

East Boston Camps Master Plan Committee
Minutes of October 27, 2005
7:30AM

Millennium School Administration – Conference Room A

The following are minutes of the Town of Westford – East Boston Camps Master Plan Committee meeting of October 27, 2005.

A permanent set of these minutes (maintained for a period of six years) is retained in the Town Clerk's office.

A set of these minutes are also available in the Town Manager's Office.

Members Present: Citizen Representatives: Denise Brunelle , George Fletcher, Angela Harkness, Kirk Ware; Conservation Commission – Peter Mahler; Parks & Recreation Commission – Mary Ellen Tynan; Water Commission – Leslie Thomas (7:50AM) and Westford Land Preservation Foundation – Nancy Rosinski (left at 7:50AM)

Present: Town Manager – Steve Ledoux, Assistant Town Manager – Norman Khumalo, Parks, Recreation, & Cemetery Director – Patricia Savage

Visitors: Paul Cully, Marian Harman (7:55AM)

The meeting was called to order at 7:35AM by Chair Kirk Ware

AGENDA

- Approval of Minutes
 - October 13, 2005 – approved as corrected
- Old Business
 - Master Plan Elements – Norman Khumalo

Norman referred Committee members to the hand out EBC Master Plan: Plan Elements (from the October 13 meeting and included with meeting minutes). Norman gave a brief explanation of the plan elements related to what was presented and discussed as the EBC presentation at Annual Town Meeting. He looked at the specifics from the BOS and the CPC; looked at the components of the CR; and review other Master Planning processes across the State and here in Westford.

The Common trend in the documents and meetings were four goals:

- Open Space Parcel Preservation
- Recreational Land
- Work to meet requirements of Water grant
- Education possibilities on property

The result of this information was the hand out on plan elements.

Norman continued addressing the question - Why have a Master Plan?

- The presentation on the purchase of EBC at ATM was with the understanding that there would be a Master Plan for the use of the property brought back to a future Town Meeting for approval.
- Preservation – can only preserve what you know you have

The use of resources to accomplish the four goals set at Town meeting and how to better use the financial resources to assist the Committee. The Committee's focus has been on camp uses. The perimeter survey will help in knowing the boundaries.

The Committee had a discussion on the Master Plan:

Angela Harkness - Norman's presentation was a great analysis of what to have in a Master Plan. Keeping the parcel "as is" and planning for these four items.

Steve Ledoux stated there are a lot of different visions of “as is”. For example the horse back riding; is allowed in the C R in designated areas only; the Master Plan would address where that would take place.

Nancy Rosinski – expressed a concern with performing studies to obtain information that was not necessary to make the decisions/recommendations to the Town as the Committee is chartered to do. She would prefer to initiate only those studies necessary for the Committee to make informed decisions.

Norman – request have been received for EBC and approximately 60% are outside of the CR and there is a need to document what we have to determine the impact of the request.

The Master Plan is the big picture of what we’re preserving; document the habitats; age and document the health and condition of the forest.

Leslie Thomas – comes from a planning background and understands the extreme importance of the land and the promised uses; the committee has focused on the running of the camps to the exclusion of having a master plan. The draft RFP is great however we can’t send that out without Town Meeting, we don’t even know if Town Meeting wants “camp”.

Norman- we’re simply looking for documentation to identify the key issues for to take back to Town Meeting.

Kirk- what would be the next step? Is it hiring a consultant? What would be the cost?

Norman – if the committee chooses that direction the cost is estimated at \$25-35,000. There are sufficient funds (ATM appropriation) to cover the cost.

Peter Mahler – the master plan may require additional studies and questioned the need for additional studies at this time. Some of the studies could be conducted at a later time.

Norman – key issues would be identified and documented for the Master Plan; additional studies could occur at a later date.

Leslie – document where things/activities are currently taking place and is that the best place? We need to identify what we have, where it is taking place, and spend the money to get this accomplished.

Kirk – is it feasible to have all that has been discussed as part of the Master Plan? How will the wildlife, forest, and wetlands be protected?

