



Rockport Millbrook Meadow Committee

P.O. Box 51, Rockport, MA 01966

www.millbrookmeadow.org

Charmaine Blanchard
Marcia Lombardo, Treasurer
Aileen Morrissey
Frederick H. Tarr III

Samuel W. Coulbourn, Chair
Shannon Mason, Vice Chair
Barbara Sparks

Minutes of Meeting Wednesday, October 8, 7:00 p.m. Trustees' Room, Rockport Public Library

7:00 p.m. Chairman **Sam Coulbourn** called the meeting to order. Members present: **Marcia Lombardo, Shannon Mason, Aileen Morrissey, Barbara Sparks, and Ted Tarr**. Also present were **Gunilla Caulfield**, Trustee of the Lura Hall Phillips Trust; **Laura Hallowell**, Advisor to the Rockport Millbrook Meadow Conservancy (RMMC), **Frank Hassler**, Advisor to the MMC/DPW Liaison Team, and **Wally Hess**, Chairman of the Finance Committee. **Charmaine Blanchard** arrived at 7:24 p.m.

1. Update Millbrook Meadow Restoration.

Barbara reported on the **Meeting September 18 with Jason Williams and Matt Sanford of MMI at the Rockport library**. MMC members and the RMMC trustees were present as were DPW Commissioners Jim Gardner and Bruce Reed; and Joe Parisi and Tim Olson, Director and Assistant Director of Public Works. Some key points:

a. Update on willows. Joe Parisi suggests that the DPW post a hearing (legal notice published in the GDT) for public comment on proposed removal of two or three dying willows (sentinel willow and one across the Brook from Welcome's Peg Leg property; a third willow is on Welcome's parking lot border and many dead limbs hang over the Meadow path; ownership is unclear). This work would take place after the ground freezes so that less damage is done by heavy equipment. Aileen brought high-quality prints of photos of the willows in question. She offered to start a binder of pictures relevant to the restoration project.

After the foregoing discussion, Barbara moved: **#1: I move that the DPW remove two dying willows located in the Meadow**. Ted seconded, and all voted to remove the two.

Then Barbara moved: **#2: I move that the DPW remove a dying willow on the border between the Meadow and Mr. Welcome's parking lot if an agreement can be reached between Mr. Welcome and the Town**. Shannon seconded, and all voted to remove that one as well.

Wally Hess, as Chair of the Finance Committee, asked: "Who will pay for removal of the willows?" Barbara and Sam said that they would discuss this with the DPW Director.

Barbara asked: do we want to plan a “goodbye” ceremony, maybe involving Toad Hall Bookstore? Do we want to save the trunk of the sentinel if the wood is viable? Members discussed, generally favoring some kind of low-key ceremony; chairman suggested that there was so much to discuss that it might be best to have a special meeting for that purpose. Barbara will notify DPW of our decision to cut down the willows as noted above.

b. Update on removal of dredged material. There was strong consensus at the Sept. 18 meeting to dispose of the dredged material off-site. Peer Consultants (a consultant to MMI) made it clear in their recommendation that State law prohibits material with the level of lead (Pb) contamination found in Mill Pond from being re-used in our location. The good news is that the level of contamination is of low enough level so that EPA should not consider it to be hazardous waste; the material can be re-used off-site at a Massachusetts lined landfill.

After this discussion Barbara moved: **I move that the Millbrook Meadow Committee endorse the recommendations made by Peer Consultants regarding removal and disposal of dredged material.** Shannon seconded. All voted to endorse.

c. ADA accessibility. Barbara reported that this was not discussed in detail at the Sept. 18 meeting, but she has asked Jason to consider area to the left of the dam (as you face west) reconfiguring the former spillway steps and possibly removing the raised planter. Intention is to preserve the woodland buffer zone next to Mill Lane. This idea was suggested by Jim Gardner, Chair of the DPW Commissioners.

Barbara next reported on the **September 24 Meeting with DPW Commissioners.** Commissioners Gardner, Paul Sena and Reed were present at the meeting. MMC/RMMC were represented by Sam, Barbara, Shannon, Gunilla, Frank, Ted and Marcia. Joe Parisi and Tim Olson were present, as were Selectwoman Erin Battistelli and Larry Neal of the Conservation Commission.

The Commissioners sent a list of questions in advance, to which Sam replied, pulling some information from earlier documents prepared by John Sparks.

Barbara reported on a follow-up telephone conversation Sept. 25 with Jim Gardner:

1. The public needs to understand the phases of the design process, and where we are now in the process.
2. It would be helpful to lay out a schedule of meetings where people can come and give their input.
3. We need to be clear about how people can give their opinions about the options; how they can communicate with the MMC.
4. We need to say how the final design recommendation will be selected.

Shannon will describe a concept for new panels for our display to respond to the Commissioners’ concerns about communication. Darren Mason has offered to help.

Barbara next reported on a **Meeting with DPW and MMC advisors on October 1 regarding Funding strategy.** Joe Parisi, Sam, Shannon, and Barbara attended this meeting.

