

Camp Aya - Po Strategic Planning Committee
Minutes
Wednesday, October 21, 2015
Somers Town Hall Auditorium
7:00 pm

Call to Order: Chairman Brad Pellissier called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.

Members Present: David Arnold, Timothy Welch, Barbara Capuano, Michelle Young, Paul Rasic, Patricia Loftus, Lucas Cherry, Brad Pellissier, Rob Hartman and Town Liaison Bruce Urbon.

Brad Pellissier opened the discussion regarding the draft survey created by Dave Arnold, Chris Boucher and Michelle Young asking members for their input.

Tim Welch expressed concern that he believes there's still some ambiguity surrounding the difference between the 3.1 acres designated as town open space and the remaining 178+ acres. He pointed out that the committee's charge states "Camp Aya Po property" but still doesn't clarify whether that means only the 3.1 acres surrounding the existing buildings or the whole parcel. Brad Pellissier explained that the land was purchased using different monies and that the 178+ acres was primarily purchased using state grant money and that acreage does not fall into our charge. Tim requested more formal clarification and Brad agreed to provide it at the next meeting.

During a lively discussion regarding the survey, the committee overall suggested:

- Clarity and additions to the opening statement to include: indication that no tax monies would be spent on the property, no town monies are available to be spent, just because we're asking what the public wants to see doesn't mean we're promising, and mention that the buildings are in extreme disrepair.
- Additional question to Part 1 asking if the respondent uses current open space facilities and/or trails.
- Deletion of any reference to the pavilion as it is not included in the 3.1 acres
- Deletion of any reference to overnight camping
- Changes to the Funding section to be more specific.
- Conclusion with a section for narrative from respondent.

Michelle Young will schedule time with Dave Arnold and Chris Boucher to revise and present a second draft to the committee prior to the next meeting.

Paul Rasic introduced a memo created by Public Works (6/19/15) with a list of approved uses at Camp Aya Po. There was discussion that the list is vague but will be looked into to insure a good definition of passive recreation for the survey.

Tim Welch shared that he did send a note to Economic Development asking if they would be willing to share email addresses, etc for distribution of the survey but did not receive a response.

Dave Arnold expressed concern that many elderly citizens may not have access to email, or a computer and we should bear that in mind when we get ready to present the survey.

Barbara Capuano suggested we consider an "open house" at the camp property to coincide with the survey so people will have the opportunity the better understand what they're responding to. Also to encourage their use of the property. It was suggested that we might be better served to hold an "open house" as a meeting with pictures/slide show, etc rather than have persons at the Camp. Brad Pellissier suggested we should partner with the Open Space Trails committee for an event like this.

Pat Loftus mentioned that she knows a reporter for the Hartford Courant who writes about little known parks, open spaces, etc in CT and volunteered to contact him for a potential piece about the entire property. She will reach out to Patrice Carson on the Open Space Trails committee to include them.

Lucas Cherry received an email from Tom VanTassel sharing that there's a Camp Aya Po Facebook pages of prior campers who share camp information and would be willing to volunteer if we need for clean up, etc. It was determined that we might have our own Facebook page to share photographs, a link to meetings and to the survey. Michelle Young will talk with Chris Boucher to determine feasibility, etc.

Brad Pellissier asked that we plan the next 3 meetings. Dates determined were Wednesday, November 18th, Wednesday, December 16th and Wednesday, January 20th all at 7pm. Michelle Young will reach out to Ann Logan to reserve meeting space.

Minutes of September 9, 2015 Meeting:

Motion: D. Arnold. **Second:** P. Loftus to approve minutes. Passed unanimously.

Adjournment: 8:13 P.M. Motion: B. Capuano. **Second:** L. Cherry. Passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Young
Camp Aya Po Strategic Planning Committee
Secretary