

## Acton Dog Park Committee

Meeting minutes

First Floor Meeting Room, Acton Memorial Library

22 August, 2017

### Committee Members Present:

- Mike Perry, Chair
- Cathy Fochtman
- Bill Alstrom
- Betsy Kristl
- Clare Siska
- Tom Gillespie
- Rodney Smith

### Absent:

- Joan Gardner
- Karen Martin

### Other Attendees:

- Joe Will

**Mr. Perry called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM.**

### Comments from the Public

- None

### Review and accept prior meeting minutes

- The amended minutes of the 8/8/2017 meeting were unanimously accepted.

### Time Frame and Process

- Discussion around the need for establishing a time frame, set of goals/dates, and a process for how we move forward. No specific actions were identified.

### Need for the Park, “Beyond the Dog Park” discussion, Justification of the park

- Discussion and agreement that while there are unofficial dog parks in Acton (Offleash Areas – OLAs), this committee is focused on the need for an *enclosed, accessible* dog park.
- Committee members vary in their interpretation of whether the town has yet sanctioned a dog park. Do we need to make a proposal for approval and at what stage of the process? Will a Town Meeting vote be required? Some clarity from Joan Gardner, BoS liason, would be valuable.
- Discussion and general agreement that we will make our strongest case by measuring interest; selling the concept to the community; identifying stakeholders; and identifying and engaging supporters.
  - Bill A to draft a paragraph for inclusion in the upcoming *Municipal Quarterly* – Cathy F will submit for publication
  - Survey – not at this time; target audience and purpose TBD
  - Articles in the *Beacon* – we will look into this down the road
  - Octoberfest (date?) – Acton Recreation will have a table. Cathy F & Betsy K will propose to this committee a plan for Dog Park Committee presence within the Recreation table.
- Members agree that we should not have to “reinvent the wheel” to prepare a justification.
  - Betsy K will share her research with this committee.
  - Tom G will contact local dog park organizations (e.g., Maynard, Chelmsford) to request copies of their justification documents. Betsy K to provide a contact list

- Cathy F is a member of the National Park and Recreation Association (NRPA), which has information on dog parks (see nrpa.org)
- Clare will draft a “needs” summary based on the above along with salient points from “Beyond the Dog Park” article. Time frame TBD.

**Town sites, specifically Morrison Farm and Ice House Farm and the 2014 TM info**

- Review of proposed Ice House Pond and boat launch improvements for Summer 2018, including a boardwalk and a new well for garden irrigation. Could this be a possible source of fresh water for a dog park?
- The town continues to explore proposed uses for Morrison Farm.
- Use and disposition of the existing house is yet TBD; Betsy K described the concept of “barn hunting,” a dog-friendly activity, and suggested the house might be conducive to that activity.

**Funding**

- Too early to solicit donations or apply for CPA funding; we need more widespread support and a concrete plan.
- A 501C3 may be needed in the future

**Field Trip to existing dog parks**

- This item was tabled.

**Maintenance Requirements**

- This this item was tabled.

**Future meetings and calendar events:**

- ADPC full committee: Thursday, September 7, 7:00 PM
- Octoberfest: (date?)

**Adjourn**

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Clare Siska