

Pequitside Task Force  
Pequitside - Tavern Room  
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## **MINUTES**

**April 23, 2018 @ 7:00 PM**

### **Attendance:**

**Voting Members:** Tom Theodore, Stacy Gorman, Betsy Sugameli, David Hiltz, Karen Erikson, Gerard Carmichael, Chief Doody

**Nonvoting Members:** .Kristen Phelps, Elizabeth Franks, Cynthia O'Connell, Marv Feldman

**Absent:** Reuki Schutt

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Chairman Theodore called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

**Review of Minutes:** Motion to approve the minutes of March 19, 2018 passed. Vote 7-0.

**Property Restrictions and Historical Documents:** The Committee reviewed the following legal documents as relates to the funding and contractual obligations for the acquisition of Pequitside Farm by the Town of Canton: Document entitled Self-help Evaluation Form, Preliminary Application; LWC&F Grants Manual "Post Completion Responsibilities"; LWCF State Assistance Program Manual; Chapter 8; EFA Article 97 Land Disposition Policy; US Dept of the Interior Land and Water Conservation Fund Project Agreement; Memo of former Town Counsel Curran with three attachments - 1.) A triennial Inspection Report, 2.) Legal description by Legatt, McCall & Werner, and 3.) Special Town Meeting Warrant article dated 10/19/70; Deed.

After review and discussion, it was determined that the documentation does not fully define any restriction on uses of the property other than for recreational or conservational uses. Ambiguity exists as to whether there are restrictions for passive or active recreation, and further ambiguity was found as to what is/was defined as a passive or recreational activity. Ms. Erickson, in conversation with a town citizen who has knowledge of the purchase, was led to believe that the purchase of the land was not intended for active recreation. Ms Gorman indicated that the documents were unclear as to the intent of the purchase other than for

outdoor activity, it was difficult to cull from the documents intent, and historical use of the property does not clarify the intent.

Ms. Sugameli indicated that the grant documents and manual provide for significant legal flexibility of potential uses and conversions so long as such use pertains to conservation and recreation. Ms. Phelps described two projects of which she is aware where adaptations were made to properties: Ridge Hill property in Needham and Adams Farm in Walpole.

Chairman Theodore suggested that the historical and legal uncertainty regarding usage constraints of the Farm might not be relevant to the discussion as to what uses, improvements, and renovations we would currently consider. This portion of the discussion was tabled until such time as it might be relevant.

**Potential Uses of Pequitside:** Ms. Erickson would like general rules of use to be established regarding hours of operation of the Farm with a preference to close access at dusk, to be compatible with Conservation hours. Mr. Feldman felt that whatever the Task Force decides it should be compatible with abutters concerns over 'noise decibels and lights'. Of particular concern, due to its proximity to private landowners, were potential uses of the Barn, particularly at night, and additional parking at that location. Mr. Feldman felt that an Art Show during the day would not be an intrusive activity. Ms. Erikson mentioned the possibility of using the Barn to house horses.

Mr. Carmichael spoke of his preference to use the Barn for Art and Music groups, and mentioned the possibility of soundproofing the building. Current night uses of the property were identified as Town Committee meetings, Boy Scout overnights and occasional movie nights at the lower fields. There has been some rental in the front of the main building.

Chairman Theodore mentioned that potential uses of the Barn should be discussed after the Task Force receives a final report on the condition of the Barn and its associated costs. He requested the Task Force identify what they wanted done in and provided examples in specifically identifying the potential connections with signage of Trails to the waterfront, Williams Estate and to Mass Audubon. Also mentioned was the eyesore made by the Gardeners at the Community Gardens specifically with old tools, planks and even chairs and umbrellas and an assortment of 'personalized' fences. Potential Community Garden regulations were discussed.

The following potential improvements were mentioned: a combination pickleball/tennis court, bocce court, an additional garden, art shows, and horseback riding. Also problematic was thought to be waiting for a determination on the Little Red House.

Ms. Erikson spoke for neighbors' behalf who didn't think it was fair to alter uses on the property that may impact abutters. Mr. Hiltz pointed out that other property

owners have had to adjust to changes near their neighborhoods and specifically identified the CHS Football field and addition of lights. Ms. Erickson would like Nature highlighted and mentioned the decreasing care of the property. Ms. Sugameli mentioned the increasing demand on Canton Recreation in caring for additional property, including the new Paul Revere Heritage Site.

As the tennis courts were mentioned, discussion ensued over the possibility of renovating, removing or moving the tennis court to provide better automobile access and parking for users of the Property. Chief Doody mentioned that if the plan was to increase use of the property, then appropriate egress to the property should be made and safety be considered. Of particular concern is currently getting the large truck in the Property, even without increasing usage. At this time inadequacy of handicapped parking was noted. The Camp bus comes twice a day and parks in the only handicapped parking space. Significant use by seniors of the property also caused concern for their safe entry to buildings and Property. The possibility of adapting the schematic designs submitted by the consultants was reviewed with emphasis on moving parking spaces away from the Barn and abutters, as well as making the access two-way at one point. Ms. O'Connell pointed out the complexities in dealing with utilities, water mains and property lines, as well as any Zoning restrictions.

Chairman Theodore suggested again, as the Barn is a large consideration in any plan, that further discussion must await a final Barn report. Chairman Theodore then charged each member, prior to the next meeting, to submit to him, with a CC to Ms. O'Connell, five uses, improvements and renovations each member would like considered by the full Task Force.

**Meeting Schedule:** It was noted that Task Force member Ms. Schutt is unable to attend Monday meetings until late May due to a prior scheduled conflict. Also, Chairman Theodore determined that there would be little use in meeting prior to the date of finalization of the Consultant's report on the condition of the barn. Upon finalization of the Consultant's report, Ms. O'Connell will issue a Doodle Poll to members in selecting a date for the next meeting.

**Adjourn:** Meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 8:25.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

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**Thomas Theodore, Chairman  
Pequitside Task Force**

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**Date**