

Farm Pond Advisory Committee

Minutes of February 7, 2011

Members present: Pat Cassell, Jackie Martin, Bob Murchison, Melinda O'Neill, Catherine Rocchio, Steve Scrimshaw. Associate member present: Pat LeBlanc. Member absent: Matt Neutra.

Guests present: Robert Johnson, Tom Trainor, Heidi Gilmore.

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 pm by Chair, Catherine Rocchio.

Approval of the minutes of January 10, 2011 was tabled until the next meeting.

Pump House discussion: The Selectmen have asked FPAC to look into the reported disrepair of the Pump House on Farm Pond.

Bob Murchison reported that the building was too small to be under the jurisdiction of the building inspector. The Conservation Commission would have to review all plans and would rather see the roof repaired than torn down. He had received some preliminary estimates of \$2500 for repair.

Sherborn resident, Robert Johnson, was present and offered the following information. The housing was built in 1905 by the State to surround and protect an intake pipe. The pipe was then extended across private and public property to Medfield State Hospital, where the water, transported through the pipe, would be used for their boilers. Robert suggested that the first order of business should be to plug the pipe to prevent accidental seepage/drainage of Farm Pond waters. He also suggested that an alternative to building a new roof would be to construct a metal cap over the bricks of the wall to prevent further damage.

Discussion followed regarding whether to repair or demolish the building. Demolition would be more costly and would involve more oversight by the Conservation Commission. The building is over 100 years old and is deemed historic by the Historical Commission.

Motion: A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to recommend to the Selectmen that the building be repaired.

Motion: A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to recommend to the Selectmen that the intake pipe be plugged.

Discussion then followed regarding how to fund the project. The Historical Commission may have some funds in their budget to contribute. Bob was skeptical about private funds from abutters and no one was interested in spearheading a fund-raising campaign. There are no funds available in the Farm Pond budget for this year. The Committee decided to present our findings to the Selectmen without a funding request.

Water Quality (Limnological) Testing: Tom Trainor, a former FPAC member, enlightened the new members of the Committee about the water quality tests he has been performing for the past 15 or so years. One of the charges to FPAC is to monitor the quality of the water in Farm Pond. Each year in March or April, Tom sets out a buoy marker in the deepest part of the Pond and takes monthly readings until October or November, noting temperature, water transparency and dissolved oxygen and occasionally phosphorous. He has tried to follow this schedule but in recent years has only been able to do a few readings in the summer. He could use some help in maintaining the ideal schedule and would like to continue monitoring the Pond. He would be amenable to an Eagle Scout project. He has also been having a problem stabilizing the marker and hopes to receive some help from the Sherborn Yacht Club this summer.

In the past, there were State funds for the phosphorus readings because they have to be sent to a lab for analysis, but these funds are no longer available.

Motion: A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to continue the testing program and to use funds from the Farm Pond budget to support tests, not covered by the State, if Tom sees a need to perform those tests.

SYC gate proposal:

Heidi Gilmore, representing the Sherborn Yacht Club, presented a comprehensive proposal to construct, on Reservation land, a gate across the path leading from the north end of the Reservation to the Joukowsky property

and the Sherborn Yacht Club. The gate would not be locked. It is hoped that this would deter non-SYC members from trespassing on Joukowsky property.

Dan Keyes referred Heidi to the FPAC before bringing the issue up at a BOS meeting. Discussion followed.

Motion: A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to recommend to the Selectmen that they support the concept of the gate/fence project.

Public Education Concerns/Outreach:

Melinda O'Neill reported that she had spoken with Artemis Joukowsky about hosting a watershed resident meeting to discuss Farm Pond protection issues. He is amenable. Discussion followed regarding limiting the meeting to one topic (phosphorous) and inviting Marianne Moore and Tom Trainor to speak. Tentative dates suggested are the Sunday afternoons of April 3 or 10. Melinda will follow up.

Farm Pond Booklet:

Matt Neutra emailed the new layout of photos and text to the committee prior to the meeting but was unable to attend. Pat Cassell offered to compile comments and work with Matt on an updated version for the March meeting, when more time would be allowed for discussion.

Update from Selectmen's Office:

There was no update on Waterfront from the Selectmen's office.

COA/DAC Concerns:

Catherine Rocchio followed up after FPAC's meeting of January 10, 2011 with a memo to DAC (disAbility Advisory Committee) informing them of our take no action recommendation regarding changing stickering, adding reserved parking, and/or building a new access path to the waterfront.

Cart Path Progress:

Jackie Martin has been following up on this issue. She was told that money for the design and reconstruction of the cart path would not be available until May. \$11,000 was appropriated at last year's Town Meeting for this project. Could construction be done in June or would it have to wait until the Fall?

Water Testing for Bacteria:

Pat Cassell and Catherine Rocchio attended a Board of Health Meeting on January 19, 2011 to discuss the Beach Closure Posting Protocol. Former FPAC chair, Douglas Cassell, and BOH chair, Chris Owen had collaborated on a protocol to be followed when it would be necessary to close the beach in the event of high bacteria level in the water. Recent changes were made to the document to conform to BOH regulations. Jeanne Guthrie attended representing the Selectmen's office. Everyone agreed that the document presented was a good working document and the BOH unanimously accepted it.

Concerns about Overcrowding at Farm Pond:

Catherine forwarded a proposal for collecting fees from drop-offs to the Committee. Discussion was tabled to the next meeting.

Sticker Prices:

A discussion was held about whether or not to raise sticker prices this year. Based on budget discussions the following was voted.

Motion: A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to keep Farm Pond sticker prices at last year's level.

Catherine will be working on the Annual Report to the Town.

The next FPAC meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 21, 2011. The meeting adjourned at 9:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Cassell
Acting Secretary