

**Norwell Board of Selectmen
Open Meeting Minutes
3/13/19**

TOWN OF NORWELL
TOWN CLERK
2019 APR 12 AM 9:22

Present: Ellen Allen, Alison Demong, Gregg McBride, Jason Brown, Joe Rull, Peter Morin.

Ellen Allen called the meeting to order at 7:06pm in the Selectmen's conference room.

Motion; made by Gregg McBride, seconded by Alison Demong, to appoint Joe Rull to the MBTA Advisory Board. Unanimously voted

Carleton Committee Charge

Ms. Allen read the proposed edit to the committee charge that will allow considering the creation of parking to access the Whiting Fields. Gregg McBride suggested some additional minor changes.

Motion; made by Gregg McBride, seconded by Alison Demong, to accept the edits to the Carleton Committee Charge as amended. Unanimously voted.

The updated Charge is attached to these minutes.

Peter Forman, President of the South Shore Chamber of Commerce, has requested a BOS letter of support as part of a state grant application to study regional water/wastewater and the effects on economic growth. A copy of the letter is attached to these minutes.

Motion; made by Gregg McBride, seconded by Alison Demong, to send a BOS letter of support signed by Chair Ellen Allen. Unanimously voted

Approval of Minutes

None

Discussion

Rep. DeCoste asked Mr. Morin to provide three earmark suggestions for the upcoming state budget. Ideas were discussed and the Board settled on a generator for the Sparrell building, a grant for work to upgrade Town Center and the funding to finish the Main St. sidewalk to Assinippi Corner, which is in and therefore requires the concurrence of Hanover officials.

Open Session at 7:30pm in the Osborn Room

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ellen Allen at 7:33pm. She reminded all that the meeting is televised and recorded. All rose to recite the pledge of allegiance.

Approval of agenda

Motion; made by Gregg McBride, seconded by Alison Demong, to approve the agenda as written. Unanimously voted

Citizen Comments – None

Selectmen Reports –None

Town Administrator Report- None

7:35 Police Chief Ted Ross – Officer Recognition

- TOWN OF NORWELL
2019 APR 12 AM 9:23
RECEIVED
1. Officer Kevin McCurdy was recognized and commended for his response to a medical emergency at 45 Accord Park Drive. Officer McCurdy's steadfast response turned this emergency into a lifesaving event.
 2. Officer Nathan Morena was recognized for his lifesaving efforts in two separate E911 calls; one involved administering NARCAN to an overdose victim, and the second is summarized in #3.
 3. Officers Nathan Morena and Nicole Flaherty responded to an E911 call to an unresponsive victim and administered CPR until the victim was resuscitated.
 4. Sergeant Dan Dooley was recognized for his dedication and commitment to training the first responders and his exceptional teaching ability.

The board congratulated these members of the Norwell Police Department on their excellent performance in the line of duty.

7:45 Deborah Stuart – Community Preservation Committee (CPC) Applicant

Ms. Stuart gave an overview of her background and reasons for applying.

Motion; made by Gregg McBride, seconded by Alison Demong, to appoint Deborah Stuart to the CPC for a term ending 6/30/21. Unanimously voted

7:50 Plastic Bag Ban in Norwell – Citizens Petition

Present: Bruce Graham, Karen Fortier

Mr. Graham gave a brief summary of this petition. The group adopted the petition text from a similar proposal in the town of Marshfield, and would like to urge people to switch to reusable bags. The petition would ban single use plastic bags effective 11/1/19. The hope is to get the state to ban single use plastic bags. Merchants can ask for an extension to use up their inventory. The group's flyer (attached to these minutes) gives more information and exceptions to the rule. There would still be a drop off spot for plastic bags at the local supermarkets. The goal is to partner with other groups to provide alternative bags at no cost. Mr. Brown asked about the comparative cost for switching from plastic to paper, noting that the cost would double for retailers other than grocery stores. Mr. Graham added that if a business would experience an economic hardship they can discuss it with the Board of Health. He concluded his presentation by stating that education is the key to helping residents make this change.

