

Danvers River Committee
Thursday, February 16, 2023
Meeting Minutes

The Danvers River Committee held a public meeting on Thursday, February 16, 2023, at the Endicott Park Visitors Center (Conference Room) at 6:00pm.

Member(s) present: Matthew Byrne, Chair
Bill Ciesinski
Bill Fouhey
Louie George
Michael McCarthy
Tom Perry
Gardner Trask, Selectman Liaison

Member(s) absent: Dan DeLorenzo
Robert Hemeon
Andrea Daley
Bob Moore

Staff Present: Christopher Sanborn, Director of Natural Resources
Carolann Powers, Secretary

Media Present: None

Matt Byrne called meeting called to order at 6:06pm.

Secretary's Report:

The committee was asked to accept the minutes of the meeting the January 19, 2023.

Motion: Made by Bill Fouhey, seconded by Bill ~~Mike~~ Ciesinski to accept the minutes of the January 19, 2023; All in favor: 6:0.

New Business:

Waterfront Updates:

Waterway Permit renewal going out to boaters on 3/1/23 and are due 3/30/23, boaters are given a grace period of a week or so before they will be charged a late fee.

A letter will be sent to all those who have docks at the Crane River Marina to advise of a fee increase so they are aware. This is a fee increase the River Committee had voted on. It was noted that F dock will be usable this year but at a reduced rate. It was also noted

the fee increase is \$5 this year; then there will be \$1 per foot increase each year thereafter.

Chris Sanborn informed the group an RFQ was sent out last month for dock repair/replacement. They only received one bid back from Northshore Marina. They can meet the specs and will do the job. There was \$45K appropriated for this job but the quote is for \$47K; the town will have to fund the \$2K difference out of the Waterways Improvement Fund. The docks should be received in late March for the start of the project. There will be 4: 6'x20' floats and 6: 4'x18' floats for this project. It was noted the increase in the price of the project is associated with the increased price of lumber and supplies.

Kernwood Bridge repairs and closures:

Chris informed the group that the Salem Harbormaster put this project his radar. The Salem Harbor Master was upset that Mass DOT said they need to make emergency repairs to the supports that support the electrical conduit on the center span of the bridge. They are on site currently preparing for this project. There will be closures to the bridge. The time frame of the closures is 2/13/23 - 2/24/23, and they will require 2 hours' notice for opening the bridge. From 2/27/23 - 3/10/23 the bridge will be closed completely. It was noted local marina owners have been made aware. From 3/13/23 - 4/14/23 they will require 2 hours' notice for bridge openings. Between the hours of 7am-3:30pm no vessel traffic allowed at all. The restrictions are just during the weekdays.

Theses repairs are a band aid to maintain and keep the electrical functioning to the center span to operate bridge. It was noted the bridge will remain open to road traffic.

Chris S. said long term he understands they may need a temporary bridge for the Bridge St. bridge while they perform major repairs to the Kernwood Bridge.

The Salem Harbormaster pushed back on Mass DOT regarding this project, and they said the only other option is to close the Kernwood Bridge for the summer.

Crane River Marina pier/gangway:

Chris S. said the Crane River Marina pier and gangway project is separate from the Crane River Marina dock project. These projects are both required to be ADA accessible. AARPA grant funds were received in the amount of \$125K for Sandy Beach repairs but the repairs are too extensive and far exceed those funds. Because the funds must be spent on waterfront improvement, they will instead earmark some of these funds for the permitting and design phase of the pier and gangway project at the Crane River marina in addition to some topography work to be done at Sandy Beach.

Louie G. inquired about access to the marina asking if it is considered a public access area under Chapter 91. Chris said the state considers it is a public access area and therefore it is unlocked for public access during the day and locked at night. This allows the town to meet the state public access requirement for this area.

Bill F. asked if the Sandy Beach can be accessed. Chris S. said it is currently accessible however it needs a redesign. ~~Bill Mike~~ Ciesinski asked where the current parking is for Sandy Beach. Chris S. said it is across the street at John George Park.

The committee noted that Sandy Beach needs a purpose and a plan, it is in need of a redesign. The committee said it would be nice to potentially rebrand it as the Danversport Waterfront Park.

They said in the meantime it would be nice to use the beach site during the season, asking if it could be used as a location for a farmers type market or other similar events. Chris said currently it is not an ideal location due to poor drainage.

Bill F. ask why the Ipswich River doesn't fall under the prevue of the River Committee. Chris said he is not sure, it may have something to do with when River Committee was appointed years ago, they may have been given specific purviews fell under their charge.

Bill ~~Mike~~ Ciesinski asked if there are any moorings available. Chris said there are 30 boaters on the current mooring waitlist and Dave Arathuzik, Deputy Harbormaster is working on contacting those on the waitlist to fill any vacancies that arise.

Tom Perry said the Popes Landing parking lot has been crowded. Lots of local businesses are overflowing into and using the lot. The committee has concerns regarding this usage. Chris S. said it is a complicated issue as it is considered a state public access area by the state, and it says the area is for boating access only. We need to consider if it is something we want to draw a hard line on. If we prohibit others from parking there, we will have to prohibit for all, including those who come to use the picnic and park area. Chris said we should table this concern for now and put it on next month's agenda as the topic is on the radar at town hall and needs a more in-depth conversation. Tom Perry said the Harbormaster's office is currently being very flexible with the parking. Chris said it is an issue and the town needs to determine where to draw the line. Tom Perry said the parking lot is so busy now in the winter months that there is concern with what the spring and summer seasons will bring. There was discussion if any of these businesses are possibly in violation of their zoning requirements by using this lot for their private businesses. Chris again said if we draw a hard line, it could create a bigger parking problem in the neighborhood. Chris will get more information regarding this matter to bring to the next meeting.

Motion: Motion made by Bill Fouhey, seconded by Tom Perry, to adjourn the meeting of February 16, 2023. All in favor: 6:0

cc: Steve Bartha, Town Manager
David Mountain, Recreation Director