

Mystic River Boathouse Park Implementation Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes
Stonington Police Department, Pawcatuck, CT
Monday, April 1, 2019
7:00 p.m.

The Stonington Mystic River Boathouse Park Implementation Committee held a regular meeting on this date, Monday, April 1, 2019 at the Stonington Police Department at 7:00 p.m.

Present were Rob Simmons, Chairman; Mike O'Neill, Vice Chairman; Mike Crowley, Tom Switz, Nick Kepple, Jim Kelley, Breck Perkins, Steve Planchon, Tim O'Brien, Kathryn Burchenal, and Sandy Tissiery, Recording Secretary; as well as Jason Vincent, Stonington Director of Planning and Zoning; Chad Frost, Principal, Kent + Frost and interested citizens

Members absent were Steve White, Farouk Rajab and Alan Strunk

1. **Call to order**

Chairman Simmons called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

Jim Kelley led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **Comments from the Public**

Chuck Stevens, Mystic River Park Commission, brought to the committee's attention the Commission's request of consideration of changing the name of the Mystic River Boathouse Park. Mr. Stevens said this item was requested and had been on the agenda and now isn't on the agenda and there has not been a resolution. Mr. Stevens said the two similar names have been causing confusion already and as the boathouse park project moves forward with more documents being processed, the name, Mystic Boathouse Park, becomes more solidified and could be more difficult to change later. Mr. Stevens said the commission is enthusiastic about the boathouse park project but would like the consideration of the name change to remain on the agenda.

4. **Approval of minutes**

A motion was made by Nick Kepple and seconded by Mike O'Neill to approve the February 4, 2019 minutes as submitted. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

5. **Correspondence**

There was not any correspondence.

6. **Old Business**

- Discussion -- State Historic Preservation Office Meeting Update
- Discussion – Building on the Property

Chairman Simmons began the discussion saying the March meeting had been cancelled as more research and analysis was needed to determine if the two buildings on the property were of historic value and could not be torn down or moved off of the property. When the property was purchased, it was thought the two buildings were not historical and would be torn down. However, the State Historic Preservation Organization (SHPO) has determined the two existing buildings are historical.

There have been multiple meetings with SHPO to discuss the procedures and guidelines that determine the historical value of the two buildings. Chairman Simmons turned the floor over to Chad Frost and Jason Vincent to discuss with the committee possible concepts of the park that will work within the SHPO guidelines. Jason Vincent shared the framework why SHPO is involved in this project. Mr. Vincent explained SHPO comes under the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act and the National Environmental Protection Act and any projects that require state or federal funding or permitting are sent to SHPO for consulting purposes. So even though these properties may be in a recognition-based district, it is not a regulatory district, these additional permitting thresholds that the state and federal government have or even if we use state or federal funding will trigger the SHPO review. SHPO's guideline for a contributing property in a recognition-based district is there is no adverse impact.

Chad Frost presented an overhead presentation of the project update. Mr. Frost discussed that saving the buildings was not part of the master plan and options to include them that would not create adverse impact had to be created. Mr. Frost said in

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continued negotiations with SHPO, there could be consideration for one building to remain providing mitigation of adverse impact.

Mr. Frost presented five options.

Option #1: This option is if we chose to keep the house, how the existing footprint of the house could be incorporated with the needs of the boathouse. This option would use the house as an entry way for the boathouse, integrate the training room behind the house and locate the boat bays as another addition creating a one-story structure.

Option #2: The second option is structurally the same as Option #1 with the exception the structure being slid over 15 feet to be able to have the parking lot remain where it had been planned.

Option #3: This option would be to keep the southern half of the shed in its original footprint. The boathouse would be the original designed footprint with the coal shed being attached to the northern side of it.

Option #4: The fourth option would be to keep the coal shed as a separate building to use as a tie into the history of the property.

Option #5: After discussion with SHPO, the thought being if the house was going to be moved, it could be moved to the northern end of the property on the opposite side of the proposed boathouse. If the building is on the northside of the boathouse facility, it would be the first view of the property coming down Greenmanville Avenue.

The committee discussed the five options and which of those options would have the least adverse impact. The committee discussed the logistics of the structures and SHPO requirement and the need of a historical consultant. Chad Frost said there was one on their team and this would be a good time to re-engage him because his knowledge and expertise will be needed to work with SHPO on the details of structural requirements. The committee concurred it was important to maintain the history of the property while also utilizing it as a public park and community boathouse making it the best situation for all involved.

The committee concluded they would take Options #1 & #3 off the table. The positives of the remaining options were discussed regarding the view coming down Greenmanville Avenue, which options offered best access to the boathouse and do not affect the vista and the view. The committee discussed how incorporating the house into the boathouse design would change the look and design of the original plan.

Chairman Rob Simmons made a motion and Mike Crowley seconded to take Option #2 and Option #5 back to SHPO for further discussion.

The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Chairman Simmons instructed Chad Frost to work in collaboration with Jason Vincent and Mike O'Neill to create 3-D schematic ground-level renderings of the Options #2 and #5 to be distributed to the committee so they can visualize what these two variations will look like from the ground. The committee asked this information be provided as soon as possible.

Chairman Rob Simmons made a motion and Steve Planchon seconded to reacquaint ourselves with a historical consultant to assist us in this process at a price that is equivalent to what was in the original contract.

The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Chad Frost said they will contact their historical consultant and, working with Jason Vincent, re-evaluate the scope and get a cost.

- **Discussion – Education Subcommittee**

The Education Subcommittee members were not present so this discussion was postponed until the next meeting.

7. New Business

Nick Kepple reported the Agreement Committee will give a report at the next meeting.

8. Comments from the Public

Chuck Stevens, opined having been to the meetings and being a lay person in this thing, you need to reword what has been presented, you are going to build a park and when the boathouse committee has the money, they are going to build a boathouse.

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You need to go back to the public and tell them that things have changed, we can't build just a park anymore, the state says their requirements restrict the project we thought we could do for now we can't do one without the other that is going to be a whole different concept to the public. You won't be able to open the park and build the boathouse later.

Jason Vincent answered the project would still be able to be built in phases, we have to present to SHPO the whole project for their review. The other permitting agencies would still allow the project to be built in phases.

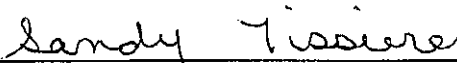
9. **Comments from the Committee**

No comments from the committee.

10. **Adjourn**

As there were no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Sandy Tissiere
Recording Secretary