

Town Land Use Committee

June 5, 2023

Minutes

Present: Tim Fiske, Kathy Boot, Allan Pickman, Lilliane LeBel, Scott Hecker, Paul Quinn, Gail Cromwell

Guests: Connie Kieley, Bruce Kullgren, Emily Sliviak, Peter Allen, Amy Cabana, Matt Cabana

Chairman Fiske called the meeting to order at 5 pm.

The Minutes of April 3 and May 15 were each approved without change.

Gail stated that at the last meeting, Paul asked if the Committee had ever approved moving the highway garage. She said she was not on the committee at the time but looked up early minutes and discovered that the committee voted unanimously to do so at its meeting of December 16, 2020. It also approved a Report to the Select Board at that time as well, which gave a summary of all its activities in its first year and a set of Recommendations to the Select Board, dated December 17, 2020. It is on the town website and Gail recommended that everyone read it.

Tim wished to note that at the present time the highway garage site is not known to be contaminated. The huge diesel spill that occurred in 1990 was cleaned up to the satisfaction of the Dept of Environmental Services (DES).

Election of Officers: Tim Fiske was elected chair by acclamation, and Gail Cromwell was similarly elected Secretary.

Considering the presence of our guests, Tim asked if they had a list of questions for our group. They basically want to know the costs of keeping the garage at the present site. What are the environmental concerns.

Tim described the benzene leak that contaminated the well at the Birchwood Inn, and also that both a well under the chapel and a well serving the Temple store were contaminated in the past. The Inn drilled a new well but the church and the store were both put on town water to compensate for the contamination. It was generally agreed that if pollution occurs we should clean it up, but also get the problem removed to avoid a repeat. Given the age of the present site, Tim feels there is a possibility there may be some small areas where there was soil contamination from oil changes and other machinery fluids.

Scott spoke to this issue, that nothing should be going into the ground. We need a retention pond because spills can happen. The present site does not have room to create such a pond.

That is one big reason why the new site would be better. He mentioned that DES has offered to test all local wells within a 500' radius of the garage area for \$200. The proximity to an aquifer for the town is too important to ignore.

Amy Cabana asked why the committee has not analyzed the present site and considered that Peggy Cournoyer has offered to sell land to the town. Tim said he has talked to Peggy for years and believes she does not wish to sell anything. She has only .4/acre available to sell. Allan Pickman replied that even if she sold her .4 acre, you need to build a retention pond and then there is no increase in the usable space at the site. Tim suggested that Bruce and Amy should bring an actual contract to the special meeting with a legal commitment to sell, the price and the amount and location of the land.

Regarding the Skladany site that the town voted in March, Sandford engineers have done a site plan for two acres and they have a wetlands specialist. They will come up with a plan to cross the small stream. We will not know real costs until the site work can be started.

Tim said that continuing with the present site means dealing with a cramped inadequate space and giving up any chance to solve other problems such as parking and the possible need eventually to expand the town hall/church septic system. Spending money to analyze the site would be a waste of money.

Peter Allen said he thought the planned relocation of the garage was premature because he wanted to see a demographic study, a safety study and a traffic study. Tim noted that he has personally lived with the problems of safety and traffic at the present site, having worked there for over 30 years. The Charette group also noted problems, questioning why a DPW is ever located in the middle of a town. Gail mentioned that she has begun looking at grant possibilities and improving pedestrian safety is a promising area.

Tim and Allan both spoke to the question of costs. Allan said his experience has been that a major renovation can cost as much or more than new construction. Trying to fix the difficulties of the present site is likely to cost more than a relocation.

The group agreed to a next meeting on Monday, June 12, at 5 pm.

The meeting adjourned a 6:34 pm.

Respectfully,

Gail Cromwell

