

Sunapee Harbor Reconfiguration Committee
Meeting Notes – 12/12/2024 5:30 p.m. Abbott Library

Attendance: Steve McGrath, Aaron Whipple, Diane Robbins, Deb Pasculano, Marybeth Carroll, Jeff Savage, Chris Whitehouse, Tim Fenton, Sarah Scrivani, Chris Murphy

C Murphy met with other committee facilitators and the SHR – they thought it would be helpful for all committee members to hear from a member of the “Riverway” and a member of Sunapee Heritage Alliance (SHA) on (1/6 or 1/16 – if streamed or recorded it would be helpful) to better understand how their tax parcels fold into the mix of the harbor area and what plans they do or don’t have for these parcels.

S McGrath and MB Carroll updated the group re: research on Ben Mere (BM) file/grant. The bottom line; if the town determined that it would like to alter the Ben Mere parcel, it would need to ask permission. It would need to be approved and comes under a federal clean water grant (ask the state first and then potentially the federal government). The land was turned over to Town of Sunapee Rec committee. The ask needs to be comparable and include a recreational use. Another potential option: Ben Mere land could possibly be swapped for an equal parcel of land. Technically the boat launch is the beginning of River Road. 1 Lake Avenue is the area below Lake Ave and the town owns it (parking lot/grass). The town dock does not have a deed restriction.

Discussed alternative parking solutions in adjacent areas and linking them to the harbor (blue stone lot and SHR lots). Is the town obligated to provide trailer parking? Another potential area for parking might be the upper portion of the BM parcel which consists of +/-0.75 acres. This would require an “ask”. Better signage as to where to park, there are spaces but do people know where to park – Riverwalk Committee is working on this.

Boat Ramp - Marinas own most the boat launches on Winnepesaukee; you can launch for free but have to pay for parking. Lake hosts are employed by the state and are not allowed to ask ?’s of the boats being launched. Could LSPA be asked to get involved to survey boat launchers to better understand the profile of those using the launch. There are 3 “major” launches for lake Sunapee? Suzie B can tell us how many in’s and out’s for boats in Sunapee (we estimate 5,600). NH lakes (nonprofit) tracks boat launch statistics. Discussed charging non-residents to launch boats and link with parking. Many years ago Sunapee charged for launching boats. Further investigation is necessary as currently Town of Sunapee bears the cost burden of launching most boats in the lake. Other lake launches are not as accessible. DR or SS (?? Help) agreed to do research on NH boat launches.

What is the purpose of this committee? The purpose of the HRC is to investigate what we can plausibly do in the harbor regarding reconfiguration to inject energy and life into the harbor area which includes parking and boat launch. This is Sunapee’s most valuable land area. We want to maximize use of the harbor by the community and encourage year round use. The charette map is the starting point for our discussions.

Sunapee Town Dock Feasibility Study – Civil Works New England has been selected by the town to (1) see what needs to be repaired and (2) to work up a design to expand docks and/or adding slips. According to the Town, they are looking to have an initial or preliminary expansion plan by late Winter 2025 and the short-term repairs completed before Summer 2025. We should be thinking about this as it relates to our harbor discussion – i.e. if town might be adding slips, do we need to think more about parking?...or would any additional slips be mostly/solely for public use/boat visitors to the harbor? We discussed run off into the lake and storm water improvements that can perhaps be done when there is reconstruction.

We discussed one-way traffic for River Road, it’s in the engineering department right now and the plan is to have it exit the harbor so that parking can be increased on River Road. Main Street will stay two way. The town will remark all the parking spaces with a goal to make a walkway along the river side and additional parking on the opposite side.

Plans are being made for a potential public meeting in March '25 to review what each committee has done and have these meetings 1x a quarter. For now, the timeline for our committee is 1 year with 12 meetings; could be extended depending on issues which need further research and discussion. The next meeting date was set for Wednesday, January 8th.

Respectfully submitted, Deb Pasculano