

Town of Harpswell
Mitchell Field Committee Meeting
April 1, 2019

Attending: Spike Haible (temp. Chair), Phil Conner, Karin Blake, Mose Price,
Also present: Mark Eyerman, Mary Ruchinskas

Quorum: not-present, meeting called to order 5:04PM

Meeting Minutes: The March 4, 2019 minutes were approved without comment.

Old Business: no changes from last meeting

New Business:

- **Harpswell Community Garden Update:** Mary Ruchinskas represented HCG to update committee on their response to ongoing concerns about PFO (firefighting foam) contamination of the dug well at the MF gardens. HCG met with DEP to review the current data; dug well has excessive level of PFO contamination, and HCG is researching how to assess any link to food grown using the water and how to test for PFO in garden soils. In meantime, HCG has decided to stop using the dug well as a water source, and asked MFC to support running a temporary waterline above-ground from the well 500 ft. +/- down the main road, with HCG to pay for installation, this to be for 2019 only. If this idea is not feasible, HCG will consider moving the gardens to a different location at MF. A quorum not being present, MFC gave consensus support for the temporary waterline.
- **Waterfront vision and Planner's update:** M. Eyerman provided handout dated March 21, 2019 reviewing MF float and ramp status, boat launch status and mooring and dinghy fees. SHIP grant moving ahead for 2020 float/ramp system. At town meeting there was some concern expressed about ramification of accepting State funds for projects at MF which would preclude local control of use by non-Harpswell taxpayers and residents. All articles, however, passed by wide margins at Town Meeting, with comments in support of the efforts to improve MF.
- **Steward's update:** Don Miskill's memo was attached to agenda packet for the meeting, with no discussion had.
- **MPUWG:** Mose Price reviewed meeting of March 21, which dealt with the question of any solar farm location and plan for combined site visit with Energy and Technology Committee to look at solar siting and possible cell tower location. The concept of conservation easement (CE) on MF was reviewed. K. Blake expressed concern that without easement MF would continue to be subject to various constituencies looking to use MF for various purposes. Karin suggested Trust for Public Lands be engaged by town to assist with easement idea. Spike Haible suggested a CE was not a good fit for MF given its limited habitat values except for parts of the open field, and concern that a CE would restrict legitimate uses of the property for recreation, solar, etc. It was agreed that master plan update needs to incorporate a statement about these conflicting concerns. Mose Price said the working group should seek advice on CE and not close any doors. The working group's assessment of administration building future was reviewed, Mose

Price noting that the cost of repurposing or replacing building was a stumbling block; should the cost of a building be determined before a use agreed to? It was agreed by working group that a public forum or survey would be useful, optimally held in summer when seasonal residents are here. It was determined by straw poll that majority of committee were not in favor of repurposing the existing building. Finally, Marine Business Zone was discussed, with some on committee not wanting any expansion of the zone, a suggestion that solar farm be located in upper business zone, a consideration of reconfiguring and possibly reducing size of business zone discussed, and staking the boundaries of the business zone would be very helpful in visualizing where it is and what changes might be made.

- **Generator building:** brief discussion about generator building and its future, with most agreeing that it has limited usefulness given its configuration and distance from water. Fishermen had expressed interest in using the building, but have not followed up. It was agreed to try to move the discussion forward with fishermen, if possible, and to include the generator building in the master plan update.
- **Other business:** Mark Eyerman raised concern that a solid core of MF volunteers was hard to come by, with Don Miskill doing most of the work there. Need to figure out how to develop a consistent volunteer base.

Meeting adjourned 6:48PM

Next MFC Meetings:

Monday May 6, 2019 5:00PM

Monday June 3, 2019 5:00PM

Next MF MPUWG Meetings:

Thursday April 18, 2019 5:00PM

Thursday June 20, 2019 5:00PM

Minutes by Spike Haible