

Town of Hudson
Benson Park Committee
Meeting Minutes
November 4, 2010

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

A meeting of the Benson Committee was called to order by Chair H. Schibanoff at 7:08 pm. November 4, 2010 in the Community Development Room, Town Hall. M. Lee led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Attendance:

J. Barnes, Late, Ken Dickinson, Late, R. Empey, C. Gagnon, Selectman Liaison S. Jasper, M. Lee, P. Nichols, Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh, Alternates John Leone, and A. Desrosiers

3. Public Input

None

4. Presentations

Bernie Manor came before the Committee to talk about the Train Station. He is still in negotiations with the State at this time. It seems that the cost went from one amount to a greater amount. Another meeting was held on Tuesday, November 2, 2010, and he stated that they were back to square one. He seems to think that a better consensus of what each side should get done. B. Manor seems to think that no action would be taken until next spring. He found the State more responsive at this meeting and is hopeful that things will go forward. One of the questions from the State is the use of the Train Station and would water and sewerage be needed. A decision should be forthcoming soon if this would be open to the public. The cost of the sewer and water would be quite high. He felt that with the foundation done, the building moved to this site, roof fixed, utilities added, the money would run out about this time. The State agreed that this was about all we could do so he felt that we were moving in the right direction. He has had two (2) meetings with the Concord Historical Group, one on site and one in Concord. They requested showing them another site plan with the building moved 90 degrees in the same location. Another issue to be worked out is asbestos shingles versus slate shingles. B. Manor thought that this was resolved but they are looking for cost estimates of both roof shingles. He was told that if we make the inside of the Train Station public it would have to be ADA compliant. He is looking for direction from the Committee at this time. Chair H. Schibanoff asked if we were in danger of losing the Grant money and B. Manor said that we are good until the end of this year. If we can get our Architect Engineer on board before then we will not lose the Grant. P. Nichols asked which way the building would face if it were moved to a 90 degree angle. This was explained and Selectman Liaison Shawn Jasper said that this made no sense and he would be glad to get involved from the Legislative end after the first of December. Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh asked what the Historical and Public use of the building would have the final word in regards to ADA. B. Manor stated that if the public were allowed use of the building then ADA rules. D. Empey asked if the building was moved and secured for now would it be possible to open it to the public in the

future. He also said that he only remembered the building with a shingle roof and he questioned the Slate roof being a consideration. J. Barnes said that he noticed that the finish line for this project seems to be moving backward and that we are no further along then we were a year ago. B. Manor felt that at this time he sees a small change from D.O.T. They seem willing to try to get back on track in helping to resolve the problems. Discussion on the above followed. Chair H. Schibanoff asked what B. Manor needed from the Committee at this time. B. Manor said he would like some idea of what we would be planning for the inside of the building to take back to the State for his next meeting. After much discussion it was decided that the interior of the Train Station would hold two (2) meeting rooms and bathroom facilities. This would be in keeping with the old design.

5. Approval of Minutes

A. Minutes of October 21, 2010 Benson Park Committee.

J. Leone made a motion to accept minutes

C. Gagnon seconded the motion

All in favor...Motion Carries

6. Old Business

A. Parking Lot Expansion

Selectman Liaison S. Jasper told the Committee that the expanded parking lot is now complete. The Town Workers started clearing the area on Monday, November 1, 2010. The thinking that the area was all ledge was found to be just large rocks. These were removed and they also cleared nearer to the fence to allow for a double row of cars in the center. The capacity for vehicles has now been increased to at least 100. In the future we may have to budget for rap or something else, but for now this should be sufficient. He also stated that more clearing was done and more will be done as the weather allows. The town is not sure where the drainage goes. The Town put 1500 gallons of water down one of the culverts and could not find out where the water came out but it never backed up

B. Invasive Plants

Chair H. Schibanoff asked if the Town had removed any of the invasive plants at the top of the extended driveway. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper was not aware of the removal of any of these plants. The plant is a highly invasive plant (Japanese Knotweed)

C. Park Benches, Selection, Location, Installation

J. Leone said that at the last meeting there was a recommendation from the Friends of Benson Park to go ahead and purchase benches that were in some areas around town. Some of the Committee Members wanted to check these out and sit on them before a commitment was made. J. Leone brought the catalog in to review other benches. P. Nichols said that she went to the Park off Greeley Street to try the benches there and she found them to be uncomfortable for sitting for more than a few minutes. The seat was not deep enough and the back was too straight. A. Desrosiers said she found them to be the same. Not comfortable for sitting for any length of time. Chair H. Schibanoff said that with so many choices for benches a sub-committee should be formed to look into this and bring recommendations back to this Committee. That sub-committee could also determine locations. He asked if anyone was willing to volunteer and K. Dickinson and Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh were the first to volunteer, along with J. Leone.

