



TOWN OF
STONEHAM
MASSACHUSETTS 02180

Conservation Commission
(781) 279-2696
jdecourcy@stoneham-ma.gov

STONEHAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
August 25, 2025 5 PM
Remote meeting

Please join us by logging in at

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87916799179?pwd=xs03C2s7qHiL3OuJuB33vrcY9WLIX4.1>

Passcode:779071

Join via phone:(929) 205-6099

Domenick Cimina, Megan Day, Jeanne Craigie, Jeremy Zasowski, Annalisa Bhatia, Richard Jackson, Jessica Gerke, Connie Felosi, Jeanne Grieve, Grace McManus, Ellen McBride, Debbie Taylor Smith, Dennis Sheehan, Karen, Toni, Marcia Wegnen

Motion to call meeting to order by Jeanne Craigie seconded by Jeremy Zasowski
Roll call yes 7/0 Domenick Cimina, Megan Day, Jeanne Craigie, Jeremy Zasowski, Annalisa Bhatia, Richard Jackson, Jessica Gerke

DISCUSSION

Exploration of Subcommittee at Whip Hill

Domenick Cimina mentions Friends of Fells as caretaker role, asks who wants to be on committee. Jessica Gerke asks why subcommittee? Domenick Cimina prefers full committee. Megan Day concerned about one off meetings that aren't including full commission, subcommittee would have access. Megan Day says meetings with Friends of Fells are happening with Domenick Cimina. Jeanne



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Craigie says open meeting law violation, last meeting said we would get group together to work out lease. Not meet privately with potential client if lease is on agenda. Jeanne Craigie asks what happened at meeting, Domenick Cimina said members saw space and didn't discuss terms. Domenick Cimina said others have met with Friends of the Fells. Jeanne Craigie had phone conversation and asked him to come to a meeting. Megan Day had a phone conversation and met with him in capacity of tours from 300th event. Domenick Cimina said let's all be involved. Megan Day states subcommittee no quorum. Meeting every week until we hash this out, Friends of the Fells is looking for the fall.

Annalisa Bhatia states it might be easier to have a smaller group create document and then react for expediency sake. Has this group used a subcommittee?

Domenick Cimina answers last subcommittee didn't interact with Dennis Sheehan and Bob Galvin. All can be involved and get all the information first hand per Domenick Cimina. Bob Galvin and Dennis Sheehan made themselves available per Megan Day. She states subcommittees thru MACC have standing subcommittees. Dissolving subcommittee resulted in forward progress halted. Jessica Gerke said previous subcommittee published agreement with review from board as well as use guidelines were developed. Megan Day says Dennis Sheehan asked us to keep subcommittee in place.

Domenick Cimina says Dennis Sheehan has nothing to say.

Jeanne Craigie in all the committee work comes with a framework, exploring expectations, define scope of work, come with document and meet with town counsel. As town property town administrator has a lot to say as the one professional of group. Jeanne Craigie has a lot of ideas for subcommittee, property underutilized, Saturday lots of compliments from so many people. Small steps for betterment of residents. Scope work to be done, difficult at regular meetings, subcommittee would focus on one piece.

Richard Jackson subcommittees aren't supposed to last forever. If were going to be going ahead and hiring someone and focus on Friends of the Fells and all work as a committee with communication and be on the same page.

Jeremy Zasowski previously what has been the engagement plan between subcommittee and committee? Weekly report out at regular meeting?



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Megan Day said subcommittee met and then reviewed documents with committee, no decisions made without full commission. Problematic if commission isn't reading documents.

Annalisa Bhatia comments format makes sense, nimble to work out agreement and react to. Happy to serve on subcommittee.

Megan Day members can attend but not participate.

Jess Gerke it may work or it may fall apart with Friends of the Fells. Voted to pursue per Megan Day at last meeting.

