



DOG PARK COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES FINAL
Thursday, March 14, 2019
9:30 AM
Acton Town Hall, Room 9

Present:

- Clare Siska, Chair
- Fred Kinch
- Karen Martin
- Mike Perry
- Public officials/guests:
 - Tom Tidman, Land Use Director
 - Matt Selby, Director of Land Use and Economic Development
 - Bettina Abe, Natural Resources Assistant

Absent:

- Tom Gillispie

1. Opening

Chair, Clare Siska, opened the meeting at 9:30 AM

3. New/Special Business

A) Progress to date.

The Chair briefed the guests on committee progress and setbacks, and expressed the committee's desire to make substantial, concrete progress towards establishing at least one dog park by the end of 2020. Seeking input on a path forward.

The committee has moved away from the concept of "one large park for all" in favor of multiple, strategically placed parks to meet the needs of a spread out town.

B) Proposed timeline

The Chair reviewed a proposed project timeline, which the guests agreed was reasonable.

C) Review of potential parcels, ideas, opinions, discussion

- Great Hill
 - Some opposition by current users to any changes at all
 - Formalize as South Acton's dog park
 - May remain an unfenced, Off-Leash Area (OLA)



- Identified possible ~ 1/2 acre fenced area for dogs which cannot be offleash. May be too wet – would require building up 6+ inches, surfacing material \$\$\$
 - Minimal improvements such as signage, benches, additional waste stations could be added at minimal cost.
 - Not a Stanton-funded park. Would not meet their requirements.
 - Consider putting up temporary fencing in the summer as a “trial run” to see how it works and how people react to it
 - Little Great Hill – anticipate opposition from Nylander Way residents; accessibility challenges with steep grade, boardwalk improvements needed, distance from parking lot
 - Outreach to Joe Watlington, Land Steward
 - Outreach to South Acton Neighborhood Association
- Robbins Mill Recreation Area (61 Canterbury Hill Road)
 - Very promising parcel: about 2/3 acre; flat, open, dry, large parking area, town water infrastructure and water fountain, picnic shelter, trail access.
 - Underutilized public resource on a public way
 - Neighborhood opposition likely to be our biggest impediment (traffic, noise); winning over hearts and minds is important.
 - Could use trees, stockade fencing on north edge to buffer from closest neighbors
 - “Low hanging fruit” – much in place already; could be done quickly
- 348 & 352 Main Street
 - (in conjunction with Acton Housing Authority’s use of 362 Main Street)
 - Anticipate Town Meeting approval April 2019
 - Selby ensuring that legal docs have Town of Acton retain use of 348 & 352 Main parcels (exception: AHA uses them for septic system)
 - Timing:
 - AHA first step is to conduct soil testing and obtain all permits in order to apply for funding – determines # of units/bedrooms; design septic system.
 - Once septic system is designed, we can design and build dog park and include fencing with gates to allow for septic system to be built later (dog park taken offline temporarily)
 - So, possibly 2021 for Main Street dog park construction
- Wood Lane
 - Possible back up plan, not to pursue at this time
 - Small, narrow road to access it



- Anticipate neighborhood opposition
- Wetherbee property
 - Conservation land, agricultural use, not to pursue
 - A property adjacent to Wetherbee may come up for purchase in the near future... keep an eye on this.

D) Action items

- Set up another meeting with Kelly Cronin, AHA director, to keep her informed. (Clare)
- Engage with Stanton Foundation – establish whether they will support / fund multiple dog parks in a single municipality (Selby)
- Email current Acton dog licensing data to Clare (Selby)
- Search dog licensing data for dog owners in Robbins Mill neighborhood; reach out to them for input/support (TBD)
- Reach out to John Wattlington, Great Hill land steward, by phone (Clare); informally at dog park (Karen)
- Reach out to Lola Farra and Lauren Rossensweig to determine if there is a Robbins Mill Neighborhood Association and how to engage with them (Clare)
- Draft a detailed action plan and preliminary design concepts at next ADPC meeting (ADPC)
- Request large printouts of Great Hill, Robbins Mill, and Main Street parcels from Fran in Natural Resources (Clare)

4. Adjournment

10:25 AM., it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting

- Proposed timeline