

Maynard Golf Club Reuse Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting date: August 12, 2013

Location: Town Hall, Basement, 7:00 pm

Committee members present were Adam Conn, Kathy Campbell, Deirdre Campbell, and Mark Grundstrom. Selectman Bill Cranshaw was present, now serving as liaison from the Board of Selectmen. A community member was in attendance.

7:01 Call to order (Kathy Campbell, Vice Chair). Quorum noted.

7:02 Resignation of Bill Freeman, Chair, acknowledged by the Committee. Committee expressed thanks to Bill for his service.

7:04 Deirdre Campbell moved to accept the Minutes from the July 15, 2013 meeting as written. Kathy Campbell seconded. **So moved** (3-0-1. Conn, Campbell, Campbell YEA; Grundstrom ABSTAIN).

7:05 At previous meeting Mark Grundstrom was nominated to replace Bill Freeman as chair. Mark accepted the nomination. No further nominations were made. Adam Conn moved to elect Mark Grundstrom as chair. Deirdre Campbell seconded. **So moved.**

7:06 Mark Grundstrom assumed chair and continued with the posted agenda.

7:07 Mark Grundstrom recapped the progress of the committee to help bring Selectman Cranshaw up to speed. Discussion included current course condition, reports from Sterling Golf Management, capital costs. Mark indicated that a meeting should be arranged involving the town facilities managers, members of this committee, and Sterling Golf Management. Selectman Cranshaw indicated he will arrange.

Selectman Cranshaw will also work with the Conservation Commission to get further details on landfill work, conservation restrictions, and landswap issues that might impact (or be assuaged by) the golf course property.

7:29 Questions arose as to the impact of development at 129 Parker and 109 Powermill, particularly as it relates to Affordable Housing. Selectmen Cranshaw also provided some information on examples of Affordable Housing in Maynard, both privately owned and town owned.

Questions arose as to the abatement agreement with the Town of Acton for the Hole #2 parcel, as well as what the CPA restrictions on the sale of Hole #2 parcel. Selectman Cranshaw will investigate specific details of both sales to private parties and conservation trusts for parts of and totality of the property.

7:41 Selectmen Cranshaw inquired as to the need for an additional member of the committee. Committee felt that it wasn't a pressing concern, as we have moved from the research and exploration stage to the report writing stage.

7:43 Mark Grundstrom detailed options #1 and #2 (keep course as is and keep course as is, with shoulder uses) from his draft of that section of the report. Adam Conn detailed option #3, Hole 1 (significant shift of fairway location to accommodate multiple functions) from his draft of that section of the report. Deirdre Campbell detailed option #3, Hole 8 (shift of tee box to accommodate potential garden space) and will be working on developing that section of the report. Kathy Campbell detailed option #4 (elimination of golf course as primary land use).

Question arose surrounding the maturity date for the bond issue. Other concerns that arose involved traffic calming on Route 27, particularly in regard to potential crosswalks from the course to the rail trail in a safe, logical area such as near Christmas Motors and sidewalks leading to the course along Route 27. The flashing lights/visible crosswalk solution that is part of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail along Route 27 in Westford was cited as an example.

8:35 Mark Grundstrom asked Bill Cranshaw about the allowable Town Days that are not being utilized in the current golf course management contract. This element of the contract needs to be organized and publicized, but it is unclear what function of the Town of Maynard would maintain this function. Bill Cranshaw will investigate.

8:37 Floor was opened to the Community. Community member asked for clarification on points within the options presented earlier, as well as understanding of which elements Options 5 and 6 encompass. Option 5 is for the town to build affordable housing on the land; Option 6 is to sell the land to private or transfer to a conservation trust.

8:44 Deirdre Campbell moved to adjourn the meeting. Kathy Campbell seconded. **So moved.**

Next meeting will be September 16th at 7:00 pm at Town Hall.

Attached are the draft outline being used to frame the final work product of the Committee, as of August 12, 2013. These documents are by no means final, but are included here for transparency purposes.

