

Town of Enfield, NH
Mascoma Lakeside Park Committee meeting with Paul Mirski
August 13, 2019

Minutes: Committee members met at 3:30 PM in the Whitney Hall conference room with local architect Paul Mirski. Present: Paul Mirski, Meredith Smith, Doug Smith, Ryan Aylesworth, Rob Taylor, Kate McMullan, Jo-Ellen Cortney, Terry Lynch, Shirley Green, Reg Jones (guest).

Meredith opened the meeting by stating the meeting was for informational purposes only. It was an opportunity to:

- better conceive what is wanted for the park
- begin to find the right professional services to provide what is wanted

Meredith stated that the Town had received one response only (covering both RFPs) to the RFPs they had issued regarding the planning and development of the park. Meredith had then reached out to Paul Mirski, who had then gotten back to Meredith with an offer to “give town” his services. Meredith, Ryan and Paul met last week to discuss his offer. She then turned the meeting over to Paul Mirski.

Mr. Mirski began by indicating his presentation would be an informal one. It would represent a “jumping off point” only. Everything should be viewed as “draft only.” He then walked us through a series of points focused on improvements to the park.

Pavilion: Mr. Mirski told us that he felt the one pavilion RFP response received by the town was inordinately high and that this is what motivated him to offer to help. He went on to state that all a pavilion requires is a foundation, some posts and a roof. One could easily employ a pre-fab or modified building kit of some sort (He mentioned a 1000 square foot, 28 foot by 38 foot pavilion could be created using 2 garage kits without their walls). He recommended a middle price range for such kits.

Later in the meeting Mr. Mirski mentioned a greenhouse roof on top of posts as a possibility. He provided us a drawing of an eight sided pavilion with 14 foot high columns. He suggested a wood ceiling as “wood better for music.” He suggested we use three tab shingles as he likes their appearance better than that of architectural shingles. He had previously told Meredith that a tin roof would cost four times what a shingled roof would cost.

Park: Mr. Mirski stated that, in his opinion, Mascoma Lakeside Park is “the best piece of property anyone has in the Upper Valley.” He mentioned its details (size, location, extensive waterfront) and suggested it could become the sort of “informal park one finds in a nice city.” He distributed a series of maps of the recent park survey findings with suggested changes and/or additions to what is currently present and/or planned including:

- Move the location of the proposed pavilion to a more visible “middle of lot” location as a way to minimize “mis-use of property by vandals”

- Use something other than “rustic” for the design as “rustic attracts abuse”
- Consider including a greenhouse type roof on pavilion

Mr. Mirski stated that the presence of the state-built emergency road is a disadvantage. He suggested:

- Change the grade of the park stating “lot could be evened out so flat”
- Add green plantings along left side by the Rail Trail
- Change parking so entering/exiting involves right side turns so more user friendly (hard to change as within 50 feet of water)
- Change greenery along water to low-growing bushes such as low maintenance Bar Harbor juniper. Doing so would improve views of lake from picnic tables and cars. He suggested we start at south end of park and rework shoreline so all plantings are low maintenance, promote a good view of lake yet still minimize geese presence in park.

Mr. Mirski suggested we be imaginative. He suggested we begin a list of proposed changes. He suggested someone create a detailed list of what each change would require (research, cost, permissions needed, etc.). Finally, he suggested we find and use volunteers to organize and maintain plantings. He stated that “sophisticated discourages mis-use of property.”

Parking area: Mr. Mirski suggested we create a long-term plan for parking, a detailed “lay-out” of what we can do.

Mr. Mirski suggested the overall slope of the park is too steep. He suggested we raise the grade so that the park area is level. He suggested we add sidewalk(s) from the grass to the water. He suggested we change the emergency road into an 8 foot wide, wheelchair friendly, promenade ... through the park and across the Rail Trail to Main St.

He suggested we create an appropriate park “lighting plan” with subtle down facing lighting. He then mentioned we will need a trench for electricity for lighting and will need to dig it without getting in trouble with the NH Shoreline Protection people.

Mr. Mirski mentioned that NH Shoreline Protection has, on occasion given Towns waivers for some development. He suggested we look into this.

Meredith commented that State had offered to remove the Emergency Road as part of their clean-up of the park. The Select Board at that time turned them down. Mr. Mirski then suggested perhaps we could raise the walk so it is six inches above parking area.

ADA related changes: Mr. Mirski suggested we work to make the park ADA friendly. He suggested we approach the Rail Trail people and ask to lower the height of the rail trail where the emergency road crosses by approximately four feet (employing a 1/12 foot slope along the railroad to do so).

Mr. Mirski suggested we avoid developing the area that requires an archeological study.

He walked us through his series of survey maps with suggested changes he had added.

Ryan asked about the cost of straightening slope of park rail trail to shore. Mr. Mirski suggested we do all research needed re changes wanted, including codes and costs involved before we approach either the State or the RailTrail. Go in with the evidence. Don't ask questions of the State. Do your own research, come up with answers and take them to the State. Don't ask them to provide the costs. He suggested someone put all questions on a list, research regulations, then figure out how to fix things and costs involved. He suggested we draft a paragraph for each change which addresses problem and our proposed "how to fix."

Meredith asked about moving wetland areas in park, rerouting run-off, etc. Based on the ensuing discussion, it is possible to do so.

Meredith ended the meeting by telling us all the above will be discussed and decisions made ("will need to be made") at our next August 20th meeting. She emphasized it is time to make decisions. Ryan and she then added all of the federal grant-related work must be completed by the end of September, 2020.