Ed Forte - Presentation on Town Hall/Sparrell Study

Ms. Allen explained that it had been agreed with the Schools last year to determine if it would be feasible to move Town Hall into the Sparrell Building. Architect Ed Forte was present to share his assessment. Alison Link, Chair of the School Committee and Glenn Ferguson, Director of the Highway yard were both present.

Mr. Forte reviewed the space needs assessments completed last year by Habeeb & Associates. He also presented several options for both the Town Hall and the Sparrell buildings with cost estimates for each option. A copy of his presentation including cost data is attached to these minutes. A summary of the information is as follows:

- 1) The proposed Town Hall Program area is 12,600 NSF excluding a total of 13,249 NSF (primarily 9769 NSF for Recreation, but also no space for the Food Pantry, HT&G office and several smaller functions.) The cost of putting these elsewhere was not addressed.
- 2) The proposed School Department program would decrease the space they currently use in the Sparrell by ~43%.
- 3) The total NSF in the Sparrell Building is 17,097 NSF, well below the 24,970 combined program need (even with the excluded departments noted in #1.)
- 4) 40-50 parking spaces would be required to move Town Hall to the Sparrell
- 5) Forte provided five options with high level cost estimates as follows:
 - a. Combination of TH & Sparrell in current Sparrell: \$9-13M
 - b. Combined TH & Sparrell with addition: \$11-14M
 - c. New Town Hall at current location: \$12-16M
 - d. New School Department at TH location and TH in Sparrell: \$12-16M

- e. Renovation of TH and renovation of Sparrell with no change in users: \$5-9M

Clearly, the most economical option that would provide room to grow for both Town Hall and the School department is keeping both buildings in operation. The cost to rehab Town Hall would be considerably less than combining both groups in the Sparrell building, which would need an addition built to provide the total required space. This would be true even if some departments are moved elsewhere including the Recreation Dept. Ms. Demong noted that the option to combine all the remaining departments into the Sparrell shell would be really tight, with no room for expansion. Ms. Allen noted that moving the Recreation Department would be a big expense that hasn't been included in the options to combine. Moving Recreation wouldn't be required if Town Hall remains open.

Mr. Morin added that he has funding options for the renovation which would also provide more flexibility for the departments. Discussion ensued about maintaining two aging buildings vs. reconfiguring and expanding the space in the Sparrell building. Mr. McBride advocated strongly to be visionary about this building issue and strive to consolidate the two arms of Town government to create better synergy. Both buildings have a lot of asbestos and lead paint that will need to be addressed. Discussion continued about the need for an addition if the Town Hall moved to the Sparrell building complex. Ms. Allen reminded the board that traffic is already an issue for this area. Mr. Brown was initially still in favor of the move to Sparrell, but wanted more time to think about the option to expand Town Hall (including to renovate and rehab the currently unused top floor). He was skeptical about renovating two aging buildings. The space at the Sparrell building is not used efficiently and could be improved. The board discussed additional options for both buildings with associated costs.

Ms. Allen stated that the Town can't afford any of the cost proposals for combining Town Hall with the Sparrell building. She would prefer to go back to the capital plan and renovate Town Hall. It has room to expand and removes the potential traffic issues. The Sparrell site doesn't need 50 additional employees driving in and out. The Town needs to start investing promptly in the TH building. Further discussion ensued about additional analysis to calculate the full cost and timeline for renovating both buildings and options for repurposing Town Hall.

Mr. Morin stated that he was Chief of Staff in Braintree when a 1912 building was extensively and successfully renovated at a cost of about \$1M. Moreover, if Town Hall stays in the current building and the rehab is done incrementally, it can be accomplished under the levy over time, and can be done well. The Sparrell building has been retrofitted and is functional now. Its needed enhancements can be done incrementally and also under the levy. They are not in the crisis mode that exists in the Town Hall building, where there are real needs that must be addressed. The central functions are breaking down and something must be done to keep the building functional.

