

LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

JANUARY 22, 2002 Minutes

@ Town Hall

Members Present:

Ellen O'Brien Cushman Chairman

Cemetery Commission Representative

Stephen Kidder

McLean Hospital Appointee

Lauren Meier

Belmont Citizen Appointee

Michele Gougeon

McLean Hospital Appointee

Ruth Foster

Belmont Conservation Commission Apointee

Others Present: Timothy Higgins, Senior Planner, Roger Wrubel, Massachusetts Audubon Society (MAS), Martha Moore MOSA and Belmont Land Trust (BLT), Kit Dreier, Belmont Land Trust. Power, Larson, Record, Allison, Stevens, Snorrason, Ward & W. McLaughlin

Chairman O'Brien Cushman opened the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

Approve minutes: The minutes from December 18th were approved.

JUDY RECORD MEMORIAL CONSERVATION FUND

Group reported on their mission to be "supportive and cooperate with Preservation and reclamation" A discussion of how it would work ensued and a discussion of fund raising. More interested in special projects, not general maintenance costs.

Some suggestions were: Make a list (Cushman), Augment standard maintenance (Power), Take one big significant project such as restoring the historic barn second floor for education and civic purposes as the Judy Record Hall. The cemetery could have storage in the basement. (Foster).

FUND RAISING

It was noted that originally there was to be raised a fund of \$1,000,000 as an endowment to maintain the land. That has never been done.

ANNUAL REPORT was accepted as prepared by Tim Higgins.

LETTER PRESENTED FROM RICHARD PICHETTE who was not able to attend. It stated that bikers and hikers have shared the space and the Town Conservation land for many years without significant problems and without any on site managers.

LETTER PRESENTED FROM WES WARD FROM THE TRUSTEES OF RESERVATIONS in which he was concerned about the absence of an on site manager.

Estimate was about \$100,000 per year for a 1 1/2 persons presence, which might be reduced to \$50,000 for part time coverage. Ward said that bicycles were an unsolved problem.

He was asked where are the Trustees if we don't have the money? As to the Conservation Restriction Ward said, "As it is written today, the Trustees would not accept it."

During the lengthy discussion the following remarks were made.

1. That's what the \$ 1,000,000 endowment was supposed to be for.
2. Develop the houses on the site for low income housing for town employees who would then be on site residents to keep an eye on things.
3. Assign a town employee as a manager. It was noted that while the town is laying off teachers, police and firemen, it was unlikely that they would fund such a position.
4. Currently open space problems are controlled by the police. Neighbors take responsibility to monitor land use. It has worked well.
5. The exact text of the Conservation Restriction has to be ready when McLean conveys the land to the town.
6. An interim trustee may be needed.

THE TEXT OF THE CONSERVATION RESTRICTION

There are many holes in the language, and some parts, which are impractical or too inflexible for a long-term legal easement that will run for many, many years. There will be things that will need adjustment as time passes and public passions change. Currently it appears that The Trustees of Reservation are the only ones who can accept the Conservation Restriction. The language should be amended to include "or another non-profit conservation organization".

THE TIME LINE for the land transfer requires that the language be ready for the spring Town Meeting. The warrant closes around March. Walter McLaughlin, a lawyer, noted that either party (town or McLean) can agree to change the wording. The town can approve changes at a Town Meeting. The McLean Board of Trustees can approve it later.

TRAIL PLANNING

L. Meier is preparing a plan. Pieces that are missing include the cemetery and hikers. Ecological survey suggested using fire lanes as shared-use bicycle/walking trails, the small trails being for walkers only. The Mountain Bikers survey has more shared use, even small trails. Lauren Meier will finish the trail maps.

A group of people (Ward, Meier, Wrubel, Gougeon, and Clancy and Higgins for the Town and Conservation Commission) has agreed to meet soon to work out the trails and a management budget.

MEETING SCHEDULE

Next Meeting is scheduled for February 5th to discuss proposed language changes to the Conservation Restriction. A meeting was also scheduled for February 26th

Meeting adjourned 9:15 PM