

Shore Road Path Committee – Minutes of June Meeting

Date: June 18, 2008

Location: Jordan Conference Room, Town Hall

Present: Chairman, Paul Thelin, Joe Chalat, Dena DeSena, Cynthia Dill, Howard Littlefield, Andie Mahoney, Suzanne McGinn, Bill Nickerson, Maureen O’Meara, Town Planner and Carl Eppich, representative from PACTS

Absent: George Morse

Meeting called to order by Paul Thelin at 7:05 p.m.

Public Input:

Paul welcomed a member of the public and explained the Committee reserves time at the beginning and end of each meeting for members of the public to express their thoughts.

Tom Kinley introduced himself and stated that both he and his wife are opposed to the path, and he would attempt to attend most meetings in an effort to influence the Committee’s outcome.

Minutes:

Upon motion of Cynthia Dill, seconded by Dena DeSena, minutes of the May 21st meeting were unanimously approved.

Upon motion of Howard Littlefield, seconded by Suzanne McGinn, minutes of the June 4th meeting were unanimously approved.

Consultant Scope of services:

Maureen distributed a proposed Scope of Services prepared by Oest Associates, Inc. in conjunction with Mitchell and Associates, Inc. and Statewide Survey, Inc., the team of consultants selected by the Committee at its last meeting. Maureen explained there will be a full contract drawn up and signed by the Town Manager. The Scope of Services will be included as a key component of the contract, and will stipulate that the survey shall be completed within 30 days of execution of the contract.

Joe called attention to the 4th paragraph of page 1 relating to the level of detail to be included in the survey. During the interview the consultants stated that all significant features within 10 feet of the right of way on the land side of the road would be detailed. On the water side, telephone poles will be detailed within the survey, after which Mitchell and Associates will fill in other meaningful features. Maureen will speak with the consultants to be sure they are clear about the level of detail to be included for both sides of the road.

Joe also drew attention to page 3 under Engineering Services concerning any easements which may be required outside the right-of-way. Maureen will also clarify this issue with the consultants.

Cynthia commented we should avoid receiving a thick glossy report containing non-essential information which could be cumbersome to work with. Carl believes the report should include a large plan of the proposed pathway for members of the Committee to work with. Maureen felt it was important, however, to have 8 ½” by 11” maps which can be copied for use in meetings with the public. Maureen will discuss with the consultants the importance of having “user-friendly” reports.

The committee discussed the importance of having photo simulations of the path provided by the consultants. Maureen explained that a photo simulation of the entire path would probably be outside the Committee’s budget, but that we should have simulations of key portions of the path, and also have the ability to provide simulations where they may be important in our discussions with abutters.

Paul inquired as to whether the survey would be available on line. Maureen responded in the affirmative, and said she expects it will be available in PDF form. Paul emphasized the importance of having the survey in ample time prior to the Committee’s meetings with individual property owners.

Suzanne inquired about the meaning of the words “near” in paragraph 4 on page 1 of the Scope of Services. This led to discussion about where the termination point of the survey should be at the northern end of Shore Rd. The Committee concluded the survey should end at the “old entrance” to the Fort, the entrance located closest to the pond. This assumes the road crossing from Fort Williams across to the inland side of Shore Rd. would occur somewhere between the old entrance and the southern boundary of the Fort, at a point of maximum visibility for pedestrians and vehicles.

Committee/abutter meetings:

Maureen stated that the Committee needs to begin thinking about how it will approach meetings with abutting property owners. She circulated a preliminary listing of abutters on the inland side of Shore Road divided into groups of 5. On the assumption that these meetings will include Maureen and one member of the committee, discussion ensued as to whether each member should be assigned an arbitrary group of 5 abutting owners, or whether each committee member should have the opportunity choose the abutters he or she would prefer to meet with. The list was circulated and members were given the opportunity to designate property owners they would like to meet with, and the balance will be assigned by Maureen.

Next there was discussion about when these meetings should commence. Emphasis was placed on being fully prepared, and the importance of making a positive impression on property owners. In order to do that, we will need materials to be completed by the

consulting team. At a minimum we will need a copy of the survey including any features located in the right of way. In certain cases we may decide additional information may be necessary. Assuming the contract will be signed in early July and the survey will require 30 days to complete, we will not be able to meet with the consultants with the survey in hand until the Committee's August meeting. Therefore meetings with property owners will not commence until the latter part of August.

Maureen will email to Committee members the finalized list of property owners. Members will be able to indicate preferences of those they would like to meet with. It was agreed that the first meeting should be scheduled with the Tim Robinson family, since it controls such a significant portion of the frontage abutting the path, assuming it is located on the inland side of the road.

Public Participation Plan:

Maureen provided a draft of a Public Participation Plan for the Committee's consideration. The Plan is based on 4 fundamental goals: transparency, multi-level participation, abutter priority and recognition the path will be a town-wide resource. The timeline contemplates that after meetings with abutters beginning in August have been completed, neighborhood meetings will be held in November, a Town-wide Public Forum would be planned for January and, if all goes well, the plan would be presented to the Town Council in February. After some minor modifications, the Plan was endorsed by Committee members.

As part of the plan, letters will be sent to abutters informing them about the initiation of the survey beginning in July. It was agreed that Paul will be designated as the person to receive calls or emails from property owners regarding this matter.

Draft Status Report to Town Council:

Committee members reviewed a draft Status Report to the Town Council prepared by Maureen. Initial discussion focused on the Committee's leaning toward locating the path on the inland side of Shore Road, and the justification for that decision. It was pointed out that during the 6 months the Committee has been meeting, various factors have pointed toward the inland side of the road being the most logical choice for the path. A grid has been developed which compares these factors and it was agreed that the grid, dated and marked "draft", should accompany the Status Report to the Council. In addition to the Committee's preliminary conclusion regarding which side the path should be on, it was pointed out that after walking the road and reviewing the pros and cons of each side, the consultants also advocated for location of the path on the inland side.

The Committee debated whether the Scope of Services, discussed earlier in the meeting, should accompany the Status Report. After discussion it was determined the contract between the Town and the consulting group, which will include the Scope of Services, should be signed before the Scope of Services is released.

The Draft Status Report was then approved by the Committee for submission to the Town Council.

Next Meeting:

Because there will be very little business to come before the Committee until after the survey is completed in August, it was agreed there will be no meeting in July. Therefore the next meeting will be **August 20**.

Public Input:

Tom Kinley reiterated his opposition to the path, and stated that while one of the goals is to build “community” through creation of the Shore Rd. path, he felt we would end up pitting residents of the land side against those on the water side. He also spoke in opposition to having the path open to multiple use i.e. pedestrians and casual bikers, and further stated his belief that there would be a particular challenge locating the path on the land side between Beach Bluff Terrace and the Town Center.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Nickerson