All discussed unanticipated growth in the schools, which could create the need for additional classrooms in the Sparrell building if it becomes a trend. In response to Mr. Rull's question, the rehab items in the capital plan can be phased into the operating budget over a couple of years, as well as using funding from PEG money for a cable studio and a Green Communities grant to cover some costs. The capital plan for the Sparrell building doesn't start for a few years. It would be much easier for taxpayers to pay for this in phases. Mr. Morin noted that he liked the idea of consolidation of the departments for synergy and still wants to consolidate some departments. However, it would be very hard to ask the school to give up 40+% of their current space and for Town Hall to downsize their space needs, which would be required to squeeze most Town Hall departments into the Sparrell building. Any addition would be costly and the aesthetics of the Sparrell building would be materially altered. Remaining at Town Hall would be a better and less expensive choice. A well done renovation can be done under the levy.

Mr. McBride said he would still like to consolidate and look at the total cost as he believes the estimates for renovating Town Hall could be low. Ms. Allen explained that the early estimates include all soft costs.

TOWN OF NORWELL
2019 APR 12 AM 9:23
RECEIVED

Discussion ensued about reusing a portion of Town Hall, reallocating some of the Sparrell building and the options presented. The cost would be very high for the combined vision and the Town just can't afford it. Energy efficiencies could be used to renovate this building more easily than the historical Sparrell building. Mr. Brown noted that it really does come down to what the Town can afford and the cost is just too high to move Town Hall to Sparrell. The work has to be done in phases under the levy.

The carrying costs of two buildings is still a future concern. All further discussed the pros and cons of staying at Town Hall and agreed that additional work must now be done to look at the most viable plan. Ms. Allen said that the estimated costs appear reasonable based on the police station and library construction costs. Mr. Morin would like to direct Mr. Forte to come up with a more detailed cost estimate to renovate Town Hall. Once obtained, he would like to start an incremental plan and bring it to the board for approval.

Ms. Link was asked to comment and said that the schools had been hopeful about a consolidation in Sparrell, but that it clearly does not make sense. The school committee would like to stay open to the option of creating school space in Sparrell if needed.

All thanked Mr. Forte for coming in.

Conservation Commission-Jacobs Pond Trail/Circumference.

Present: Conservation Agent Nancy Hemingway, Con Com Chair Marynel Wahl, Samantha Woods from the NSRWA and Pat Campbell, Planning Board rep to the CPC.

Ms. Hemingway gave a summary of the reason for this year's CPA request from Con Com. Jacobs Pond Estates (JPE) currently has no access to Jacobs Pond, and this project would provide the last piece of the loop that is about 2 miles around the pond and 3 miles from the high school. This funding would pay for a feasibility study to see the possibilities for enhancing the use of this property. Mr. McBride noted that the property was given to the Town by the JPE developer for conservation. Mr. Campbell added that the CPC asked Con Com to look into creating an easement /parking lot within JPE in return for access to the recreation area for the pond. Mr. McBride opined that JPE residents would love to have pond access and a trail in return for a parking space easement. The study would look at all of these options with a few more. The original application to the CPC was funding for a study for just parking on Doris Ave, and the board asked Con Com to expand the project into a trail to the water's edge and a parking lot.

The second part of this proposal is for a trail concept connecting the YMCA/North South River Watershed Association/High School/Library/South Shore Natural Science Center). This would be a nice amenity, but would require some easements to be granted by a resident on South St. and the mall developers on the Norwell side as well as building a couple of bridges over Third Herring Brook. This would be an amazing opportunity to acquire an easement and expand the trail system. All discussed the easements needed on the map and the pros and cons of acquiring the Acton property, which in combination would add another two miles to the trail system. Pedestrians could potentially walk to all of these locations. An alternative idea to put a sidewalk along the rest of South St. would be a major challenge, per Glenn Ferguson, because the road layout is so narrow. It would be dangerous.