Norman – there are two options;

1st option – the consultant works with the group helping us to identify the plan elements etc; this is more time consuming

2nd option – the consultant does the work and presents a report to the group based on the perimeters set by the group for the scope of the work. Consultant would identify the plan elements and organize the fundamental data.

Peter – For example the Master Plan – could determine the wetlands need to be identified but does not have to be completed for the plan to be presented.

Marian Harman – Added that in addition to the wetlands there are sensitive areas that may be migratory paths

George Fletcher – reminded the group that the CR limits most of the activity to the “camp” area; the majority of the land would be left untouched.

Mary Ellen Tynan – The CPC has concern regarding the Care, Custody, and Control and what is the plan to for additional monies to maintain the property? For example- the trails should those even be marked as no determination has been made regarding trails.
Norman – Element K: The Business Plan/Marketing Plan would address those questions.

Leslie Thomas motioned, Peter Mahler second

To spend \$25-30,000 on hiring a consultant to develop a global Master Plan to include the elements identified in the hand-out from Norman Khumalo titled EBC Master Plan: Plan Elements.

Discussion:

The Committee discussed the motion. From the discussion it is understood the consultant would help facilitate at meetings and would also create the report that the Committee would review/revise/approve.

Norman can develop and RFP to included

1. Background relative to challenges in the process – identify key areas
2. Scope of service (plan elements)
3. Challenge consultant to identify how they're going to accomplish this with the Committee.

Motion passed unanimously (N. Rosinski had left the meeting and did not participate in this vote)

Kirk – for the next meeting we should re-assess the Committee's focus. What is our role as a Committee? The Consultant is not dealing with current property management issues

Leslie and Angela did not want to lose the momentum being generated from the logo contest. They want to continue with the logo and handed out a flier with information for submittals. They have already received work from a High School Art class.

Kirk quickly addressed the remaining agenda items:

- Public Relations – short press release – Angela and Leslie will complete
- Timeline – may change with Consultant
- RFP – hold off as it may change with consultant
- Kiosk – it's there
- Survey – halfway around the property; tentatively looking at report by Thanksgiving
- History Update - ongoing project
- Building condition survey
- 501 (c) 3 – Angela wrote By-Laws; looking for “purpose” to be written

New Business

Leslie – For future meeting – have a discussion of all the possibilities for use of EBC; how is EBC going to be over-seen?

Kirk – What do we see the Committee doing independent of the Consultant?

NEXT MEETING – THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2005 7:30AM

Meeting adjourned at 8:45AM

Accepted and approved as corrected November 10, 2005

(Created by Norman Khumalo, Assistant Town Manager)

EBC Master Plan: Plan Elements
October 12, 2005
Issues for consideration

Possible Plan Elements

- a. Vision and goals
- b. Public Participation: How did we get here?
- c. Community Character, Services, and Facilities (this would cover current camp uses)
- d. Land resources (this element should emphasize land uses/resources identified in the CR)
- e. Open Space, Scenic vistas and natural ridge lines
- f. Environmental and Wetland Resources
- g. Water Resources
- h. Woodlands/Plants
- i. Wildlife
- j. Circulation (including trails, pedestrian and vehicular traffic)
- k. Business Plan/Marketing Plan
- l. Implementation
- m. Evaluation/Monitoring

I offer the above as the broad elements of the master plan. Overall, these elements address and respond to the issues that were highlighted during discussions leading to TM approval of the EBC purchase. The list also incorporates issues that have come up at the EBCMPC meetings. Note that I have identified elements beyond the traditional recreational camp use.

At first sight, the list may appear overwhelming. The intention is not to study each element exhaustively. Instead the Plan may identify or speak to future studies of some of the plan elements.

Plan Format

Further, preparation of the plan itself can be approached in various ways ranging from simply showing these elements on a land-use map as an attachment to a business plan; through simply outlining existing conditions, goals/objectives and implementation policies/strategies/plan for the protection/preservation/utilization of each element; to a much more detailed and comprehensive plan document.