

Town of Harpswell
Mitchell Field Committee Meeting
July 11, 2016

Attendees: Jane Covey, Don Miskill, Nancy Sohl, Nate Wildes, Sandra Allen and Michael McCabe.
Also present: Mark Eyerman and Gina Perow.

A quorum was present. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes: The June 6, 2016 meeting minutes were approved as written [5-0-0]

Old Business: Action Items (not listed in any specific priority order)

- **Action Work List:** Tel-Com Conduit Repairs, pour concrete slabs on which to set granite benches, remove dead tree at entrance copse, repair trail ruts, asphalt road repairs, till and smooth lower meadow so it is usable as a grass playing area, remove remaining fence barb wire, burn or remove invasive plants debris at concrete pad, install 5 4x4 posts on new beach access trail, and Sentry Building Refurbishment.
- **Action item: Bluff Area Work Plan.**
- **Action item: Trim Oak trees at entrance and improve visibility of the entrance.**
- **Action item: Develop and implement invasive species mitigation and removal plan.**
- **Action item: Develop a strategic plan to upgrade and maintain the open meadows.**
- **Action Item: Mitchell Field Waterfront 2016 Work Plan:** Pier Demolition, Waterfront Circulation Plan, Replacement Pier, Marine Business District Infrastructure, Stormwater Management Improvements, Boat Launch and Submerged Land Lease.

New Business:

- **Tailgate and Recreate Event – July 16, 10 am – 2:00 pm.** Gina Perow (Recreation Director) gave an overview of the day's event: live music, scavenger hunt, children's games, storybook hike, Scrabble, town committee tables, local food vendors, open community garden. This is our first time and we're excited that it is happening.
- **Summer Activity Levels** – Don Miskill, as steward for MF, had sent an email with his observations of use over the July 4th weekend. Lots of cars and beach goers, hikers and fishermen. This generated some concerns by town administration about whether or not we need more on-site monitoring during the summer months. There were multiple people out on the pier despite the warning signs that necessitated calling the sheriff. Insufficient caution signs around the pier to warn kayakers not to go under the pier. The need for stripping on the tarmac indicating where people should park. Concern that some kids using the swimmer float were destroying it. We will need to bring it in and look at it. Increased use meant that the porta-potties were overflowing well before the scheduled weekly cleaning day. We may need to have it done twice a week in the summer. Heavy beach use highlighted the inadequate amount of parking if all the proposed uses for the admin building were in place. We need to solidify our long-term goals and make recommendations to the BoS before things move too far along with building use requests. They don't necessarily need parking that close to the beach. There may need to be a coordinated effort on monitors with other departments. Gina Perow is aware of these concerns.
- **Jim Cornish** – Jim is again requesting use of the upper meadow for his horses. Kristi is working with him. The contract is the same one that was proposed last year but never signed and executed.

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- **Planner's Update:** (see memo)
 - **Small Harbors Improvement Program (SHIP) Grant** –We have been approved. Paperwork is complete but not yet delivered. Since time is part of the grant match and we cannot count any until we have the paperwork in hand, this slows us down. Committee has a role in this. Mark is talking with Kristi about our contract with Barney Baker.
 - **Replacement Pier Facility Study** – Mark asked the committee to make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen that the town contract with Barney Baker Associates as the sole source marine engineer for our replacement pier design. His recommendation is based on Barney's past work for the town on the pier evaluation and boat launch. His detailed knowledge of the issues and extensive background knowledge make him the ideal candidate. The committee voted to approve the following recommendation [6-0-0].

Motion: The Mitchell Field Committee recommends to the Board of Selectmen that the town contract with Barney Baker Associates as the sole source marine engineer for our replacement pier design. This recommendation is based on Barney's past work for the town on the pier evaluation and boat launch studies. His detailed knowledge of the issues and extensive background knowledge of the site make him the ideal candidate.

- **Artificial Reef** – Mark presented an Artificial Reef Work Plan. The response from regulatory agencies has been lukewarm at best. The cost savings still makes it worth evaluating. Mark is reaching out to those in the decision-making process and the Massachusetts Artificial Reef Office and Mark Russo, professor of Marine Science at UMO. He also contacted the Darling Center for Lobster Studies. He also presented a draft scope of services for evaluating the habitat benefits for marine life as a reason to construct the reef. Monique Coombs can help us make contact with the lobstermen. He has been trying to contact Chris Heinig [MER Assessment] who did the underwater evaluation around the entire pier structure. He would be an excellent proponent for why the reef would enhance marine life habitat.

Action item: MF Committee hold public workshop in September about the project.