D. Gorilla House Funding

J. Leone reminded the Committee that at the last meeting he submitted a proposal to ask for \$1,000 to purchase materials to finish the wall above the Gorilla cage. The Committee approved to sum to ask the BOS for funds. He is still waiting to hear if funds will be forthcoming at this time. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that at the last BOS meeting a budget was being presented and that the Committee had over spent by \$1,800. He is investigating how this happened and in what area the overage occurred. The budget review will also be on the agenda for the next BOS meeting so Selectman Liaison S. Jasper will not be requesting the \$1,000 at this time. Chair H. Schibanoff asked J. Leone if this would be a hindrance if the weather changed in the interim. J. Leone stated that the volunteers would continue the work with the resources that are available at this time. P. Nichols asked if the work was not completed before the winter would this damage work that was already done. J. Leone said that it was inside the Gorilla cage so it would not be damaged by storms.

7. New Business

A. Committee Reports

P. Nichols wanted to let the Committee know that the last of the brochures have been placed in the park. There will be no brochures ordered for the winter months. She has placed a flyer in the Kiosk letting visitors know this and that they can print a copy of the map from the Town Web Site. She also posted the new hours in the Kiosk. She was not sure they were in effect at this time but Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that they were. J. Barnes asked out of curiosity just how many brochures we have gone through this year. P. Nichols was not sure at this time. She did not have the figures with her. Guess work put the figure around 6,000. The usage of the brochures had dropped dramatically during the week and the biggest use was weekends and holidays. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that Selectman R. Coutu suggested looking into the Lowell Voc/Tech, they have a print shop and this could be a possible source for printing in the coming year and a little less expensive. P. Nichols said she would consult with Selectman R. Coutu regarding this venue. C. Gagnon asked if we anticipate a spike in visitors during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays and would we want brochures in the park during this time. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that he would not ask the BOS for money at this time and P. Nichols said the same. Chair H. Schibanoff said he was glad that the Committee was looking for other ways to communicate with people by using the Town Web site to get the maps and information.

B. Warning on Trails

Chair H. Schibanoff said that Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh and D. Empey was involved in this, that people complained about the difficulty of the Hazelton Barn Trail. They are requesting that some sort of warning be posted on this trail. This was brought up for discussion. K. Dickinson said that he would say no to a warning being posted. All the trails have levels of difficulty and he did not know what people were referring to. He said that maybe a notice be posted about trails having elevation changes. Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh felt that a warning should be posted about rocks, roots and elevation changes that make it difficult for some people to maneuver. She was surprised by the number of people who bring strollers on these trails. C. Gagnon said that she could see elevation changes but as a hiker, these trails are a walk in the park and not all that difficult. J. Barnes agreed and said we were not talking about the White

Mountains. He mentioned that there were rocks and roots that you might have to step over or go around. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that he would not agree to more signs in the park, if people were on a trail and it became too difficult then they could turn around and come back. K. Dickinson stated that his work in Park areas does show some with a few warnings but he felt that this would be optional not mandatory. Vice Chair S Rumbaugh said that she would like to see a warning posted with the map on the Kiosk to watch for rocks, roots and elevations on some trails. D. Empey made a proposal that he would make a sign to go on the Master Trail Map at the Kiosk saying that the Hazelton Barn and Oakridge Trail may be challenging for some people due to elevation and terrain changes. C. Gagnon asked if we knew the highest elevation in the park. D. Empey said that it was 300 feet. The lowest was 172 feet. It is 128 feet from the lowest to the highest spot in the park.

Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh made a motion on D. Empey' recommendation to create a sign on the Kiosk with a footnote stating that the Hazelton Barn Trail has some elevation an terrain difficulties

D. Empey seconded the motion

4 in favor-5 opposed-Motion Defeated

8. Other Business/Remarks by Committee Members

J. Barnes said that monies were discussed for a number of things and if the BOS were looking at us to be accountable and responsible for this spending for the park he would like to start seeing a regular report of what has been spent. Chair H. Schibanoff said that he gets a general one from the Town Treasurer and we have one that D. Yates keeps track of. D. Empey said that he thought we were supposed to get a timely update on park expenditures. Chair H. Schibanoff said to remind him before the next meeting and he would put it on the agenda.

C. Gagnon said that the next clean-up would be on Saturday, November 13, 2010, from 9:00 AM until 2:00 PM, with a rain date on Sunday, November 14, 2010. Plans have been approved by the BOS for the clearing of the Dog Park area, so if D. Briand wants volunteers for this area than that will be the main concentration of this cleat-up. C. Gagnon is waiting to hear from other sub-committee members, trails, etc. for final clearing before the winter sets in. This will most likely bet he last clean-up this year. Chair H. Schibanoff asked Selectman Liaison S. Jasper if the insurance and other problems regarding the Dog Park had been resolved. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that it seemed to be a misunderstanding about the insurance. The liability is with the Town.

Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh reminded everyone that there will be someone from the Fish and Game Department on Tuesday at 1:00 P.M. They will be meeting in the Main Parking lot and will be walking the trails to identify animal habitats, and looking at the water to see how it can be protected. They would also identify areas that would not be allowed as an adopt-a-spot or for future landscaping. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper asked if they would be walking the entire park to put all areas in perspective. Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh said that she felt the adopt-a-spot areas would be mainly in the Historic District and wanted to concentrate on the area from the elephant barn down to the lake, in that general area. Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh said that she would show the Fish and Game person the entire park. D. Empey stated that he agreed with Selectman Liaison S. Jasper that he would like to have the Fish and Game person see as much of the park as possible. Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh stated that this person is a Hudson Resident and has been a visitor to the park many times. She will see that an overview of the entire park will be

offered. Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh also said that she has been receiving many calls about students wanting to do volunteer hours in the park as part of their community service requirements. She is sending out the notices to the Committee Members and is not sure if anyone has needs and corresponding back to them. D. Empey said that this is an issue that needs to be addressed. A large number of these requests are coming in and to be honest he feels that they are being unreasonable. He feels that we have somewhat of an obligation to help the students, but when a parent calls and says that their child needs 9 hours of volunteer work in two weeks but that one of those weeks they will be on vacation and expect someone from the park to set up the hours with no thought that this person is a volunteer and also has to have someone else there in the chance that someone could get injured. This is just an example of what has been happening, it goes on all the time and it is very hard to schedule time on such short notice. C. Gagnon stated that she receives a lot of request and she lets them know when the next clean-up will be. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that this was not reasonable to be putting all this on D. Empey. He felt that there should be a contact from the school or an adult that D. Empey could contact if he had something that a student could do and give them a time he would be available. Then it would be up to the student to try to work around this schedule. The Park closes at 5:00 pm now so it would be difficult to get in many hours after school. Chair H. Schibanoff asked Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh if she would contact the school and see what could be set up in the future. This would be discussed in more detail at a late date.

Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that he had not been in the Park in a few weeks and was amazed at the work that has been done. Adopt-a-spots areas have really opened up the park and he mentioned the Boyer area and the aviary area and was very impressed. He was hoping to see someone from the Recreation Department would come in to discuss the playground. An update on what the Recreation Department is planning would be appreciated at this time. There is nothing in the park for children at this time and this would be a wonderful addition to a beautiful park. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper asked if Chair H. Schibanoff would contact the Recreation Department and ask them to come to the next meeting.

Chair H. Schibanoff stated that he presented the Benson Park Budget to the Selectmen at a meeting last week. There were a lot of questions but everything was approved at this time.

Next Meeting:

November 18 2010

7:00 PM

The Ann Seabury Room, Police Station

9. Adjournment 8:23 pm

P. Nichols made a motion to adjourn

C. Gagnon Seconded the Motion

All in favor-Motion Carries