Subcommittee limited to 3 members. Jeremy Zasowski, Jeanne Craigie, Annalisa Bhatia, Richard Jackson, Domenick Cimina are all interested in being on subcommittee.

Jessica Gerke and Megan Day will sit out.

Jeanne Craigie states most committees have a subcommittee. Standing agenda item on full commission meeting.

Document needs review by full committee, can meet with anyone as subcommittee.

Megan Day if its specific if meetings are for Whip Hill, Megan Day would have to be a contract not a lease per Bob Galvin. Megan Day agrees group will need to meet weekly or biweekly.

Domenick Cimina asks to work as full committee.

Jeanne Craigie proposes subcommittee membership.

Annalisa Bhatia asks if Friends of Fells could join weekly, Domenick Cimina says we have not asked.

Jeanne Craigie says town counsel for memorandum of understanding, Bob Galvin will be consulted.

Megan Day states more flexibility with subcommittee.

Motion to meet regularly as full commission by Richard Jackson seconded by Jessica Gerke roll call 3 yes Jessica Gerke, Richard Jackson, Domenick Cimina 4 No Megan Day Jeanne Craigie, Jeremy Zasowski, Annalisa Bhatia

Motion fails

Motion for subcommittee of 3 members by Jeanne Craigie seconded by Megan Day withdrawn



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Motion for Jeremy Zasowski, Annalisa Bhatia, Jeanne Craigie to be subcommittee by Megan Day seconded by Jeanne Craigie

Roll call 5 yes Megan Day, Jeanne Craigie, Jessica Gerke, Jeremy Zasowski, Annalisa Bhatia 2 No Domenick Cimina, Richard Jackson

Motion passes

Richard Jackson suggests that someone of the subcommittee should be on the Commission for more than a year. Megan Day states a lawyer, someone who has worked a lot for the Town and the vice chair of the Commission is a great mix. Jeanne Craigie states everybody say what they want subcommittee to look at.

Domenick Cimina doesn't like the \$1 a year, premium location, a lot of work expected. Believes a great fit. Building inspector needs to be involved, smoke detectors reviewed.

Jeanne Craigie said Whip Hill is hard wired to Fire department.

Jessica Gerke what needs to happen to space for it to be utilized, maintenance that may need to happen.

Jessica Gerke caretaker contract and job description, Friends of Fells may want a more specific list and details of expectations.

Domenick Cimina would like to talk to Galvin, utilities separated. Megan Day we pay the utilities. Megan Day have impressive group that will apply for grants and do trail maintenance. We've never charged and its in exchange for living there. Public awareness, capital projects, Megan Day thinks the Whip Hill proposal is the most important, written about a group managing property. Tours of Fells, respect house and wildlife conservation center, their vision. Keep document in mind and work from it.

Domenick Cimina a lot of trail maintenance, grant writing in their spare time, will work out, great fit.

Jeanne Craigie in contracts worked with school committee, memo of understanding, short term year or 2 agreement, will know after a year if its' working. Have 600 volunteers, need to make sure its legal and what's in it for the house to come alive. Neighbors were elated with music, wanted to come again.



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Jeanne Craigie used to be opposed to beer gardens, they are safe. Hopes to get Friends of the Fells in before the snow hits.

Jeremy Zasowski specifically designed role for resident Conservation steward. Tours, hikes, town events, great fit on surface how do we get into structured format. Adapt for organization instead of individual.

Grace McManus talk about town manager, town attorney, how many of you have read the trust and are you allowed to do this. Megan Day would like to know who the trustees are. After changing use would we have to go to board of appeals. Domenick Cimina states Conservation in charge, we are replacing caretaker. Jessica Gerke states Friends of Fells will maintain use of property. Municipal property exempt from zoning laws per Jeanne Craigie. Town owns property.

