



Rockport Millbrook Meadow Committee

Town Hall, Rockport, MA 01966

*Charmaine Blanchard
Kimberly Jones
Shannon Mason, Vice Chair
John Sparks*

*Samuel W. Coulbourn, Chair
Marcia Lombardo, Treasurer
Barbara Sparks
Frederick H. Tarr III*

Minutes of *Informational* Meeting, Wednesday, October 16, 2013, 7:00 p.m., Community Room, Rockport Police Headquarters

7:04 p.m. Chairman Sam Coulbourn announced that because of a late posting of the meeting, it could not be an official meeting; no votes may be taken. We will defer all votes or other decisions to our November meeting. Members present: **Kimberly Jones, Shannon Mason, Marcia Lombardo, Barbara and John Sparks, Ted Tarr, Charmaine Blanchard and Coulbourn.**

1. Update Millbrook Meadow Restoration.

Status of Contractor Selection. John Sparks reported on progress in obtaining a contractor to perform Phases I and II of the restoration. He, Eric Hutchins, and Sam participated as the Millbrook Meadow advisory team in interviews held of the top selected bidders by the Director of Public Works. Tim Olson of DPW also participated, and Barbara Sparks observed. Although all three bidders made excellent presentations, one contractor stood out as the top contender. The group then left the Police Headquarters, where interviews had been held, and went to Town Hall to open the sealed price bids. Subsequently, the MMC team examined the price bids as to how much effort each bidder proposed to devote to each subtask, and to compare the three. If all goes well in this process, the winning bidder will be invited by DPW to negotiate a contract. We still hope to begin work early in November, John said.

Future Playground Considerations. Shannon brought several booklets depicting a wide variety of playground equipment and offered them to members to take and consider. Sam suggested that it would be very helpful for us when the contractor presents us with recommendations and options for playground equipment we are better informed.

Eagle Scout Project. John reported that Sayles Kasten was progressing on his project to cut a path in underbrush around the Pond, and had yet to meet with the Conservation Commission, but John will join him at that meeting. Sam said that he had looked at the potential path from the back yard of 16 Mill Lane and suggested that Sayles climb down that hill there to get a better picture of how to lay out the path, since there was less undergrowth in that area.



Bench near Pond

Current Maintenance and status of list given to DPW. Charmaine reported on the current status of maintenance in the Meadow and around the Pond. Not much seems to have changed, she said. The cornerstone on the Founders' Bridge is in danger of dropping off or being pulled off by children. The "Good Vibes" graffiti on the Dam wall was removed by DPW by power washing, Sam noted. Charmaine observed that the power washing had removed some of the mortar in the wall. She reported that graffiti on the slide had been mostly removed, but nothing has been done on the graffiti on the tree near the playground. (See photo) The park bench on the north side of the Pond is in miserable condition. We should make special effort to have DPW fill in the depression beneath the swings as it fills with water and is unsafe for children.

Members discussed ways to prevent or discourage graffiti and other vandalism. Charmaine suggested that we ask the Rockport Police to conduct occasional patrols in the Meadow. Ted reported that at the last meeting of the Board of Selectmen our report of vandalism in the Meadow came up, and the police would be asked to patrol. Barbara suggested that we ask Smith Hardware not to sell spray paint to kids. Sam observed that asking a local business something like this might be a matter for the selectmen to handle. He said he would make that recommendation to Selectmen.

Kimberly suggested that we might consider a pro-active approach to the graffiti problem and other possible vandalism by children by using the Meadow as a location for school art projects, which could help children to see the value of the Meadow and their connection to it.



Tree graffiti

2. Plans for Fundraising, publicity, community support:

Sub-Committee to Establish Non-Profit (501.c.3) status: Sam reported that Kimberly has asked to step down from chairmanship of fundraising because of the demands of her academic career.

She and Charmaine reported on a meeting they had with Julie Bishop at Essex County Community Foundation (ECCF), investigating "fiscal sponsorship". Charmaine stated: "I think

it (ECCF) would be a perfect fit for our group.” ECCF would serve in lieu of a 501.c.3 tax-exempt status for our fundraising. Kimberly added that ECCF gives advice on fundraisers and more. Charmaine said the cost of managing funds we receive is 1.5%, but our funds are invested, and this can pay for the 1.5% cost. Barbara noted that Susan Gray, who has offered us advice on fund raising, is a member of the board of ECCF; Barbara will ask her about the organization and whether it would be a good fit for us. Members roundly showed approval of Charmaine and Kimberly’s report.

Kimberly suggested that members read the material on ECCF and come with questions for discussion at our November meeting.

Harvest Festival. Shannon reported that we will have a table at Harvest Festival on Saturday, October 19th in Harvey Park. Members will show visitors the photo display about the Meadow and Pond, sign up Friends, and sell t-shirts, and cards. We will have a basket of apples that visitors may take, and a fishbowl for donations and contributions. She reported that we had augmented our supply of some sizes, and she has repackaged them for easier handling and selling. Marcia suggested that we should wear the shirts so that the public can see them, but that we should also have one on a hanger so that they can be more visible.

Schedule for manning the table at Harvest Fest Oct. 19th:

From 9:30 a.m. to noon, Kimberly and Sam

From noon to 2 p.m. Ted and Shannon

From 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and closure: Marcia, John and Barbara

Shannon will provide display, shirts, cards, etc; for table. Sam will provide table. Shannon and Sam will set up the event and Marcia, Barbara and John will help Shannon take it down at 4 p.m.

Nasturtium Seeds. Sam thanked Barbara and John for the beautiful planting of the garden leading from Mill Lane down to the Meadow, which has bloomed spectacularly and still is very attractive. Barbara mentioned that seeds could be harvested. Charmaine suggested that we package them and sell them, and members suggested that might be something we could sell at our table on Motif No. 1 Day next May. Barbara will look into capturing the seeds. Members offered to help with the project. *[Imagine an attractive little package with a picture of our nasturtium garden on it--- all proceeds going to MBM&MP Restoration.]*

3. Report on Arboriculture Talk at Rockport Garden Club. Barbara attended a talk at their September meeting in lieu of our meeting since it was directly relevant to our restoration program. Melissa LeVangie, certified arborist and owner of *Trees New England*, addressed the group with “Right Tree, Right Place.” She gave considerations on how and where to plant trees, how to care for new trees, and an alarming piece about the Asian Longhorned beetle. Barbara distributed copies of material Melissa furnished in her presentation.

4. Meadow Event Schedule:

Saturday, Oct. 19, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Harvest Festival

Saturday, May 2014: Motif No. 1 Day

4. Committee Business:

Approve Minutes of August 21. Deferred until we can meet for an official meeting.

5. Set Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 13th at Trustees’ Room, Rockport Public Library.

7. Adjourn (informally). 8:30 p.m.

Approved:

Samuel W. Coulbourn

**Copy to: Town Administrator
Director of Public Works
Eric Hutchins**