- **Water Tower Update** – The task force has had three meetings.
 - They have had expert speakers talk about water towers and communications towers.
 - Their next meeting will address the mission of the TF. Do they have a narrow focus on just the water tower 's structural integrity and lifespan? Or, do they focus on the big picture, potential water needs at MF and the surrounding community. What role does the tower play, if any at all?
 - Don has been talking to the test well contractors who are on-site. They are pulling all the test wells except the ones around the old landfill on the south side of the woods area. MDEP is ready to lift the water volume restrictions at the site so that makes the DeLuca-Hoffman proposal to drill a potable water well at the MFBZ much more cost effective.
 - The committee may be asked to weigh in on their deliberations.
- **Pump House Removal** – The work is complete. They did have to modify the contract for an additional \$8000. This was due to the discovery of some additional structure below the surface that was covered up by the fallen structure.
- **Rob Roark Celebration of Life – July 31 at 3:00 p.m.** Don is coordinating with Mary Ann. Jane spoke with Kristi about accepting donations for memorial gifts in Rob's name.
- **Rob Roark Memorial Gift** – Mike McCabe will look at the catalog Gina Perow gave us and make a recommendation for the bench in Rob's name to go down near the water.

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- **MF Tailgate & Recreate Table** – The Mitchell Field Committee will be asking people to fill out surveys about their use of and vision for Mitchell Field. Also, a volunteer opportunities form. Don will provide clipboards, pens & pencils. We can also put the survey online and discuss it in the town newsletter.
- **Kiosk** – Don informed us that he and Dave Brooks begin building the kiosk tomorrow. We have the Mitchell Field Rules sign too.
- **Solar Power Project:**
 - The BoS held a workshop with Revision Energy. They propose to erect a solar power field at Mitchell Field. Jane and Nate were in attendance. See Jane's notes on the project. She also asked a birding expert to visit the field and discuss Bob-o-Link habitat and nesting behavior. See her notes on that meeting too.
 - Nate indicated that they are on a tight timeline. Time is off the essence. They need to get it going before January 1, 2017, which would require a special town meeting. There is uncertainty about the net metering issue at the state level.
 - There were two proposed locations for the project. The far west corner of the upper meadow and the southeast corner of the lower meadow. The committee discussed both locations and is concerned that use of the lower meadow would potentially limit other proposed uses for that area. Specifically, additional parking, potential library site and possible expanded business zone.
 - **One question raised is a solar panel installation an approved project under the Mitchell Field Master Plan, or does it require a change and approval at town meeting?**
 - The following motion was approved [6-0-0].

Motion: The Mitchell Field committee recommends that any solar panel installation project be confined to the far west edge of the upper meadow and not include any part of the lower meadow so as not to adversely impact any future possible development in the lower meadow.

- **Community Garden** – Working with Environmental Solutions in Yarmouth for better irrigation water availability. Jane meets with them this coming Thursday.
- **2016 MF Committee Goals** - Added a Recreation section: Tailgate & Recreate event, replace picnic tables, and placing the swimmer's float. Committee approved the revised goals [4-0-0].
- **Invasive Species** – Mike McCabe has volunteered to become a certified applicator of herbicides. Jane feels we need to develop a management plan for MF as an ecological entity. Coastal Botanical Gardens has a management plan.
- **Summer Recreation Events:**
 - **Tailgate and Recreate Event – July 16, 10 am – 2:00 pm**
 - **HHLT Overnight Campout – August pending BoS approval**
- **Spring-Summer Work Plans:**
 - Road has been repaired behind the admin building.
 - Posts are in and the rope is strung for the beach access trail.
 - Need to clear the glass from behind the admin building.
 - Need to remove one more picnic table.
- **Action items** – No other changes.
- **September MF Meeting** – Monday, September 12, 2016.
- **Committee Membership** - Nancy Sohl submitted letter of resignation effective September 30, 2016.

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Handouts:

- *Mitchell Field Committee Goals – June 6, 2016*
- Nancy Sohl memo of July 2016
- *Survey on Mitchell Field Recreation and Waterfront Pier Form*
- *Mitchell Field Volunteer and Support Opportunities Form*
- Jane Covey Memo on 6-27-16 *Select Board Workshop with Revision Energy Regarding Possible Solar Installation at Mitchell Field* dated July 5, 2016
- Jane Covey Memo *Note on Siting Solar Panels on Mitchell Field with respect to Bob-o-Link Population* dated July 8, 2016
- Mitchell Field Map showing possible locations for the Solar Panel sites
- Mark Eyerman memo, *Planner's Update* dated July 8, 2016
- Mark Eyerman memo, *Mitchell Field Artificial Reef Work Plan* dated July 8, 2016
- Mark Eyerman memo, *Draft Scope of Services for Mitchell Field Pier Habitat Assessment* dated July 8, 2016
- Donald K. Miskill, Jr. email, *Mitchell Field Weekend* dated July 5, 2016 at 8:10 am

Next Meeting:

- MFC meeting on August 1, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Office
- MFC meeting on September 12, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Office
- MFC meeting on October 3, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Office

The MFIC Meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Don Miskill, Secretary