

**Junction Village Open Space
Task Force**
Meeting Minutes
September 8, 2021
Online Zoom Video Session

Pursuant to a notice and agenda filed with the Town Clerk, the Junction Village Open Space Task Force met at 5:00 p.m. on Sept. 8, 2021, and held a virtual online public meeting via <https://zoom.us>.

Members present: Harry Bartlett, Christa Collins, Sue Felshin (clerk), Robert Hartman (joined at 5:29 p.m.), Carlene Hempel, (chair).

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); Linda Escobedo, Select Board liaison; William (Bill) Murray of PLACES.

The meeting was called to order by Carlene Hempel at 5:02 p.m.

Minutes:

Mr. Bartlett asked about the process for submitting to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC). Ms. Hempel explained that because we are proposing a multi-phased project, this application will be general. The Task Force does not need to select a specific design for the purposes of the application. Phase 2 of the project would start a year from now. Ms. Rasmussen added that there are limited funds available from CPC so it makes sense to do it in phases. The first phase request will cover site clean-up, grading, preliminary planting, and basic trail layout. The design will be finalized by the end of the year.

CPC application is due Sept. 17th and Ms. Rasmussen will be away. Ms. Felshin suggested that the Task Force focus its discussion on the application rather than on the designs themselves.

Ms. Hempel shared a draft project summary that Task Force members will be able to review in more depth in the next few days. It describes the full context of the project, discusses phases and implementation plan, key project contacts, and why Town Meeting should support the project. The application must address how the project serves underserved populations, and how it reflects goals set out in various Town plans. She asked for input on sustainability measures. Letters from other committees are due in November. Ms. Hempel is working on that and asked for input on additional entities that could be approached.

Ms. Hempel proposed a final discussion of the proposal at the Sept. 15 meeting, ending before sundown to accommodate the Yom Kippur holiday.

Ms. Hempel invited Mr. Murray to speak about the project's construction costs. He prepared a rough estimate of \$1.3 million to \$1.4 million for the project in its entirety, which can be refined as the scope is narrowed. The path, at 1500', requires a lot of earth removal. The Task Force should think about ways to reuse the soil on site. Ms. Rasmussen reminded the Task Force members that they will need to solicit more input from the public about programmatic needs once there are more refined design options. She also noted this is envisioned as a conservation restriction, so we may want to look at the riverfront area and decide whether the level of development there warrants an open space restriction instead. Ms. Hempel noted that the West Concord Cultural Council loved the idea of the amphitheater.

Ms. Rust suggested a public forum to present the options we have to get public feedback, and then another once the Task Force has narrowed it to one design, to confirm that the feedback was incorporated correctly. It would be ideal to have done that prior to Town Meeting in the spring. The CPC has public hearings much earlier, usually in December. This year it will be December 1. Marcia suggested the third week of October for the first forum. Ms. Collins requested an iteration of the hybrid plan that was discussed at the last meeting. The Task Force will want to have at least two plans to share at the forum. The Task Force will spend most of the meeting on the 15th providing additional feedback to Mr. Murray. The Task Force identified Thursday, October 14th from 5–7 as a date for the forum, and Ms. Rasmussen confirmed that it doesn't conflict with anything else on the Town calendar. Ms. Rust will be able to give an update on the residential portion of the project.

The number of phases required to complete the project will depend on the complexity of the project. Ms. Collins asked about ongoing maintenance and when we would need to consider that, and who would be responsible. Ms. Rasmussen said it could be Parks & Recreation, Facilities, Public Works, the Friends of Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, or a future Friends group. Ms. Hempel noted that it is a part of the application to address maintenance. The West Concord Green Thumbs and Natural Resources are also possibilities, and we will want to approach all the groups as we move forward to get input.

The Task Force discussed a meeting schedule and tentative agendas:

15th – Task Force provides additional feedback on concept plans

23rd – Mr. Murray presents two new concept plans

7th – Forum planning

14th – Public forum

Task Force members are also invited to send feedback on the plans to Ms. Hempel in advance of the meeting on Sept. 15th.

Ms. Felshin made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Hartman. Meeting adjourned at 5:52.

Respectfully submitted,
Christa Collins