Ms. Demong asked about the MassWorks grant in process by the mall developers to address traffic issues at the South St & Mill Street intersection and culvert bridge. This could potentially

TOWN OF NORWEL
COUNCIL
2019 APR 12 AM 9:23
address glaring traffic concerns using state money. Mr. Ferguson noted that he addressed the specific traffic issues with the grant consultant. The project would require about \$1M. The board added that a lot of runners currently use this street, which is very dangerous. Perhaps the YMCA would be willing to partner with funding a sidewalk. Mr. Campbell noted that the mall plan doesn't envision anything on that side of the street. All discussed options for this project. Ms. Hemingway provided a map noting that many of these path components are already in place and the project would just need to connect the dots.

Next Steps:

1. Discussion with Mr. Ferguson about what could be done on South Street.
2. The mall developers will eventually have to come to Con Com with their proposal. This might be an opportunity to have the conversation. Mr. Morin will follow up with mall developers and Ms. Hemingway.
3. NSWRA rep. Sam Woods has been talking to the developer about an easement or right of way crossing through the woods for pedestrians from the mall to the area of the NSWRA property on South St. Ms. Woods could arrange a site walk on this location.

Postponed: Review of Warrant Articles – will be on next week's agenda.

Adjournment

Motion; made by Gregg McBride, seconded by Ellen Allen, to adjourn at 9:40pm. Unanimously voted


Ellen Allen, Chair

CHOOSE TO REUSE Norwell



PLASTIC BAG BYLAW: A proposed town bylaw, sponsored by a group of citizens, that would ban single-use plastic bags at all Norwell retailers.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Plastic bags are bad for the environment, waterways, and wildlife. They make up the third largest type of litter from land-based sources found on U.S. coasts. The World Economic Forum estimates that by 2050, the amount of plastic in our oceans will outweigh fish.

Plastic bags waste taxpayer dollars because they jam single-stream recycling equipment, clog storm drains, and litter our sidewalks and parks. Single-use plastic bags are used for an average of 12 minutes, but can last up to 1,000 years.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

If the bylaw passes, Norwell retailers will no longer be allowed to give you single-use plastic bags with handles. They will be allowed to offer you reusable bags or paper bags made from recycled material. At last count, 93 cities and town in Massachusetts have similar bylaws, including Cohasset, Duxbury, Hingham, Marshfield, Pembroke, Plymouth, Scituate, and Boston.

If you're one of the thousands of South Shore residents already choosing reusable bags, you're already part of the solution. Choosing reusable shopping bags is a simple, effective start to reducing plastic in our world.

HOW CAN I HELP?

VOTE: Come to Town Meeting on May 6th & 7th, and vote to pass the Choose to Reuse bylaw. If it passes, the bylaw will go into effect November 1, 2019.

BRING YOUR OWN BAG NOW: Keep reusable bags in your car or in a handy spot by your door. Always write "bring bags" at the top of your grocery list!

Email: CHOOSETOREUSENORWELL@GMAIL.COM

CHOOSE TO REUSE FAQs



Which is better for the environment: paper or plastic?

The answer is **neither**. Both bags come with costs to the environment. Stray plastic bags in the ocean are killing marine birds and animals, and microplastics are increasingly found in our fish and in our food chain. Trees are cut down to make paper, and the production and transport of paper bags leaves a big carbon footprint. But plastic bags are made from fossil fuels that release greenhouse gases. For these reasons, we hope Norwell residents will choose reusable bags.

Can't plastic bags be recycled?

Certain plastic bags can indeed be recycled, where facilities and demand exist. However, currently there is a glut in the global market for baled plastic bags, and tons of them sit waiting for a destination in ports around the world. The bottom line is, most people don't recycle their plastic bags.

Won't a bag bylaw hurt local businesses?

Paper bags might cost more for retailers than plastic, but our goal is to get people to bring reusable bags. When you bring your own bag, it does not cost the business anything. Zero. More importantly, several businesses and organizations in Norwell have already signed on in support—Tinker's Son, Pour, Norwell Package, and DKD. Big retailers like Stop & Shop and Shaw's have already phased out plastic bags in other South Shore towns with bans. Big Y in Norwell is reported to be phasing out plastic bags in 2020.