Option # 1

Maintain Golf Course As Is – No Changes to Contract

Benefits to Town

- Guaranteed annual revenue (10 % / 5% or 50K. *Over 400K, 15%*)
- High Community Support (esp. among golfing community/ex-members)
- Limited burden to Town infrastructure (w/ Golf management company operating)
- **Town can choose to self-manage to increase income (Municipal GC / Enterprise Fund)**

- Low OPEX / Fairly low CAPEX currently (clubhouse issues down the road)
- Low maintenance requirements by town
- Draws people to Maynard and Downtown
- Green/Open space and wildlife habitat is preserved.
- Low impact to taxpayer (except 15 year bond @ 1.5 Million)
- Free event space per Sterling contract 4 times a year.
- Off Season access (Dec-MAR)
- Clubhouse ADA compliant / Open to community as function hall (revenue generator)
- Acton tax abatement if land stays a golf course
- No concerns regarding land reversibility
- No Town redundancy
 - Could establish Resident / Non-Resident rates.

Disadvantages to Town

- Usage is limited to golfers during the season
- “Town Days” requires consideration and planning for temporary issues of parking, lighting traffic, security & accessibility
- Revenue generated is currently being used for Capital costs (over \$2,500.00). Only 1 of the 10 desired **course** improvements by Sterling has been done. Well off Hole # 2 established.

General Concerns

- Non Renewal of Management company
- Short and Long Term Capital Costs related to the clubhouse
- Failure of Management company to maintain proper stewardship of the land.

Option # 2

Maintain Golf Course w/ Temporal Edge of Day Activities

Benefits to Town, same as #1, PLUS:

- Expanded recreational usage by larger group of constituents
- Increased visibility and access to Town-owned open space
- Small cost (if any) to town
- Little or no impact to the lay of the land
- Might increase course play

Possible Recreational uses during golf season could include:

Walking, Jogging, birdwatching.....dawn and dusk.

Possible safety issues could arise.

General Concerns, same as # 1, PLUS:

- Contract Terms might be considered less attractive to golf management company
- Potential damage to the course
- Burden of management, enforcement needed
- Operating costs to get the word out.

Option #3

Modification of Hole 1 Tee boxes and Fairway and Green Approach

Description of area

- Longest par 4 on course
- Dogleg right
- Anchored by three fairway bunkers to dissuade cutting the corner
- Green opens narrowly in front, with three bunkers guarding

Overview of proposed changes

- Convert area between current first fairway and heavy tree barrier to second fairway to an active fairway
- Convert current first fairway to community and facility event use
- Pave additional parking area

Scope of work

- Convert area between current first fairway and heavy tree barrier to second fairway to an active fairway
 - Improve grounds in current unused/underused area of the course
 - Remove multiple trees
 - Modify bunkers near green
 - Modify tee boxes to accommodate new hole direction
- Convert current first fairway to community and facility event use
 - Add picnic tables and other movable structures
 - Provide sufficient remote electrical support or generator platform
 - Plant trees and other natural barriers along left side of new fairway
 - May need ADA compliant pathway/features
- Pave additional parking area
 - Provide accessible spots for area nearest community area
 - Expand current parking to attract and accommodate larger community uses and events

Additional uses to be accommodated by change

- Increased number of active town events, including but not limited to concerts, outdoor movie events, community bazaar, art festivals, yoga classes, summer theater programs, as well as provide a public gathering place for organizations and groups.
- Off-season use, such as sledding hill, will benefit by natural barrier to new fairway
- Off-season use, such as a skating rink, could be more easily accommodated without potential to damage course
- Allows for safer perimeter trail construction without impacting course, including access to Rail Trail at Acton Street/Brown Street/Conant Street intersection

- Some potential for an outdoor pool to be constructed, however, this may provide noise detrimental to golfing activities, a need for a larger increase in parking than for other passive and active uses, significant construction and recurring costs, increased ADA compliance issues, and severe impact on off-season usage.

Costs

- Tree and stump removal
- Construction of the new fairway
- Changes to the green
- Parking improvements
- Electrical support
- Certification of the hole (length, change to code rating, slope, etc.)