Jeanne Grieve speaking as resident, amazing event, Megan Day did great job. Whip Hill as taxpayer and resident concerned about extra ware. Marion Towse from will attorney Lahey section 7.1 net income from trust for maintenance at Whip Hill for Conservation purposes only. If Town fails for 2 years consecutively money can be withdrawn, Town pays for utilities. Extra costs involved, trust shouldn't have to pay for all. Fiscal features are that Stoneham can not afford to supplement Whip Hill. Will this go before town meeting or is this strictly a Conservation Commission decision. Domenick Cimina answers it's a Conservation Commission decision. Jeanne Grieve asks about public participation in questions that will be asked. Job description available? Chris Redfern expanding use to Malden students, objects on fiscal grounds. Domenick Cimina said Friends of Fells is responsible for groups. Jessica Gerke can include in conversation of Friends to the Fells to iron out responsibilities. Parking is limited, will it be expanded? Shovel, plow, clear trash, DPW went as far as lower lot, details will have to be examined. Domenick Cimina Town is obligated to fund Whip Hill, includes DPW per Megan Day and costs. Snow removal has been discussed. Domenick Cimina says Bob Galvin will review. Jeanne Grieve asks if town's people can be involved. Domenick Cimina says letters can be sent in,



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participate in subcommittee meetings, and regular Conservation meetings at the Chair's discretion.

Ellen McBride agrees Friends of Fells is good fit, co-chair of commission 2007-2023 with Bob Parsons when Bob Conway moved. Issue with changes at Whip Hill are blurred. Happy to share deed, Angie Crockett's request was to keep as Conservation property. Haunted tour and beer garden not conservation purpose, Whip Hill should be celebrated with 300th. Cautious observations that Friends of Fells has great energy, staff, and old history that nothing has been developed at hospital site. Stoneham lost taxpayer money. Contract or lease per Bob Galvin but agree there has to be something in it for Whip Hill. Town has not supported since Jim Previte retired 4 years ago. Maintenance and upkeep is Town's responsibility, negotiate with Town for funds.

Trustees are Bank Mellon New York and name has changed over years. Currently take care of money but with Tom Lahey dying the bank is the trustee, current person says just financial, attorney being consulted to find out who is trustee. Conservation is purpose of property, if Friends of Fells can help enforce that great, Garden Club helped update electrical outlets, upstairs not included. There should be smoke detectors, public town owned building is hard wired. Ellen McBride asks people to pump brakes, we have never had a cosponsor ever. Subcommittee meetings are public meetings, would request public be allowed to speak. Ellen McBride will attend subcommittee meetings to provide background. There is no trust document, it is the will and the deed. Asks if document Megan Day mentioned could be shared. Invasive species maintenance would be great.

Jeanne Craigie mentions capital projects with maintenance. Agrees great fit, Howard Dimmick's wife sent document Megan Day referred to, Ellen McBride and Jeanne Grieve are interested.

Domenick Cimina says it will not happen fast, will listen to everyone. Timing of subcommittee later in the day preferred. Jeanne Craigie thinks it'll be a decision of the subcommittee. Jessica Gerke subcommittee members will have to schedule.



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Jeremy Zasowski states Town property that Garden Club and others have done a ton of work, maintain spirit of conservation and caretaker of property. Thorough and exhaustive, mutually beneficial to Town and property.

Jeanne Craigie mentions gifts of Garden Club need to be accepted by Conservation Commission. Liability and property belongs to house, asked Jeanne Grieve for list. Ellen McBride mentions wanting to look for receipts. Dan Towse knew and didn't share, Ellen McBride only shared big things, day to day stuff got done. Keep as Conservation use. Building inspector Cheryl Noble when subcommittee formed, not a building approved for public use, architect reviewed, code enforcement person. Zoned for residential currently. Public building per Town of Stoneham's code.

Motion to adjourn meeting by Jessica Gerke seconded by Jeanne Craigie roll call yes 6/0 Domenick Cimina, Megan Day, Jeanne Craigie, Jeremy Zasowski, Annalisa Bhatia, Jessica Gerke