



Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

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Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

Symonds Way Exploratory Committee

Date: 2023-01-18

Time: 7:00 PM

Building: Reading Town Hall

Location: Select Board Meeting Room

Address: 16 Lowell Street

Session: Open Session

Purpose: General Business

Version: Final

Attendees: **Members - Present:**

Chair Carlo Bacci, Vice Chair Chuck Robinson, Angela Binda, Heather Clish, Andrew Dribin, Nancy Twomey

Members - Not Present:

Karen Janowski

Others Present:

Town Manager Fidel Maltez, John Halsey, Susan Bowe, James Pearson Weston & Sampson (remote), Jim Bedingfield (remote), John's iphone (remote), Marilyn Shapleigh (remote)

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By: Jacquelyn LaVerde

Topics of Discussion:

This meeting was held in-person at the Town Hall Select Board meeting room and remotely via Zoom.

Chair Carlo Bacci called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

Presentation from Weston & Sampson:

Town Manager Fidel Maltez explained that engineering firm Weston and Sampson was hired to conduct an environmental assessment, land survey, wetland delineation, a proposed subdivision plan, and a geotechnical assessment of the site in anticipation of this Committee.

James Pearson of Weston and Sampson presented the details of the work performed in April of 2022, and the findings on the site. He presented the site as two separate parcels. Parcel A is 9.9 acres total, mostly wet, landlocked, and therefore not developable. Parcel B is 4.9 acres total, but only contains approximately 2.5 acres of buildable land outside of the road easement and the 35-foot wetland buffer. The historic uses of the parcel show construction materials, abandoned cars, and fill that was brought in. Preliminary environmental tests showed trace amounts of possible contaminants. Further testing was not completed at this time, as there are statutory timelines for mitigation once contaminants are definitively identified.

Discussion on Town Needs Related to Public Owned Lands:

Following the Weston and Sampson presentation, Mr. Bacci posed the question of whether or not to move forward with additional testing. The Committee discussed and members agreed that it would be best to get a sense of what the community would like to see there to determine the level of testing that would be needed. Members also agreed that housing does not seem to be an appropriate use of the site. Ms. Clish recalled that discussions at

Town Meeting focused on the site being an asset for recreation, as the area is already a hub of recreation with the ice rink, and baseball fields.

Discuss Public Input Process, including a community survey:

The Committee discussed getting input from the community about what they envision for the parcel. As there are no funds available for a consultant to help develop a survey, Mr. Maltez suggested asking Business Administrator Jayne Wellman to assist with developing a survey for SWEC as she had done for the Reading ARPA Advisory Committee (RAAC).

Chuck Robinson suggested having a one-paragraph executive summary at the beginning of the survey explaining what the Town has for this parcel.

John Halsey of Beaver Road suggested considering the additional 200 acres of Town owned land on the opposite side of Symonds Way that is a current recreational area, and perhaps creating a master plan for the entire Symonds Way area.

Susan Bowe spoke in favor of considering something environmental on this land, and possibly partnering with Black Earth Compost as a satellite food scrap composting site.

Marylin Shapleigh, Chair of the Council on Aging, noted that a finding in the ReCALC survey found that many respondents were interested in having a facility that was also open evenings and weekends.

Discuss Next Meeting Dates:

The Committee agreed to schedule the next meeting for Wednesday, February 15th at 6:00 pm.

Future Agenda Items:

Mr. Bacci stated that the survey will be the focus of the next meeting.

Approve Meeting Minutes from 12/12/2022 Meeting:

On a motion by Chuck Robinson, and seconded by Angela Binda, the Symonds Way Exploratory Committee voted unanimously 6-0 to approve the meeting minutes of December 12, 2022.

On a motion by Heather Clish, and seconded by Angela Binda, the Symonds Way Exploratory Committee voted unanimously 6-0 to adjourn at 8:38 pm.