next meeting topic was to approve the last meeting minutes. After discussion it was determined that some committee members needed more time and it was decided to postpone until the beginning of the next meeting to vote on approval of the minutes.

Bill then asked if Barry had checked with the Board of Health and the fire chief on our handling of hand sanitizer. Bill said that he thought it was important before taking any further steps with this. The understanding is that we are looking at putting a station close to the playground by its entrance near where the sunscreen dispenser is now. Barry agreed that he would do this. Adelle added that we should also get clearance for putting hand sanitizer by the pavilions. Marcus told the committee that Steve Jahnle had no issue with us putting up hand sanitizer stations but that the DPW would not be maintaining or filling them.

Next meeting date should be before Steve goes before the Conservation Commission. Barry and Marcus will reach out to Steve and schedule the next meeting date. [Marcus and Barry met with Steve on March 24. Minutes from that meeting were sent to all committee members.]

Meeting adjourned.