Are there exemptions to the ban?

Thin-film plastic bags (typically without handles) used to carry dry cleaning, newspapers, produce, baked goods, meat, cheese, and other similar merchandise will be exempt. And if a business is experiencing a hardship, they can apply for an exemption.

What if I can't afford reusable bags?

Choose to Reuse Norwell will provide FREE reusable bags to residents who need them.

What will I use to pick up after my dog?

Many of the items you already buy come in plastic bags. Think bread bags, deli bags, produce bags, cereal bags, salad bags...you can probably come up with more if you get creative. As a last resort, you can purchase a roll of biodegradable pet waste bags.

CHARGE TO THE CARLETON PROPERTY COMMITTEE

March 6, 2019 Update

The Carleton Property Committee (the Committee) is created pursuant to a vote of the Board of Selectmen. The Committee shall consist of 7-9 members appointed by the Selectmen with representation from past or present members of the Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, Community Housing Trust, Community Preservation Committee and Planning Board. The remaining members will be at-large appointees. All seats are for a one-year term of office.

1. On May 7, 2018, the Norwell Special Town Meeting will vote on whether or not to authorize the Selectmen to acquire a parcel of land described as the Carleton Property, 124.2 acres located on Main Street and Lincoln Street (Map A). An affirmative vote will purchase the land and subject thereto, the Selectmen will appoint members to this committee to create a land use plan for future Town Meeting consideration and approval.
2. The Selectmen charge the Committee with considering various options for use of the Carleton Property, as permitted under M.G.L. Chapter 44B, the Community Preservation Act, and report back to the Selectmen and the Community Preservation Committee their action and their recommendations. The Committee may conduct any and all activities as may be approved by the Board of Selectmen and the Community Preservation Committee as required to prepare a definitive land use plan.
3. In consideration of a land use plan, the Committee must start with the assumption that the "Whiting Fields," the 10.65 acres of hay fields located on Main Street and Lincoln Street, are to remain as open space and are not to be considered a site for community housing or active recreation development (Map B). Any proposed land use plan shall not alter the historic and iconic views of these fields along Main Street and Lincoln Street. [Proposed plans may include areas for parking and passive recreation in the fields, ideally set in less visible parts of the fields.](#)
4. To develop a land use plan, the Committee shall seek recommendations and comments from various town officials and committees, including but not limited to: the Board of Selectmen, the Conservation Commission, the Community Housing Trust, the Pathways Committee, the Planning Board, the Recreation Commission, the Athletic Fields Committee and the Historical Commission. The Committee may also seek recommendations and input from youth sports organizations, local land trusts, neighbors and abutters.
5. Should there be any recommendations for community housing, details about the anticipated appearance, number of units, target residents, street access, potential funding sources and anticipated rental vs. ownership nature of the housing should be detailed.
6. The Committee shall prepare a draft land use plan and cause such draft to be available for public inspection on the Town website, and at Town Hall and the Norwell Public Library. The Committee shall actively seek verbal and written public comment on the draft report and hold at least one public hearing advertised in advance.

7. The Committee will bring the plan, or portions of the plan, before the Board of Selectmen and the Community Preservation Committee for conditional approval. With the approval of both boards, the Committee will bring the plan, or portions of the plan, to a future Town Meeting for a vote.

March 14, 2019

Peter Forman
South Shore Economic Development Corporation
1050 Hingham Street
Rockland, MA 02370

Dear Mr. Forman:

The Town of Norwell supports the application from the South Shore Economic Development Corporation, a related corporation to the South Shore Chamber of Commerce, for a MassDevelopment Technical Assistance Grant. The Grant will be used to help evaluate water and wastewater issues as a barrier to economic growth. The target area includes the Town of Norwell. We will cooperate with the appropriate people to provide information on our own water and wastewater capacity issues.

Sincerely,

Peter J. Morin
Town Administrator