Barriers to success

- Displeasure of current golfers
 - Potential delays in pace of play
 - Fear of change, any change
- Risks associated with concurrent use
 - Should be minimal for community use side, as tee box directs away from area
 - Possible sound distraction for golfers, should lessen over time with tree barrier
- Risks associated with non-concurrent use
 - Potential damage from community users leaving designated area (current risk now)
 - Potential litter problem
- Decreased visibility from Route 27
 - Minor potential for those to see the golf course as they enter town

Benefits

- To golf course management
 - New area to use for additional revenue opportunities
 - increased parking
 - New challenge to the course
 - More non-golf events increases exposure to potential patrons
- To Town
 - large area for use for events hamstrung by Memorial Park's shortcomings
 - increased events at facility increases awareness and desirability for further use
 - opportunity for additional tree planting increases "greenness" of town

Other factors

- Highly reversible, as former fairway will still be maintained
- Should community uses not coalesce, area could be converted to a small driving range
- Very low impact environmentally, as most of trees to be removed are dead or in poor condition [Should check this is true](#)

#4. Repurpose Golf Course for Primarily Non-Golf Related Recreational Uses (allowed under CPA)

- Unlimited recreational uses as allowed under CPA and preservation restriction
- Redundant recreational opportunities/activities using other Town owned assets?

Follow Up Questions/Clarification

- This is a LONG TERM scenario so include (in a list) ALL *creative* ideas (allowed under CPA) that got more than a few votes at the original visioning session? Maybe identify those that *could* be revenue generators?

INTRODUCTION

This option is the removal of the current primary use of the land as a 9 hole golf course, and developing 1 or more selected options for recreational use. Due to the land management requirements to maintain and operate a golf course, this option is considered irreversible without significant capital funding for restoration.

VISIONING SESSION RESULTS REVIEW

(summarize or list from MAPC)

Identify those uses that fit under this option

COMMUNITY BENEFITS OF THIS OPTION

The benefits to the Town are 1) opportunities for unlimited, 4-season access to recreational open space and the improvements thereon, and 2) accommodation of multiple users & demographics with proper land use and capital planning.

[Space to share for developing both passive and active recreation](#)

During visioning sessions, participants identified numerous re-use options for both passive and active recreation. However, any re-use alternatives that are considered will need to be evaluated, at a minimum, in terms of the following:

- allowable uses under CPA
- usage estimates
- physical land restrictions (wetlands, floodplains, rock outcroppings)
- availability of parking or resources for expansion
- handicap accessibility
- environmental benefits
- traffic management and connections to surrounding streets, and
- cost implications
- potential revenue opportunities

[Community connections needed \(pedestrian, bike\) to be viable long term](#)

ALLOWABLE USES UNDER CPA

USAGE ESTIMATES

PHYSICAL LAND RESTRICTIONS

(wetlands, floodplains, rock outcropping etc - use maps)

PARKING

Expanded uses and increased visits will require additional parking, with multiple access locations coinciding with locations of specific improvements.

HANDICAP ACCESSIBILITY

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

While land conservation and wildlife habitat protection were ideas discussed during these sessions, the overwhelming public consensus involved the development of new options that encouraged all ages and their unique interests, while allowing opportunities for the most number of people to actively enjoy the property. Certain sections of the land parcel are thriving resource areas for flora and fauna; these areas also serve as important assets for storm drainage, flood control and groundwater recharge. These resource areas define the center section of the parcel, giving ample opportunity for public wildlife viewing - therefore serving to provide both recreational uses and environmental protection benefits. However, care should be taken to manage the boundaries of these existing environmental resource areas, as unmanaged open spaces within the floodplain could expand wet areas, diminishing public access and use.

Existing woodland land planning for added wildlife benefits, nature trails and connections to adjacent Acton conservation land.

Open Space Aesthetics: Topography and context-sensitive land development

Scenic landscapes – include notable areas such as hilltops, stream corridors, open meadows, areas suitable for agricultural uses, separation landscaping, scenic views, and scenic pathways.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

COST IMPLICATIONS

The availability of capital funding for desired improvements

TO IMPLEMENT + TO MAINTAIN

- Option is likely irreversible without large capital cost
- No guaranteed revenue to offset operation and maintenance
- Full time management needed

- Capital improvements will require prioritizing based upon funding
- All facilities including clubhouse must be maintained by the Town
- Thoughtful planning needed to avoid a money pit for unsupported uses
- Improvements can be phased as capital funding is raised

POTENTIAL REVENUE OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities for revenue-neutral activities with user fees Types of Co-Existing, Allowable Uses

- Same as Options #1-3, plus: