

**Junction Village Open Space
Task Force**
Meeting Minutes
March 25, 2021
Online Zoom Video Session

Pursuant to a notice and agenda filed with the Town Clerk, the Planning Board met at 5:00 p.m. on March 25, 2021, and held a virtual online public meeting via <https://zoom.us>.

Members present: Harry Bartlett, Christa Collins, Sue Felshin, Robert Hartman, Carlene Hempel

Also present: Peter Lowitt, liaison from the Concord Housing Development Corporation (CHDC); Marcia Rasmussen, Director of Planning and Land Management for the Town of Concord; Elizabeth Rust, Director, Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO), Select Board liaison Linda Escobedo.

The meeting was called to order by Carlene Hempel at 5:03 p.m.

Vote to confirm a chair and clerk

Nominees from the previous month's meeting were: for chair, Carlene Hempel, and for clerk, Sue Felshin. Ms. Collins moved to elect Ms. Hempel as chair and Ms. Felshin as clerk. Mr. Bartlett seconded and all voted in favor.

Minutes

The Task Force reviewed the draft minutes for the meeting of March 25, 2021. Ms. Collins moved to accept the minutes as written. Mr. Bartlett seconded and all voted in favor.

Discussion of RFQ for landscape architect services

Ms. Rust described the RFQ for a consultant to the Task Force and requested that committee members assist in broadcasting the availability of the RFQ to suitable firms. [Ms. Escobedo joined the meeting at 5:09 p.m.] A minimum of three quotes is required. Several possibilities were noted.

Discussion of introductory letter from the Task Force to interested parties/committees/boards

Ms. Felshin moved that the Chair be authorized to write and send a letter to other relevant committees in Concord informing them of our work and soliciting their input. Ms. Collins seconded and all voted in favor.

The Task Force brainstormed for relevant groups: West Concord Junction Cultural District Committee, West Concord Advisory Committee, Natural Resources Commission, Historical

Commission, Commission on Disability, Pollinator Health Advisory Committee, West Concord Business Community group, West Concord Green Thumbs, Fowler Branch Library, Umbrella Arts & Environment Program, Concord Cycles, Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT) Advisory Committee, Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, Sudbury Assabet Concord Comprehensive Invasive Species Management Association (SuAsCo Cisma), Metrowest Conservation Alliance's Native Pollinators Group, OARS. Also the Department of Corrections, which might want to give input on, for example, height limitations and screening. Ms. Rasmussen advised that for this purpose, the Dept. of Corrections is best contacted through the person in charge of facilities. Ms. Escobedo volunteered to look for language in a deed or transfer document for the Junction Village site that might detail the Dept. of Corrections' requirements or rights of refusal.

Discussion of how to complete engineering baseline documents

A baseline documentation report must accompany the conservation restriction. Ms. Rust reported that she will obtain the plan from William Murray, Director of Landscape Architecture and Planning, PLACES Associates Inc. She will meet with Delia Kaye, Director of the Division of Natural Resources, and possibly a member of the Natural Resources Commission, in order to look into options for obtaining aerial photos (by drone). Ms. Collins noted that it is a significant job to complete the baseline report, and the report can't be finalized until just before the conservation restriction is recorded because photographs must record whether conditions change from year to year. The Task Force will make the master plan, while a different party will complete the report.

Next steps for preparation of concepts

Potential master planning concepts include the "triangle" paths, plantings, benches and wayfinding measures. Ms. Escobedo noted that the Task Force can wait for the landscape architect to complete their work or begin immediately. At the Site Visit on March 23, Phil Posner, chair of Concord Bikes cycling group, suggested active recreation uses for the "triangle," the smaller portion of Open Space adjacent to the BFRT, such as a skate park. However, active recreation may not be allowed by the deed. Ms. Rust noted that the deed specifies that "no improvements or landscaping such that no shadow shall fall on solar panels on" prison land. The Task Force discussed finding photos of interesting ideas that can be posted on the Task Force's Town website and used to solicit opinions and preferences from the public. [Mr. Lowitt joined the meeting at 5:40 p.m.] Discussion moved to distributing facets of planning to different members, e.g., historical aspects. The Task Force brainstormed about people who could inform the committee about the site's history: David Wood, curator at the Concord Museum; someone from the Musketaquid organization (now part of the Umbrella Arts Center); Shirley Blancke, an archeologist working to categorize Concord Museum artifacts. Different meetings of the Task Force could concentrate on different topics. Mr. Bartlett noted Malcolm X and Mother Theresa as important historical figures who were at MCI in one capacity or another.

Ms. Escobedo noted the short timeline: information gathering in the immediate term and a public session in June presenting three concepts if the Task Force is to meet a funding deadline in the fall. Ms. Rasmussen commented that the goal is to have enough information to submit to the Community Preservation Committee in September; the Task Force would presumably have two

public sessions, one with an initial presentation of ideas and another with more concrete ideas, with the first session ideally before school lets out. The date for the first public session will be set after the landscape architect is hired.

Ms. Hempel summarized next steps: write and send letter to other committees, get a landscape architect, and line up historians for the next meeting. Ms. Rasmussen offered to reach out to an additional possible historian who is a doctor interested in acknowledging the prison cemetery. Members of the Task Force should transmit ideas for the site to the Chair, for discussion at the next meeting.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Adjournment

The next schedule meeting will take place at 5 p.m. on April 23 on the Town's Zoom channel.

Ms. Felshin moved to adjourn. Ms. Collins seconded and all voted in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Felshin