

TOWN OF WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT

Special Meeting Notice



AGENCY: Mill Brook Open Space Steering Committee

DATE: October 3, 2018

TIME: 6:00 PM

PLACE: Town Hall – Ludlow Room

AGENDA


1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment
3. *Review of preliminary vision statement, guiding principles and concept plan
4. Discussion of plan / report format
5. Other Business
6. Approval of Minutes
 - a) *September 6, 2018
 - b) *September 20, 2018
7. Adjournment

*Backup materials

Public Act 75-312 requires notice of Special Meetings to be posted in the Town Clerk's Office not less than 24 hours prior to the time of such meeting. No other business shall be considered at this meeting than that listed on this Agenda.



First in Connecticut. First for its citizens.

Date: September 28, 2018
To: Members of the Mill Brook Open Space Steering Committee
From: Peter Souza, Town Manager 
Subject: Back up materials for October 3rd meeting

Attached is the preliminary draft of the vision statement and guiding principles we plan to have the committee review and discuss at the October 3rd meeting in hopes of finalizing the draft. Planning staff is finalizing the map/concept plan based on the committee's input from the last meeting. We will also review that on Wednesday night.

Mill Brook Open Space Vision and Guiding Principles

VISION

The Mill Brook open space will become an open space park that complements existing parks and trails, and is readily accessible for passive recreation and environmental education in harmony with the natural environment.

Guiding Principals

- *Land Management*

Areas of the parcel will be managed to varying degrees to provide diversity in the wildlife habitat and visitor experience, including informal lawns, meadows, succession forest, and perhaps community and/or formal gardens.

- *Trail System*

Develop a safe, easily maintained system of different types of trails to accommodate walkers, hikers, and possibly bikers (non-mountain bikes), which could include existing paved cart-paths and bridges; milled cart-paths, packed into a hard gravel-like surface, mowed grass paths, or woodland dirt trails

- *Habitat*

Allow for bird and wildlife watching through maintaining and creating a variety of habitats, such as: wildflower and grass meadows to attract pollinators and birds; existing and succession forests to support birds and large mammals; and restored riparian zones (stream buffers) to support wetland dependent species along the Mill Brook, which is an important and integral part of the property. Limited portions of the stream bank should be opened up to allow public contact, while the majority of the riparian zone would be less managed or even wild, similar to the Farmington River bank in River Street Park.

- *Activities*

A range of passive recreation activities, such as walking/hiking, sledding, picnicking, and bird/wildlife watching can be accommodated through varying land management approaches, without significantly compromising the environment

- *Building Re-use*

Possible approaches for reuse of the clubhouse include:

- Town operated venue for various town / community programs
- Lease as event/meeting space
- Lease for commercial use

The property at 72 Mack Street provides the opportunity for pedestrian access from surrounding residential areas in and around Windsor Center. Potential reuse options could include leasing the property for residential or non-residential use. Consideration could be given to acquiring an access easement from the neighboring office building as well as the possibility of relocating the house closer to Mack Street to provide for pedestrian access along west side of parcel.

**TOWN OF WINDSOR
MILL BROOK OPEN SPACE STEERING COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 6, 2018
LUDLOW ROOM – TOWN HALL**

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

Present: Steven Fraysier, Meg Harvey (arrived at 6:50 p.m.), Nigel Pepin, and Aaron Szotka

Absent: Hilary Carpenter

Staff Present: Town Manager, Peter Souza and Town Planner, Eric Barz, Assistant Town Planner, Todd Sealy

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Jim Kanvik, from Windsor Land Trust, expressed his appreciation on behalf of the Windsor Land Trust Board for the Committee's work to date. This parcel has long been sought after by the Windsor Land Trust and others. It is gratifying to see the long term planning process underway.

3. REVIEW OF AUGUST 28TH OPEN HOUSE EVENT

Committee members felt the August 28th open house went well. There was a good turn out and attendees were engaged and sharing their ideas and thoughts. Some ideas shared included:

- Incorporating some type of display recognizing the rich history of the Mill Brook and Mack Brick yard;
- need to be cognizant of access for individuals with disabilities or limited mobility; and
- reuse of the clubhouse should take into account the cost benefit analysis, including revenue potential and annual operating expenses.

4. DISCUSSION OF PUBLIC INPUT RECEIVED TO DATE AND UPDATE ON-LINE SURVEY

Town Manager Souza stated the survey was posted on the website late last week. So far, approximately 379 surveys have been completed. A summary of the results to date was provided.

Mr. Eric Barz, Town Planner, reviewed the exercise gauging open house participants' desire regarding land management levels and passive activity.

