

**DRAFT Volunteers Green, Browns Court, Round Church Green  
3 Parks Improvement Committee (ARPA Funds)**

**Minutes from meeting held on August 20**

**Members Attending:** Kendra Ziskie, Fran Thomas, Tess Storrs, Megan Andrews, Jeanne Agner

**Members Absent:** Mary Lefebvre, Denise Barnard

**Guests in person:** Bob Marquis, Gary Bressor

**Attending Virtually:** Christy Witters

**Public comment:**

Gary Bressor presented a draft of some ideas that he and Bob Marquis have for the higher area at /volunteers Green. Gary asked that they be on the agenda for the next meeting to discuss this.

Christy Witters sent an email with some thoughts she had on a playground. She joined in the discussion later when we talked about Volunteers Green.

**Minutes Approved** from last meeting on 7/25/24

**Next scheduled meetings** Weds Sept 11

**Agenda:**

**Planning commission update:**

The Planning Commission met on August 7 and were meeting again on Aug 21, the day after our meeting. No one from our committee was able to attend the Aug 7 meeting to give an update. The planning committee was looking at language to define a playground for planning purposes. We need to look into the language regarding the bathroom to see what can be done with that structure as far as planning.

**Front Porch Forum feedback**

We got several email responses from the update that was posted on Front Porch Forum. All were positive, some with constructive criticism. We shared the key points of the responses. We talked about how to respond as a group or as committee members to the comments that pertain directly to the tasks we were charged with by the

selectboard. We should only address what is in our committee's realm. It would not be fair of us to respond to comments that have to do with the work of other committees.

One of the questions that Rod West raised is the use of wood chips being a good surface for accessibility by all. Jeanne will do some more research, as she has also questioned this. The material is not really wood chips, rather Engineered Wood Fibre milled especially for playgrounds. Many public playgrounds in larger cities have moved to using a poured rubber base which is easier to navigate if one has mobility issues. However, the cost is very high and usually prohibitive for small towns. That would also have to be researched more as to the feasibility of that base in a flood zone.

Chrissy Witters had emailed pictures of playgrounds that are considered natural playgrounds. We discussed the perimeters we had to work with. Jeanne explained that we had originally asked all of the playground reps that we met with to include some of these natural elements. However, we are severely restricted as to what can be done in a flood zone. Now that the playground is hopefully moving to the higher area, we will be looking at an adapted version of the original design. But the area is still within a flood plain and will have the same restrictions.

### **Next steps for Volunteers Green Park**

We commented how quickly the park and the playground were put back together after the most recent flood. Most of us were surprised to see that the playground could be refurbished yet again.

Jeanne will look into the most recent playground inspection from the state to see if there is anything that needs immediate attention.

Fran suggested that we look at the plateau of Volunteers Green as a blank slate in order to consider all possibilities.

Denise was not in attendance. She was going to ask John LInn and John ? for some on repairing the bandshell vs building a newer bandshell/pavilion with restrooms. We also discussed at our last meeting hiring the structural engineer to assess what would be needed to rebuild the current bandshell and bring it up to code. Denise was going to look into that. Fran will talk with Denise to find out where we are in that process and continue to move this along. We know that the original quote for the engineer to look at the bandshell is out of date and that we should look to see that the scope of what we were asking to be evaluated is up to date. Denise was also going to ask Bob Marquis if he would evaluate the cement floor of the bandshell.

We would like to have several designs for the entire area that have details including landscaping to propose to the public.

We think that the Farmers Market with their portable stations would be better suited to the area under the trees where the current playground is now.

If there is still some money budgeted for tree work after the tree at the Old Round Church is addressed (see next paragraph), we decided that the weeds and invasive plants under the crab apple trees should be removed now.

### **Round Church Green and Browns Court Park**

Fran will touch base with Josh to see he needs help from any of us regarding projects at either of these parks. Tess has been pricing some items for the pickleball court for Josh such as hoses and more.

We did discuss the tree at the Round Church Green that Acer identified as having some early disease issues and recommended pruning. Fran will suggest to Josh that work be done now to prolong the life of that tree.

### **Other items for discussion**

Jeanne will talk with Mark Fausel to see if there is any update on the status of the Recreation Committee or a part time Recreation Director. Who will follow up with the park updates and maintenance when our committee disbands?

Tess has alerted the selectboard with some of her research regarding noise concerns surrounding pickleball and sound mitigation strategies.

Meeting adjourned.