

Notes for Meeting October 30, 2018
Bremen Town Center

Called by Bremen Conservation Commission, Recreation Subcommittee chaired by Mary Voskian
Hosted by Travis Pryor, RLA- Landscape Architect, Wright Pierce

Present: Residents of Bremen, Travis Pryor

The meeting began at 5:05.

Mary introduced Wendy Pieh (one of our selectmen), members of the Bremen Conservation Commission, Kevin Redline (President of the board of the Bremen Library) and welcomed everyone for coming.

Mary introduced the people who have joined the Bremen Conservation Commission Recreation Sub Committee. They are Mary Voskian, Joan Ray, Jane Carroll, Daniel Ungier, and David Thorpe. Mary invited people to volunteer to join the committee.

Mary Voskian introduced Travis Pryor of Wright-Pierce. He is a registered landscape architect. The work provided by Wright-Pierce has been funded by an Ask Grant from the county.

Travis led the presentation. He noted that the site is 4 1/2 acres including woods behind the ball field. There are fairly steep grades. He had a diagram on paper in addition to the digital presentation. (Revisions to the plan will be made based on additional comments and suggestions given at this workshop). Travis said the project should fit the rural nature of Bremen. The project might include:

walking paths, shade shelter next to a garden or playground, and a multigenerational recreation area.

Travis said the feedback was to leave the ball field as is and not invest a lot of money and have an open lawn. Phasing for the project: build paths first, then fundraise for playground. The town would need to have capital funds in place and a volunteer structure for maintaining things.

Travis said having some elements close to the street is important to draw visitors; there are concerns with visibility behind the hill or too close to cars.

Travis next talked about the paths in his proposal. There are choices: paths mowed with meadow on either side, or paths with woodchips. ADA compliant paths constructed of stone dust with solid gravel base like the DRA is building require grading every year and require more maintenance than asphalt. ADA compliant is a 5% slope.

A comment: A gravel access drive to be able to drive down to the ballfield area?

A comment: The lupine field?

Travis: Storyboards along paths, exercise stations..

Travis: Shade shelter 20 by 30 feet or 20 by 40 feet to accommodate a couple of picnic tables.

A comment: What about smaller size? Travis: it could be 15 by 15.

A comment: Location of shade shelter, perhaps better down by the ball field.

A comment: People start using the spaces and see how it works.

A comment: A picnic table is easy to move, a good way to start, if in fact people do sit there.

Travis then talked about a play area. He noted that other projects have received a 75% federal match with 25% local match to fund the construction of a playground. There is a movement for 'natural play' the cost of natural play areas is a lower cost in comparison to traditional playgrounds. \$10,000 for swing set, similar in cost to trash cans and benches.

A comment: Sand box

A comment: At Great Salt Bay the children use what is there for imaginative games. They really love swings.

A comment: Enclosed for littler kids and open for older kids.

Travis: They get hurt less with a boulder. He will talk about a range of options in the report.

Travis then talked about the lower field. It could be a public gathering space. He noted that some communities are using their open spaces as a revenue generator.

Travis showed the location of a possible basketball /ice skating rectangular built structure near the driveway location. He said these are hard to maintain, it is hit or miss and not a cheap endeavor especially with lighting.

A comment: The fire station parking lot would be a better location for a basketball/ice skating structure.

A comment: Concern about light pollution and noise near a residence.

Travis then talked about the sledding hill location. Sometimes people want lighting for a place for the kids to hang out at shelter or sledding hill for evening hours.

A comment: A sign about sledding hill.

A comment: Sledding hill was facing towards the ball field in the past.

Travis said now plants have grown up in that area, but the land could be returned to grass.

Travis then talked about site amenities, benches, picnic tables, trash and how in the last meeting we suggested coming up with a theme, so everything looks well together.

Travis said that with signage it is possible to have way too much of it. He said we should invest in improving the town sign.

Travis then talked about costs:

implementation costs

operations costs

maintenance costs.

