

Temple Land Use Committee

Minutes

December 5, 2022

Present: Tim Fiske, Gail Cromwell, Christine Robidoux, Honey Hastings, Lilliane LeBel, Allan Pickman, George Willard, Kathy Boot, Scott Hecker

Guest: Connie Kieley

The group met with Kent Perry, Road Agent, at 4:30, to tour the current highway buildings.

Tim Fiske called the meeting to order at 5 pm.

1. The Minutes of November 14, 2022, were approved with several corrections.
2. Lilliane LeBel described a plan for several mailings to the town. She recommended 4 distinct mailings, the first two would focus on the safety problem, describing the problem, and then offering solutions. The second two would focus on the problems associated with the current highway garage buildings and location, first facts, then possible solutions. What are the most important points to be emphasized for each. These would go out starting in January for safety and February for the Highway Dept problems, followed by forums for townspeople to have a chance to discuss.

A two page handout from Lilliane was discussed. It was suggested to add descriptions of the size of the highway trucks to emphasize their general incompatibility with the usual cars and pickup trucks. There have been accidents and near accidents. Children present particular problems because they dart out from the library, and even have been found playing in the town sand pile which is quite dangerous. The library is much more active now, which is great news, but it does raise safety issues. The library is planning to construct a fence to contain participants in the back and side of the library, which should help. Town Hall activity has also picked up with the end of the covid pandemic.

Tim emphasized that the highway department needs to be expanded and there is no room to do so. A listing of the highway equipment was discussed, showing \$1.3 million in equipment, with 8 major trucks/equipment, only 4 of which can be stored inside, plus the tractor, implements, and brush chipper. The list is attached. It is commonly believed that inside storage increases the life of equipment by 30%. Proper storage would save the town considerable money.

Christine thought the town should address safety sooner rather than later, doing what could be done now. What sort of things? Painted crosswalks across the highway, sidewalks that would create safer passage to parked cars, more lighting, particularly using motion sensors. Allan thought \$5-10K would cover a lot of such costs.

Kathy suggested that we worry about the highway trucks passing between the library and town hall but if the back area became an extended parking lot that would also create more traffic in that area. The Charrette identified possible 60 parking places. Cars and trucks are different from large highway trucks but the numbers would add up. Lighting and sidewalks are needed for safety.

It was wondered why the Birchwood Inn continues to allow its employees to park on the town common choice places. The Select Board suggested to the Inn some time ago that employees should be parking behind the town hall, leaving the best places for their customers. This has not happened.

Gail raised the question of costs. For many people cost will be the important issue. Where in the flyers will this appear? Tim of course will be working on developing costs but people will want that information.

Tim believes that the current trust funds will be sufficient to do the necessary site work, leaving open the possibility of achieving "shovel ready" status necessary to apply for grants. We need the town to agree on the proposed site at the next town meeting. We would not ask for more money. We need to formulate our goal for town meeting.

Christine suggested that because some people are reluctant to speak in public forums one-on-one private conversations/discussions with residents might work better. Announce such a time for residents to come in and talk with some members of the committee. Concern was expressed that it would be very time consuming to do that.

Scott discussed his idea of tying the new Highway Dept site to a proposal to put a conservation easement on the Skladany land, holding out only X acres for the new site. The Charrette did indicate that using the land for hiking and riding trails would be a very popular idea. Committee members wondered if that would make the proposal more palatable for those who we believe object to any change? Tim and Scott have discussed where parking for such trails could go, possibly on the Holt property, but that is considerably in the future. Honey was reluctant to give up the Holt property in case the Historical Society decided that was their preferred site for a museum. It was stated that the Holt property is a separate lot and should remain that way, not be merged into the Skladany land. Both are town properties.

It was suggested that Lilliane prepare sample flyers so we could better evaluate her plan. She will send out to us as soon as possible for our comments.

Our next meeting will be on Monday, December 19 at 5:30 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30.

Respectfully submitted

Gail Cromwell

