

Shore Road Path Committee Meeting
April 30, 2008

Place: Town Hall, Cape Elizabeth

Present:

Paul Thelin, Chair

Maureen O'Meara, Town Planner

Cynthia Dill, Town Councilor

Dena DeSena

George Morse

Andie Mahoney

Howard Littlefield

Josef Chalot

Suzanne McGinn

William Nickerson

Meeting called to order by Paul Thelin.

Minutes from the Committee's March 26 meeting were accepted and approved.

Public Input

Paul Thelin welcomed the public to the meeting, and indicated that the public would be permitted to address the Committee for five minutes at the beginning of the meeting, and then again for five minutes just prior to the conclusion of the meeting.

Gail Atkins addressed the Committee, indicating that she was not aware of the existence of the Committee until she read an article about the Committee's work in the South Portland Sentry. Paul Thelin responded by saying that this project is distinct from past projects in that the charge was to determine the feasibility of a pedestrian pathway (including for casual bicycle traffic) and to connect Fort Williams with the Town Center. Maureen O'Meara explained that the Town's Comprehensive Plan recommendation included working collaboratively with Shore Road abutters on the creation of a path that would preserve the character of Shore Road.

Ms. Atkins then inquired into why the Town was still pursuing this initiative, in light of the opposition that similar initiatives have faced in the past. Ms. O'Meara responded by talking about the Road Safety Working Group, and about the Committee's commitment to meet with every abutter regarding the initiative.

Barry Sheff from Woodward Curran then introduced himself as one of the bidders for the feasibility study.

Mary Ann Lynch introduced herself. She expressed gratitude that she was able to join the Committee for the Shore Road walk, and praised the Committee for its in-depth examination of the Shore Road area during the walk.

The Committee then spoke of the Jaime Petrus letter. The Committee accepted the comments.

Schedules

The Committee scheduled meetings for May 28, June 18 and perhaps on July 30 and August 27.

The Committee also announced that it would be completing its Shore Road walk on Wednesday, May 7th, at 9:30 AM, beginning at Town Hall.

Site Walk

Paul Thelin inquired into whether Committee members had any follow-up comments from their recent site walk. Suzanne McGinn indicated that it was helpful for her to see exactly how far the Town's right of way extended beyond the paved portion of Shore Road.

RFP Process

Paul Thelin then drew the Committee's attention to the bids received in response to the Town's RFP. Maureen O'Meara indicated that she expected to receive no further proposals than those that the Committee had already received to date.

Andie Mahoney recused herself from this and any future discussions on the RFP process, given that her father, John Mitchell, is the principal of one of the bidders, Mitchell & Associates.

There was a long discussion regarding how best to compare and rate the various bids. Joe Chalot noted that there was a wide range in the costs among the bids. Some Committee members observed that some bids proposed more complex work than others did. Maureen O'Meara suggested that the Committee develop a set of questions to be answered by each applicant, touching upon what the applicant's approach to the survey would be, and what the Committee would get out of the survey.

The Committee decided to create a matrix to compare the various bids. At Cynthia Dill's and Mary Ann Lynch's suggestion, the Committee would decide what characteristics would be included in the matrix. Each of the bids would then be graded in accordance with the matrix in executive session. The top three ranked bidders would then be invited for an interview with the Committee at a later date. Paul Thelin then recommended that a deadline should be set for Maureen to report back to the Committee with her draft matrix

The Committee then discussed what characteristics of the proposals should be included in the matrix. Dena DeSena thought that the survey should include flagging of the Town's right of way. Suzanne McGinn and Howard Littlefield both indicated that they were concerned about wetlands. Paul Thelin expressed an interest in visual aids to assist the abutters and the general public in understanding the project. Bill Nickerson and George Morse echoed that visual simulations of a path would be very important. Joe Chalut was looking for a right of way line and some guidance regarding where the path should go. Suzanne also prioritized the bidders' willingness to participate in public meetings and in meetings with abutting property owners. Cynthia Dill emphasized the importance of bidders' "qualifications and experience" and expressed some concern over the public's reaction to seeing flags going up on the side of Shore Road. She also wanted to know bidders' ability to work with abutters in the event that the survey reveals that the Town's right of way is inadequate to support the development of a path. Maureen O'Meara indicated that she has received calls from residents who support the creation of this pathway.

The Committee decided that, regardless of the size or type of markers that are utilized to map the right of way, abutters will notice them. Accordingly, it is important to convey to abutters before the survey occurs what is going on and that the Committee wants to work cooperatively with them.

Maureen O'Meara indicated that she would have a draft matrix prepared by May 14. The Committee also decided that the bids would be discussed and graded using the matrix in executive session on May 21 at 7:00 PM. Interviews of highly-ranked bidders were tentatively scheduled for May 28.

Public Information Effort

Bill Nickerson suggested that Town residents on both sides of Shore Road (from the main entrance of Fort Williams to the top of Shore Road) be sent a written notice of the Town's plan to conduct a survey of the Town's right of way in this area. Maureen suggested that the letter should also be published on the Town's website, the Cape Courier and the South Portland Sentry. She likewise suggested that the final page of the letter, at line 5, be amended to read, "[t]he Committee is hoping to begin meetings in late summer or early fall, and will be back in contact with you as the time gets closer." The Committee agreed to all of the above suggestions and recommendations.

Public Input

Before adjourning, Paul Thelin again opened up the meeting for questions/comments from the public.

Gail Atkins inquired what the source of grant funding is, what the cost of conducting the feasibility study will be and, finally, what the cost of construction is expected to be. Bill Nickerson responded that the Committee does not know all of the answers at this time regarding cost, but that the letter to Shore Road residents was meant to be an

introduction. Dena DeSena indicated that the Committee at this point is only at the feasibility stage. Gail Atkins indicated that there are more questions than answers at this point. Cynthia Dill suggested that the grant funding information be put into the letters to Shore Road residents. George Morse stated that questions are good things, and that the public may have some good ideas for balancing pedestrian safety with the need to preserve the character of Shore Road.

Howard Littlefield moved to adjourn the meeting. The Committee adjourned.

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