

Acton Dog Park Committee

Meeting minutes

First Floor Meeting Room, Acton Memorial Library

22 August, 2017

Committee Members Present:

- Mike Perry, Chair
- Cathy Fochtman
- Bill Alstrom
- Betsy Kristl
- Clare Siska
- Tom Gillespie
- Rodney Smith

Absent:

- Joan Gardner
- Karen Martin

Other Attendees:

- Joe Will

Mr. Perry called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM.

Comments from the Public

- None

Review and accept prior meeting minutes

- The amended minutes of the 8/8/2017 meeting were unanimously accepted.

Time Frame and Process

- Discussion around the need for establishing a time frame, set of goals/dates, and a process for how we move forward. No specific actions were identified.

Need for the Park, “Beyond the Dog Park” discussion, Justification of the park

- Discussion and agreement that while there are unofficial dog parks in Acton (Offleash Areas – OLAs), this committee is focused on the need for an *enclosed, accessible* dog park.
- Committee members vary in their interpretation of whether the town has yet sanctioned a dog park. Do we need to make a proposal for approval and at what stage of the process? Will a Town Meeting vote be required? Some clarity from Joan Gardner, BoS liaison, would be valuable.
- Discussion and general agreement that we will make our strongest case by measuring interest; selling the concept to the community; identifying stakeholders; and identifying and engaging supporters.
 - Bill A to draft a paragraph for inclusion in the upcoming *Municipal Quarterly* – Cathy F will submit for publication
 - Survey – not at this time; target audience and purpose TBD
 - Articles in the *Beacon* – we will look into this down the road
 - Octoberfest (date?) – Acton Recreation will have a table. Cathy F & Betsy K will propose to this committee a plan for Dog Park Committee presence within the Recreation table.
- Members agree that we should not have to “reinvent the wheel” to prepare a justification.
 - Betsy K will share her research with this committee.
 - Tom G will contact local dog park organizations (e.g., Maynard, Chelmsford) to request copies of their justification documents. Betsy K to provide a contact list

- Cathy F is a member of the National Park and Recreation Association (NRPA), which has information on dog parks (see nrpa.org)
- Clare will draft a “needs” summary based on the above along with salient points from “Beyond the Dog Park” article. Time frame TBD.

Town sites, specifically Morrison Farm and Ice House Farm and the 2014 TM info

- Review of proposed Ice House Pond and boat launch improvements for Summer 2018, including a boardwalk and a new well for garden irrigation. Could this be a possible source of fresh water for a dog park?
- The town continues to explore proposed uses for Morrison Farm.
- Use and disposition of the existing house is yet TBD; Betsy K described the concept of “barn hunting,” a dog-friendly activity, and suggested the house might be conducive to that activity.

Funding

- Too early to solicit donations or apply for CPA funding; we need more widespread support and a concrete plan.
- A 501C3 may be needed in the future

Field Trip to existing dog parks

- This item was tabled.

Maintenance Requirements

- This item was tabled.

Future meetings and calendar events:

- ADPC full committee: Thursday, September 7, 7:00 PM
- Octoberfest: (date?)

Adjourn

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Clare Siska