The committee identified several preliminary themes based on public input received to date including:

- *Land Management* – Areas of the parcel could be managed to varying degrees or levels to provide diversity in the wildlife habitat and visitor experience. For example, portions of the flatter/level portions of the site could be mowed on a more frequent basis while areas toward the western side of the parcel could be managed less and allowed to revert to succession type forest.
- *Trail System* – develop a combination of different types of trails to accommodate walkers, hikers and perhaps bicyclists. Trails could be existing pavement, hard packed gravel, mowed grass or woodland type. Committee members discussed the topic of bicycle trails and the initial consensus was to not have mountain bike trails but perhaps a ‘family and leisure’ type biking trail could happen on hard surface trails.
- *Habitat* – Allow for bird and wildlife watching through maintaining and creating a variety of habitats. For example, flower gardens to attract pollinators could be created.
- *Mill Brook* – The Mill Brook waterway is an important and integral part of the property. Efforts should be dedicated to stabilize and enhance it. Committee members suggested it would be possible to open up some portions of the stream bank while other segments could be kept ‘wild’ or less managed. River Street Park was cited as a possible example.
- *Activities* – A range of passive recreation activities can be accommodated through varying land management approaches. Committee members noted that survey results to date indicate walking/hiking, sledding, picnicking, and bird/wildlife watching are the top preferences.

The committee discussed possible approaches for reuse of the buildings. Members noted the preliminary survey results show the following preferences for the clubhouse:

- Town operated venues
- Lease as event/meeting space
- Lease for commercial use

Discussion regarding Mack Street focused on the need for handicap access, pedestrian access, vehicle parking and potential reuse options for the house. Members discussed the possibility/idea of getting an access easement from the neighboring office building as well as the possibility of relocating the house closer to Mack Street.

Members agreed that further information and discussion is warranted concerning the reuse options for both the clubhouse and 72 Mack Street.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting is scheduled for September 20th at 6:00 PM and will be held at the Windsor Library in the large community room on the main floor.

Members requested staff send them a copy of the Northwest Park master plan as a reference document.

Staff will poll committee members in the next week regarding possible meeting dates in October. Prior to finalizing recommendations to the Town Council in early November, it was

suggested that preliminary recommendations be 'tested' with residents at one of the October meetings.

Tentative agenda items for the September 20th meeting are:

- Review survey results
- Review draft themes and guiding principles
- Complete mapping exercise related to land management/concept plan
- Discuss elements of vision statement
- Set meeting schedule

Members of the public were recognized and made a few comments including:

- The Mill Brook is an important waterway and the public is pleased the committee seems to understand that
- Access to Windsor center through Mack Street is key
- Providing both a walking and biking connection from Mack Street to Pigeon Hill Road was suggested. This would help connect the Day Hill corporate neighborhood with the center.

6. MINUTES

MOVED by Mr. Szotka, seconded by Mr. Pepin, to approve the minutes of the August 22, 2018, August 23, 2018 and August 28, 2018 meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 4-0-0

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned by consensus at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter Souza
Town Manager

**TOWN OF WINDSOR
MILL BROOK OPEN SPACE STEERING COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 20, 2018
LUDLOW ROOM – TOWN HALL**

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:45 p.m.

Present: Hilary Carpenter, Meg Harvey, Nigel Pepin, and Aaron Szotka

Absent: Steven Fraysier

Staff Present: Town Manager, Peter Souza; Town Planner, Eric Barz; and Assistant Town Planner, Todd Sealy

2. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

3. REVIEW OF SURVEY RESULTS

The committee was given a copy of the survey and reviewed the results.

4. DISCUSS ELEMENTS OF VISION STATEMENT, DRAFT THEMES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Eric Barz handed out a sheet showing a hierarchy of mission, values, vision, and goals to help create a frame work for developing a vision statement. An explanation was given to the committee on the differences between vision, goals, and objectives. The committee started crafting a vision statement that incorporated protecting, preserving, and enhancing the Millbrook corridor while providing recreational and educational opportunities and helping to connect people, neighborhoods, and Windsor center to nature.

Town Manager Souza then handed out a preliminary draft on the guiding principles for Millbrook. The committee commented on the principles and it was agreed that the goals were representative of the committee's aspirations for the park. There was some discussion if the land management and habitat goals should be combined but no consensus was reached. As part of the trail system goals, it was noted that accessibility and community linkage were important aspects to incorporate.

5. COMPLETE MAPPING EXERCISE RELATED TO LAND MANAGEMENT / CONCEPT PLAN

The committee reviewed a series of maps showing topography, vegetation, wetlands, and the Mack street property.

The committee, along with Eric Barz and Todd Sealy, conducted an analysis. The committee marked up the maps that were provided to highlight key features and access.

The first map markup was done on the topography map where the committee identified sections of the trails that could be reconfigured or removed based on slopes and access to the property.

The second map markup was done on the vegetation map to determine areas that required buffering and the ideal areas for forests, meadows, and managed lawns.

The wetlands map was reviewed to identify potential connections to the brook. The Mack Street property map was reviewed to see what options were viable for relocating, site alterations, and what issues could occur with mixing public/private access. The committee was in agreement that donating the property was the most desirable option.

Mr. Sealy offered to send out maps to the committee and commented that he would develop a draft map based on analysis and markups by next meeting.

6. SET MEETING SCHEDULE

The committee scheduled the next two meetings for October 3rd and October 18th at 6:00 p.m.

7. OTHER BUSINESS - None

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

No action taken.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned by consensus at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter Souza
Town Manager