Joe had prepared the Capital Improvement Planning Committee (CIPC) Request, and we confirmed that we want to submit to CIPC, even though funds will not likely be granted through CIPC, but will need to come from Community Preservation Committee (CPC). Frank Hassler has offered to convene a meeting with Joe and all the potential funding entities: CIPC, CPC, and Finance Committee, to get all parties on the same page.

Joe reviewed what he termed the “base project.”

1. Strengthening retaining walls at culvert
2. Stream
3. Frog pond
4. King Street steps
5. ADA access from Meadow to top of dam
6. Dredging pond (question: how much mapping has MMI provided?)

Plan is for work to be staged concurrently, not sequentially. Land contouring, plant material, playground equipment, and furniture are all part of the project, but come after the “base project” has been completed.

Laura noted that plantings all over the Meadow and Pond edges need careful planning, and with preparation of the ground and elimination of invasive plants, it is a multi-year process.

Barbara noted that apparently the Town does not have an easement through the private property that goes with the Mill House. That means the Town does not have control of a section of Mill Brook. Is this cause for concern?

Barbara reported the following upcoming events:

Oct. 14 BOS (Selectmen) presentation—Sam, Shannon, Barbara.

Oct. 14 CPC Workshop for 2015 applications – Stephanie will attend.

Oct. 18 Harvest Fest

Oct. 22 Special MMC meeting to review Master Plan draft

All MMC members are encouraged to attend one or both meetings on Oct. 14.

The Oct. 22 meeting has just been scheduled, since we will receive the Draft of the Master Plan in mid-October, and will want to review it while the discussions are fresh in our minds. This meeting will take place at 7 p.m. in the Trustees’ Room at the Library.

Eagle Scout Trail. Sam noted that Laura, Barbara, Gunilla and he had met with Gerri Falco, Conservation Agent, at the Pond to discuss the reported ill-use of the Trail by kids. Shannon suggested that since weather will prevent much more of this we take this up in the spring.

Dog leash laxity? Barbara noted that signs adequately stated town regulations, and Shannon suggested we not discuss this now. All gratefully agreed.

2. Financial Strategy. Sam noted that Wally appeared to be getting ready to leave, and asked if he had a few words for the MMC. Wally said it will be helpful if costs are known as far in advance as possible. Shannon noted that timing of our requests for funding is vital, since one Funding source (CIPC or CPC, for instance) is likely to refer us to the other, resulting in delay from one year to the next. Frank said that is why we need to have meetings with Finance Committee, CIPC, and CPC. Wally said he supports the idea of these meetings.

3. Fundraising Sub-Committee, publicity and community outreach. Status of FSC fundraising and grant research efforts. Shannon reported that we have now raised \$17,235.

4. Getting our message out:

Abutters’ Meeting Sept. 14 and MMI briefing Sept. 18 [Aileen and Shannon]

Need for intensified PR effort, improved graphics, and websites. Barbara discussed the graphic she and Darren and Shannon are working on to show using a tree the different phases of this project, key planning, design and construction events, and status of funding attained and money spent. Charmaine offered an alternative idea for displaying this information.

Websites: Frank noted that this project has vastly more substance than most that are presented to the Town for funding, but MMC has an urgent need to expose the public to the case. He went on to show how he has been unable to find information on the restoration project on the Town website, links between the Conservancy site, the Facebook site and the Town site are very inadequate, and we simply are not putting our message out effectively. Laura offered to help with this.

Outreach to Boards, etc.: Barbara suggested that our outreach to Town Boards, Committees, and Commissions be discussed at our Nov. 12 meeting.

5. October Event Planning

Harvestfest October 18th: Shannon displayed the ten-foot “Millbrook Meadow” banner. She discussed the setup and schedule for members to tend the booth. She suggested that we sell tickets for a Fifty-Fifty Raffle. Members approved the plan; she will prepare the tickets.

6. Committee Business

Treasurer’s Report. Marcia advised that the Treasurer’s report should take place at the start of the meeting, She presented bills for the Sept. 29th fund-raising mailing in the amount of \$256.34. Moved and seconded to approve the reimbursement, all voted to approve. Marcia advised that donation checks should be sent to Shannon instead of her.

Approve Minutes of September 10th. Ted moved to approve, Shannon seconded, all voted to approve.

7. New Business. None.

8. Set Next Special Meeting: Wednesday, October 22nd, 2014 at Trustees’ Room, Rockport Public Library, 7 p.m. to Discuss Master Plan and to Decide Upon Future Action.

Next Regular Meeting: Wednesday, November 12th, 2014 at Trustees’ Room, Rockport Public Library, 7 p.m.

9. Adjourn 8:56 p.m.

Approved:

Samuel W. Coulbourn

**Copy to: Town Administrator
Director of Public Works
Conservancy Board and Advisors
Conservation Agent
Walter Hess, Finance Committee
DPW Commissioners**