

## **DOGTOWN PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**October 26, 2022**

#### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

A meeting of the Dogtown Preservation Commission (DPC) was held on October 26, 2022, at the Kyrouz Auditorium, Dale Avenue, Gloucester MA.

**Members Present:** Cindy Dunn (CD), Chair; Chris Leahy (CL) Vice Chair; Leslie Nicholson (LN); Val Gilman (VG); Richard Quateman (RQ); and Charles Schade, Conservation Agent (CS).

**Members Absent:** Mike Hale, DPW Director (MH).

#### **II. MINUTES REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

The minutes of May 11, 2022, were reviewed and approved with no changes by a vote of 5-0.

#### **III. BUSINESS**

##### **Open Space Update: Richard Quateman**

RQ provided an update on OSRC that will be meeting the following week. The OSRC has been working on a new seven-year open space and recreation plan. There were members in the audience who began shouting at RQ about MAPC and making Dogtown into a park. The DPC tried to assure members of the public that there is nothing in the recreation plan with this intent; however, the shouting continued.

On several occasions CD asked for order and to allow the DPC to conduct its business.

##### **Statement from the Mayor's office.**

The DPC was asked to read a question-and-answer statement prepared by the Mayor's office concerning Dogtown.

Below is the statement as submitted by Jill Cahill, Chief Administrative Officer and read by CD:

1. Are their plans to add a visitors center at Dogtown Commons where the compost center is located?

The current administration has no plans to pursue a visitors center in Dogtown. No proposals related to such have been brought to this administration for consideration.

2. The Dogtown Preservation Commission (DPC) lists restoring Dogtown in their ordinance, can the City elaborate on what types of restoration may be considered? At this time, it is our understanding that there have been discussions at the DPC regarding what might come of the area where the compost site is currently located, should it be relocated or discontinued.

3. DPC ordinance and OSRP lists grants as a possibility for restoration and preservation processes... can you describe how the City chooses which grants to consider and how they will make sure that City does not apply and approve ( by Council) grants with strings?

The City develops project proposals, and then considers whether the project is eligible for grant programs that may offer funding consistent with the project goals. All terms and conditions of a funding award and all contracts are considered prior to submitting an application. The City Council approves both application submission and acceptance of grant awards.

4. Why can't we just leave Dogtown alone?

Dogtown is currently enjoyed by several user groups for appropriate activities. The proper maintenance of open spaces is required to allow permitted uses to be conducted safely. Also, some of Dogtown is tributary to our water supply system and therefore it is imperative that the City maintain safe access and oversight.

5. Why must Dogtown stay in our soon to be approved Open Space and Recreation Plan? Can't we just leave it out?

The open space plan development guidelines (as issued by the Commonwealth) require that all open space within a community be evaluated for its current or future open space value.

Members of the public continued to be disruptive, and CD again asked for order so that the DPC could conduct its business. This request was largely ignored for several minutes but order was restored.

#### **Compost Facility Recommendations and Timeline:**

The DPC was asked by CAO, Jill Cahill, to look at what other similar communities do in comparison to Gloucester. The DPC discussed its research on 8 other communities and determined that none of these communities dispose of yard waste on conservation land. The Gloucester compost facility is sited on a 4 plus acre parcel of land known as the Gronblad property. This property was purchased in 1981 and transferred to the Gloucester Conservation Commission for conservation and watershed protection. This parcel is not part of the Babson deed. The DPC's opinion is that the deed restriction on the Gronblad property is being violated. The next steps are to prepare a written action plan and to set up a second meeting with Mayor's office.

#### **IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

The meeting was opened to public comment. Unfortunately, the tenor was still very combative, and it became impossible to record the comments.

#### **VI. ADJOURN.**

At 7 pm and not really containing the disruption, the DPC adjourned the meeting.