

September 9, 2017

The Stonington Board of Selectmen and the Mystic River Boathouse Park Implementation Committee held a joint special meeting on this date at Latitude 41 in Mystic, CT at 9:30 a.m. Present were First Selectman Rob Simmons, Mike O'Neill, Mike Crowley, Nick Kepple, Tom Switz, Steve Planchon, Steve White, Alan Strunk and Kathryn Burchenal as well as members of the press and public. Selectman Mike Spellman, Selectwoman Kate Rotella, Bryan Bentz, Scott Bates, Frank Todisco and Breck Perkins were absent.

(1) Call to Order

Mr. Simmons called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

The meeting recessed at 9:33 a.m. to allow for the site walk.

At the conclusion of the site walk, the meeting reconvened at 10:23 a.m.

(2) Pledge of Allegiance - Led by LTC George Sylvestre

(3) Presentation regarding the Mystic River Boathouse Park

Mr. Simmons read two emails from residents who were unable to attend the meeting as follows:

Ms. Candace Sanford stated she would like to express her support for the Stonington Garden Club's position that the landscaping of the park maintains open green space and uses low impact designs and sustainable landscape strategies including native plants necessary to nourish those pollinators who maintain our food web by sustaining important ecosystems. The Stonington Garden Club is working with a landscape designer to develop a plan for the park which I urge the town to adopt.

Ms. Carrie Powers stated that the parks landscaping should maintain open green space and encompass low impact designs as well as sustainable landscape strategies. This should include the important native plants necessary to nourish those pollinators who maintain our food web by sustaining important ecosystems. She hopes the town will receive the support required to proceed with their 2.2-million-dollar restoration project for public land use that exemplifies both ecological responsibility and conservation thoughtfulness.

Mr. Simmons introduced Mr. Chad Frost of Kent+Frost, the Master Planner of the project. Mr. Frost gave a brief background of his company followed by an overview of the program items for the groups consideration when thinking about the feel of the park. The items included the following:

- Pedestrian Connectivity
- Bicycle Facilities
- Public Boat Launch
- Handicap Kayak Launch
- Public Water Access
- Shoreline Restoration
- Outdoor Classroom
- Pavilion/Shaded Structure
- Restrooms
- Exterior Public Kayak Storage
- Boat Wash

- Visual Gateway
- Memorable/Iconic Space
- Sustainable Planting/Design native Plants
- Public Art

After some discussion, Mr. Frost asked the groups to gather around boards which listed each item and to choose which they considered to be most important.

(4) Discussion of the Mystic River Boathouse Park and Hands on Project/Chalkboard

Mr. Frost had each table complete a hands-on project to discuss which amenities were most important and how much value would be placed on each. During discussion, the following issues were raised:

Ms. Jennifer Lacker stated that the elm tree which was removed from Willow Street is ready to be made into a bench and she feels that this would fit into the design.

LTC George Sylvestre stated that it will be important to prepare for the management of the facility.

Mr. Herb Holmstedt stated that informational signage should be created to educate the public about the park.

Mr. Frost asked the group to share any further comments/concerns. They included the following issues:

- Parking issues
- Fencing for child safety
- Town should not over think this project as it is meant to be a park dedicated to water usage and should be kept simple
- Will there be enough accommodations for public and those who will be holding regattas on the property
- Management of the facility
- Signage to let people know that motorized boats cannot launch on property
- Pavilion could have multiple uses

Mr. Simmons stated that he and members of the committee would be visiting other locations in CT that have a similar type of park to see how they oversee and manage the completed project.

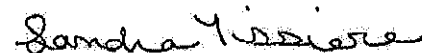
Mr. Frost stated that he would take all the information gathered from the meeting and would bring that to another meeting within the next few months, which would include the next phases of the project.

Mr. Simmons announced an invitation to the Hart-Perry Community Rowing Center Capital Campaign Kick-Off to be held on September 16, 2017 from 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. at 268 North Main Street in Stonington.

(5) Adjourn

There being no further business to come before this Board, the meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m.


Stacey Haskell
Recording Secretary


Sandra Tissiery
Recording Secretary