

## **St. Mark's Street Park Working Group (SMSPWG)**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**January 18 2023**

**Southborough Town House - McAuliffe Meeting Room**

**17 Common St. Southborough MA 01772**

#### **Opening:**

The remote, virtual meeting of the St. Mark's Street Park Working Group was called to order at 7:12pm on January 18, 2023 via Zoom technology.

Working Group Members Present: Andrew Dennington, Grant Farrington, Freddie Gillespie, Kevin Miller, Marguerite Landry, James Nichols-Worley, and William Sines.

Members of the Public Present & Commenting: Bonnie Phaneuf, , Patti Burns-Fiore, Kathy Cook, Jim Hegarty

Also Present: VHB Landscape Architect Greg Russell, VHB – Michael Kluchman

#### **Administrative**

1. Meeting called to order at 7:12pm by Chair Margarite Landry
2. Amend/Approve Minutes
  - a. December 2, 2022. Sines moved to approve, Miller seconds. Approved 7-0. Aye: Andrew Dennington, Grant Farrington, Freddie Gillespie, Kevin Miller, Marguerite Landry, James Nichols-Worley, and William Sines
  - b. December 8, 2022. Sines moved to approve, Miller seconds. Approved 7-0. Aye: Andrew Dennington, Grant Farrington, Freddie Gillespie, Kevin Miller, Marguerite Landry, James Nichols-Worley, and William Sines
  - c. December 13, 2022. Landry moved, Farrington seconds. Approved 7-0. Aye: Andrew Dennington, Grant Farrington, Freddie Gillespie, Kevin Miller, Marguerite Landry, James Nichols-Worley, and William Sines
  - d. January 11, 2022. Nichols-Worley moves, Miller seconds. Approved 6-1. Aye: Andrew Dennington, Grant Farrington, Kevin Miller, Marguerite Landry, James Nichols-Worley, and William Sines. No: Freddie Gillespie

#### **Public Comment**

3. Comment from Bonnie Phaneuf asking if Town Meeting Warrant Article will limit spending on the park to the amount of money designated
4. Comment from Karen Shimkus that tax-payers have the right to object to spending without

mischaracterizations of criticisms, and believes that there should not be a Park on the parcel. States that former DPW Head Karen Galligan recommended returning a \$290,000 grant from MassDOT. Karen Shimkus also objects to transferring the current layout of St. Mark's Street to St. Mark's. Asks if members have legal authority to serve on the Board pursuant to "Advisory 05-02: Voting on Matters Affecting Abutting or Nearby Property." States that the Group does not have authority to spend money. Says that there are technical flaws with MOU between the Town of Southborough and St. Mark's School, Inc.

### **Plans for Park Design**

5. Gillespie discusses Recommendations Packet and plan for Park
6. Bonnie Phaneuf left the meeting room due to OML Compliance with Southborough Public Access Committee
7. Greg Russell, VHB Landscape Architect, answers questions about Design, including the accessibility of a potential path
8. Burns-Fiore comments on her Design Plan
9. Russell comments that a plan using concrete pavement would cost about \$150,000, Design costs depend on how much can be reused from previous design plans, may cost several thousand dollars.
10. Michael Kluchman comments that designers can work with comments heard tonight
11. Select Board Chair Kathy Cook comments that the Select Board would like to see a plan of the Park area before Town Meeting, although the Plan can be conceptual. Comments that VHB have hours left in contract with town to design conceptual "bubble" design
12. Group will meet again to finalize preliminary design concept before sending plan to VHB
13. Town Clerk Jim Hegarty comments that Group can include plans in electronic communications before meetings

### **Park Bid Package**

14. At present, the Group does not expect to spend any money before Town Meeting as they do not expect additional charges

### **Public Comment**

15. Patti Burns-Fiore questions if Ms. Gillespie received approval from the Open Space Preservation Commission of her plan
16. Jim Hegarty comments that Group should have a firm deadline for no more designs, and that additional sidewalk on plan is a bad idea from a safety perspective because Route 85 is a busy street
17. Karen Shimkus comments regarding road safety

### **Administrative**

18. Dennington moves to adjourn, Gillespie seconds

- a. Approved 7-0. Aye: Andrew Dennington, Grant Farrington, Freddie Gillespie, Kevin Miller, Marguerite Landry, James Nichols-Worley, and William Sines

**Meeting adjourned at 9:21pm**

**Next Working Group Meeting: Wednesday, January 25, 7:00pm**

**Documents**

St. Mark's Road Park Recommendations and Design by Freddie Gillespie

***Submitted by James Nichols-Worley, Secretary, March, 2023***

***Approved : March 6, 2023***

OBG Cemetery



Library Parkway

Library Grounds

Hardship Parking

Future Library needs appears

Flexible Lawn

D1

D2

D3

D4

Perfect Lawn

St Mary's

under study

Tree = Deciduous

Flowers = SB-Rose / yellow / pink

Utility Box

Note Lawn area Bigger

Not to exceed

## **St. Mark's Road Park Recommendations**

- **Native Plants**

- The Working Group has consistently supported native plants in the park except for areas of lawn as needed for specific activities.
- At the Public Forum many people expressed the desire for reduced lawns, and only for specific activities where needed.
- Increasing native plantings are goals in both the Master Plan and the Municipal Vulnerability Plan.
- Southborough zoning code requires native plants.
- The project requires site plan approval.
- There is precedent with the Planning Board requiring straight species native plants, no cultivars.
- Don't waste time and consultant expense including non-native plants.

- **Pollinator Habitat**

- The landscaping will be professionally installed.
- Rain gardens are the only native perennial pollinator gardens.
- Native flowering shrubs and trees recommended by OSPC will satisfy the pollinator habitat goals.
- Shrubs and trees' locations and final choice to be determined with consultation with landscape designer.
- Plants chosen from Dr. Gegeer's plant list.

- **Map of Prevailing Winds**

- The working group never discussed a wind block for cemetery.
- However, the Historical Commission was advised years ago to plant trees in the OBG.
- The Working Group did however decide not to use evergreen trees.
- Don't want solid wall of evergreens. Maybe three American holly trees with tall shrubs between.

- **Sun Map**

- Showing path of the sun throughout the course of the year at different times of day. Show area of shade from trees when library/children activities will be there.

- **Lawn**

- Determine where and how much lawn is necessary.
- Native grass alternatives
- Native ground covers

- **Rain Gardens**

- Native Plants per the OSPC recommendations.
- Plantings can occur now to mitigate and manage water issues.
- When/if library parking is built (in 20 years), they can create a new storm water mitigation system
- Located as advised by consulting landscape designer/architect. Based on water table.

- **Sidewalks**

- The only sidewalk connection is currently across the street at the St. Mark's parking lot. See new connection to sidewalk on Rt. 85.
- Shrub border along edge of road consisting of several different shrubs of varying heights.

- **Handicap Parking**

- Are those spaces O.K. to tie up existing library parking locations? See spaces on park land.