

Town Committee on Squibnocket

Draft Minutes

June 24, 2014

Chilmark Town Hall Selectmen's Meeting Room

8am

Present: Jim Malkin (Chair), Allison Burger, Steve Flanders, Dan Greenbaum, Billy Meegan, Jane Slater, Janet Weidner, Ron Rappaport (*ex officio*)

Also Present: Chris Murphy, Tony Orphanos, Jonathan Mayhew, Joan Malkin, Wendy Jeffers, Miles Jaffe

Committee Staffing: Jim Malkin introduced Marina Lent, who will act as the Administrative Assistant to the Committee. Marina is also the Administrator for the Chilmark Board of Health.

Swearing-in of Members: Jennifer Christy, Chilmark Town Clerk, conducted the swearing-in of the appointed members of the Town Committee on Squibnocket. Janet Weidner, who was not yet present at the time of swearing-in, will be sworn-in immediately following today's meeting.

Squibnocket Committee website: Jim Malkin noted that the web page for the Squibnocket Committee, which is currently under development, can be accessed on the pink banner entitled "Squibnocket Project" in the center of the main page of the Town of Chilmark website, www.chilmarkma.gov. He noted that the Squibnocket page will be modeled on the web page of the Board of Selectmen (BOS), which contains links to documents under review by the Board embedded in the agenda of the BOS meeting. Marina Lent has prepared directions on [how to subscribe](#) to automatically receive postings to the Squibnocket Project web page via email. Committee members and any interested members of the public are encouraged to subscribe.

Process Discussion: Jim Malkin noted that the Committee has available to it a number of proposals and ideas, at various levels of elaboration and scope, and that ideas and suggestions are continuing to be generated.

As a way of organizing the Committee's work to both take advantage of the work already done to develop existing proposals, and to solicit additional proposals and identify further information that will be needed in order to assess the various proposals, Jim Malkin suggested that interested parties – at a minimum, those groups identified in the [letter of appointment](#) of Town Moderator Everett Poole, should be invited to submit and present proposals and ideas to the Committee at its meetings throughout the month of July. The Committee could then take a recess in the first half August to digest and further examine the proposals and background information, individually or in subcommittees, and resume after that with a clearer idea of what information is still needed and how the work should proceed. Janet Weidner stressed that all ideas regarding any aspect of the Committee's mandate, not just comprehensive, fleshed-out and fully-developed formal proposals, need to be solicited and heard.

Discussion followed on the best role and timing for input from professionals such as coastal engineers. Jim Malkin noted that it will be important to have a clear sense of what questions they should be tasked

with, and this is what it is hoped will emerge from the upcoming broad-based consultative process with interested parties.

Review of Committee's Work Program Outline: Dan Greenbaum presented a work program outline he had prepared, entitled "[Example of Squibnocket Committee's Work Program Outline](#)" to help organize the work of the Committee. He noted that the elements of the work program need not—and in fact, should not—be done consecutively, but will be undertaken concurrently. He also stressed repeatedly that Committee members need to expect to work hard in between the weekly meetings of the Committee on assigned tasks to move the project forward: it is a large undertaking that will require significant application on the part of all Committee members.

In establishing goals and defining the problem, he stressed the importance of explicitly addressing what has led to the need for this work to be undertaken at this time. Project components will continue to evolve and to present themselves as the work of the Committee progresses; at this point, it is important to lay down only the main elements.

The review criteria must be carefully defined and clearly articulated in order to demonstrate the respective merits of different proposals. Not every person will assign the same weight to the different criteria; he noted that he expects that the Committee will end up with a range of thoroughly evaluated proposals, each with its own pros and cons, to present to the Selectmen. He felt that the Committee would not be well served by trying to force itself to select a single proposal, but could best fulfill its mandate by doing the difficult work of thoroughly evaluating and objectively presenting the pros and cons of a small number of different but equivalent proposals.

He suggested that an online archive of background material should be established to inform the Committee's work.

The Committee and members of the audience then discussed financial implications of proposals as one of the factors to be evaluated; elements of "financial implications" could include maintenance costs, and, in broadest perspective, financial implications for property owners, not just for the Town.

Janet Weidner was asked to confirm with the Town that the State grant which has been awarded to address the issues surrounding Squibnocket remains available and under what parameters.

Invitations: The Committee is eager to hear from all interested groups or individuals on the issues identified by Town Meeting, namely "a) to assist Squibnocket Farms in developing alternatives for access to Squibnocket Point for both vehicles and utilities, and b) improved access for Chilmark residents to beach resources, including parking and an expanded beach for swimming and recreation." Jim Malkin asked for Committee input as to who, in addition to the parties named in the appointment letter of the Moderator, should be invited to present proposals over the coming weeks. Wendy Jeffers noted that a group has been formed named "Friends of Squibnocket". She is willing to be the contact person for that group. Chris Murphy recommended that *all* nearby residents, regardless of affiliation, should be individually addressed and invited to participate in this process.

Jim Malkin confirmed the importance he attaches to reaching out to all people who are likely to be affected by any proposed course of action. There is no possible course of action that will be fully satisfactory to all. Difficult choices must be made, and therefore, the more the people affected by these decisions are involved throughout the process, the better.

Janet Weidner noted that the Chilmark Beach Committee should also be asked to provide input. Committee members informed the Chair about an additional group, the Squibnocket Beach Association, which will need to be contacted. Allison Burger asked about fishermen interested in accessing Squibnocket Pond, another member suggested that the Town of Aquinnah also be contacted. Billy Meegan reminded the Committee of the extensive outreach undertaken in connection with the Town's consideration of wind turbines; the town can generate lists of property owners through its mapping program, and a letter should be sent out to all parties within the general area, not just immediate abutters of proposed activities.

Upcoming Work: Steve Flanders suggested, and the Committee agreed, to invite Chuck Hodgkinson to address the Committee at its next meeting on Tuesday, July 1 to provide an overview of available information in studies and data already collected by the Town. The Committee will also consider how to make such background information publically available via the Squibnocket Project web page. Jim Malkin agreed to contact Chuck following the meeting to extend the request.

Jim Malkin will produce a draft invitation letter, and Marina Lent will look into ways of generating address lists of individuals and groups as specified by the Committee. In addition, Jim Malkin will locate the background documents already available to the Town and Marina Lent will work on making them available on the Squibnocket Project web page.

Minutes: Minutes of June 16, 2014 were adopted as amended. In future sessions, the Committee will review, amend and adopt minutes at the outset of its sessions.

The meeting was adjourned at 09:14.