He said reaching out to land trusts, crowd funding are ways to raise money. There are no free lunches, some local match is always needed.

Having a good plan:

Public plan well endorsed is helpful when asking for funds. He will come up with a written plan including scheduling.

A comment: Has this been put out to the community? With a questionnaire?. Are there statistics of how many children there are in Bremen?

Travis: In initial survey there were 60 responses. This probably represents about 100 to 120 individuals. The public process never really ends.

Mary: We have tried to be as open to the public as possible, and we will move ahead in the same way.

A comment: Deeper data is needed.

A comment: Number of kids of a certain age?

A comment: What is the trend in membership at the library?

Travis: Think about the quality of place in a community, reverse the trend of aging

A comment: Low impact, slow implementation, low light pollution

A comment: Telescopes, not light pollution

A comment: Put a boat in the playground

A comment: Expand the trail network?

A comment: More kids in school, will change again

Wendy Pieh: Our comprehensive plan was approved in 2004. They recommend every 10 years. If there is a group of people that want to look at the comprehensive plan, please go ahead.

A comment: Advisable to look at the plan, make sure this project is consistent with the comprehensive plan

A comment: address parking?

A comment: What is the impact on insurance? The insurance company can have suggestions of what to put on signage.

A comment: You can require renters to get insurance for events

A comment: Look at our ordinances, consideration to neighbors, lighting, noise.

A comment: Bring the comprehensive plan back up to be readopted.

Mary: Our next step: The committee will meet, goal of the plan is to move ahead. Decide what we should look at first. Present plan to the public. Figure out how to pay.

The bicentennial of the State of Maine is in 2020. We would like to at least have something started, and it would be nice to have a celebration.

Travis: The paths are a reasonable first step. People start walking around. Each phase would be approved by a town vote. My role is to provide technical information for the next step.

A comment: What are the estimated costs?

Mary: The town pays \$1,300.00 per year currently for mowing this property.

A comment: To sell this to people that are not here (at this meeting) a play area near the library, especially if there is a boat.

A comment: Paths, and I think its around the children (to get support for project)

A comment: The goal is donations and having a continuing endowment.

A comment: Playground is an easy sell, some walking paths tie into playground.

Travis: Stewardship is important.

A comment: A former place I lived was a barrier island, pristine nature abounded, no buildings. As time went by people moved there, they said could we have one of these (and the place changed). I have been so impressed that this community wanted it as a rural area. It would be nice if it was mowed, a bench or two benches. Light pollution is going to radiate beyond, noise, I want to remind everybody why we are here.

A comment: Some were in agreement with the warning comment.

A comment: What we are looking for is balance, when this was a school it was more of a community center.

A comment: Element of gathering, frustrating where there is no place to see each other. The Hay property is a solitary activity, what we need more of is a gathering space.

A comment: Bremen days, all sorts of events, miniature horse, the whole town, this was the gathering spot.

A comment: Making site more amenable, easy opportunity, see if it gains momentum, not changing property physically.

A comment: When the school closed we lost that community.

A comment: We are so short of manpower, a sense of community is lacking in town, recommend serving the community in different organizations.

Mary: It (this project) started as the library needing a play area to attract more children to the library. We want to keep it rural, keep it simple.

A comment: Do we need a physical place? We have fire department dinners, Oktoberfest at the Town House, the Bremen Church.

A comment: The real center of town is by the fire department and Town House and church.

A comment: This is a wonderful idea, attract more people to the library, a play area is a great plan, low key, a place to be, where people go to chat and spend some time.

A comment: A place to gather, and we want it to be low key, a playground and on the paths. People might be inside if there is not a place to be outside. We can do it in a way that will not be out of character in this community.

A comment: Do it in phases - mowed paths, work its way into becoming a center, going to be in increments.

Travis: A picnic table goes a long way. Libraries are becoming more of a community center.

We thanked Travis.

The meeting ended at 6:45

Respectfully submitted by Terry Marsh (for the BCC)