

WATERBURY PARKS STEERING COMMITTEE

Approved Minutes

Thursday, March 2, 2023

Waterbury Parks Steering Committee Members (or Substitutes)

Alyssa Johnson – Waterbury Selectboard; Tami Bass - Skate Park Coalition; David Frothingham – Center Chains Disc Golf; Steve Lotspeich – Waterbury Planning Department; Alex Thomsen – Capital Soccer Dan Potter – Public At Large; Lawrence “Lefty” Sayah - Edward Farrar Utility District

SE Group Staff and Subcontractors:

Patrick Olstad & Elena Juodisius

Public:

Eric Lustgarten, Meg Baldor, Tom Scribner, Roger Tubby, Jake Pitman, MK Monley, Laura Parette, Tom Leitz, Duncan McDougal, Mark Stirewalt, Anne Imhoff, Monica Callan, Belle McDougal, Mike Rossi, Billy Vigdor, Lisa Walton, Mike Bard, Maureen McCracken, Bill Minter, Jane Brown, Sarah Callahan, Chris Viens, Jesse Wing, Roger Clapp

CALL TO ORDER

Steve Lotspeich opened the meeting at 6:33 p.m. at the Steele Community Room, 28 N. Main St. and via Zoom.

AGENDA REVIEW AND MODIFICATIONS

There were no modifications to the agenda. Steve noted that we would begin discussions with the Ice Center Area this evening.

CONCEPT PLAN COMMUNITY MEETING

Steve Lotspeich opened the discussion of the Ice Center Area by explaining that after conversations with the Regional Floodplain Manager from the VT Department of Environmental Conservation, the plans were modified to keep development downstream of the Ice Center. It is anticipated that by doing so permitting would be much easier. Patrick Olstad gave an overview of the Ice Center Area concept plans. Option #1 keeps the road in place whereas option #2 moves the road closer to the railway corridor.

Members of the public then had an opportunity to speak and raised the following topics:

- How difficult would it be to permit moving the road?
 - o Steve stated that it would likely be very difficult, but is not off the table yet and further discussion is needed with the State.
- Thankful for work to date.
- Which if any trails will be wheelchair accessible? What is the planned parking capacity increase? Is the planning in-line with Waterbury values? Will the Conservation Commission’s planned value mapping be synced in some way to this work?
 - o Patrick explained that the darker orange paths indicated on the map are planned to be accessible, yellower paths would be more natural.

- What other options were considered in place of the soccer fields? Will parking be an issue due to strong visitation? Should the gathering space be bigger to allow for arts/performance?
 - o Steve explained that due to permitting constraints, any future activity in the area of the soccer fields is likely to be limited to on-the-grass activity. Patrick also stated that they did not hear a strong preference for any other uses during the visioning phase of this project.
- What are the plans for the town materials storage area? Is the entire space utilized and does it need to be as big as it is? Will the space be changed as a result of this effort?
 - o Steve discussed that the area is extensively used by the town currently for both snow and materials storage. Additionally, there is planned screening in the site plans.
- Accessible pathways are important to include.
- The challenges and possibilities of combining private and public funding was discussed.
- Concern was raised about the potential for drug activity surrounding a space designed for children/families. Will the facility have nighttime lights? Will it have hours of operation?

The discussion then moved to the Hope Davey Park and Patrick Olstad provided an overview of the concept plan. Members of the public raised the following topics:

- How long will the comment period be open?
 - o Steve stated that the group would like to see comments submitted by 3/10/23, but that any comments that come in afterwards will also be forwarded to the Steering Committee.
- Would like to see a full basketball court with two hoops at Hope Davey. This preference was reiterated several times.
- Support for the concept plan.
- Rehabilitation of the existing skate park.
- Concern regarding parking near the Fire Department.
 - o Steve pointed out that the dark grey area shown on the concept plan would have gravel and serve as overflow parking. He will discuss the concern with the Fire Department.
- Potential Municipal liability for injuries resulting from Disc Golf activities.
- A lack of design for the current Disc Golf course.
- The plan to mix a walking path into the disc golf course is incompatible with very high disc golf use during the summer months.
- Would like to see ADA compliance considered with respect to the disc golf area.
- Support for the consideration of a volleyball space.
- Concern for all the various potential uses that have been expressed and whether there is enough space to accommodate them all.
- Will screening apply to all abutting properties in Hope Davey?
- Playground should be expanded and be ADA compliant.

- Could there also be seating?
- Supportive for some type of art installation.
- Support for the walking path loop concept.
- 18 holes of disc golf is much more impactful than the straight lines shown on the map.
- Support for an official setback between park infrastructure and neighboring parcels.
- Concern that we are trying to fit too much in too little space with Hope Davey. This concern was expressed several times.
- Cannot use the walking path at 5pm on a summer day because there is too much disc golf activity.
- What analysis was done regarding other Disc Golf spaces and how much land they occupy?
- Should scale back the disc golf to give a walking path a fair chance.
- When will costs be discussed?
 - o Steve stated that cost estimating has not been done yet but will be in the master plan.

ADJOURNMENT:

Steve Lotspeich adjourned the meeting at 8:21pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Potter, Secretary