

Notes for Meeting September 19, 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, Alex Violo

The meeting began at 6:05.

Mary Voskian introduced Travis Pryor.
Mary then introduced and thanked for coming Hank Nevins, Wendy Pieh, Kelly Clancy.
BCC members present were: Mary Voskian, Virginia Betts, Susan Davis, Mary Berger, Ann Nessler, Daniel Ungier, Terry Marsh

Mary introduced Kevin Redline, the president of the Board of Trustees of the Bremen Library.

Mary thanked Alex Violo, a reporter for Lincoln County News, for attending.

Mary Berger collected email addresses and a list of attendees.

Travis described Wright Pierce and noted that he has been working with them for 15 years doing planning, land use and civil engineering.

Travis then said he would give us a variety of options, nothing set in stone, consensus and finding the preferred plan is his goal.

Following are some of his comments. Please see also the PDF of his presentation.

Community consensus and public buy-in is good for funding (grants)

Town property and library property primarily open

residential houses abutting

changes in grade, field and meadow, ball field.

Ideas suggested by the survey results: Ball field, walking paths, small shade shelter, outdoor entertainment, playground/play area, native plantings, benches and picnic tables

Mary Voskian explained that a number of planners visited the site and submitted proposals. Wright Pierce, Travis Pryor as planner. was selected. The town (the Bremen Conservation Commission) received a grant to hire Wright Pierce to do this planning work. There was a kickoff meeting in July with the Bremen Conservation Commission, some library trustees and town staff representatives.

The survey responses: 61 responses. Highlights of responses:

low maintenance, ball field, dogs allowed, trails, why more trails?, community garden, costs?-maintain?, leave as is, concern regarding construction and operating and maintenance costs, concern regarding staffing and insurance, play structure, sledding hill, small pavilion, multi generational play, and more unique ideas.

Travis noted everything is on the table here, ice rink, pickle ball, basketball court, senior housing, Christmas tree.

The distinction between paths and trails was pointed out by Mary Voskian. The Town Center property would have walking paths. The town's existing properties have trails which are wooded areas and fields.

Travis then talked about design considerations. There is no wetland. We need to think about parking needs, signage on Route 32, utilities, lighting, water, sewer, electric, wifi, Wright Pierce can help with grants.

Travis presented three concepts. (please see his presentation)

A question-Has there been research done on the number of people who would use?

Travis Pryor: Needs use assessment a valid question, no extensive research but recommendations for what worked in other communities.

A comment- We need the details, specifics are needed.

A comment- maintenance costs need to be considered.

There followed a detailed talk about types of path surfaces,

There followed a talk about pavilions, fire places and skating.

A comment- Our kids go to Great Salt Bay school, we need a feeling of a community center, develop a sense of place.

A comment- small charcoal grills outside.

A comment-in their former community investing in a pavilion, it was just amazing the use it got, added a kitchen, now festival, part of funds raised go back into maintenance fund.

There followed a talk about types of pavilions.

Travis noted: lighting and hours of use, electrical outlets, communities wrestle with people gathering, hours of operation? public events could be a revenue source.

Travis then took a vote of hands for support for public gathering events.

A comment-trucks would need to access the gathering area.

There followed a talk about building an amphitheater area.

A comment- If you had all these elements, it would feel like it was built up.

Striking a balance, suddenly a developed site.

Could make minimal improvements without filling space.

Travis noted that he will come back with a preferred concept plan, action plan, what we could do quickly.

Travis said: you will be voting for all of them.

A question- No public funding will be required?

Mary answered: Whatever happens would not increase taxes. Funding would be through grants, donations, in phases, raise money and do step one, then raise money for the next aspect.

Travis noted that a lot of grants are competitive, often split-local match, in kind or volunteer time and materials, very few entirely free.

There followed a talk about the pros and cons of a community garden.

A comment- gardens are messy, concern for access for automobiles.

Mary noted that a manager would be needed for a public garden.

A comment-putting up a pavilion attracting concert goers- all this public access and public things-feeding, watering, bath rooming, it just seems to me filters out in a lot of things.

Are we still going to be rural?

A comment- We are a town of fewer-resist temptation to get it built out.

A comment- More inviting-really try to keep it simple.

A comment- See if people want to do it.

Travis then talked about a pollinator garden, smell and touch nature, bees and butterflies, low investment, experiential gardens.

A comment-maintain some of the meadow that is already there, that view is very important.

Travis then talked about playgrounds, traditional built playground structures can be more expensive than 'natural play'.

A comment- play spaces with water feature.

Travis noted that water features are more expensive, more of a climate challenge to run.

A comment-limited by water available, we have a well.

A comment-a playground, combination for older and younger children.

A comment-sell blocks to raise money.

Travis: can be overdone with memorialization, can have too much of that.

A comment-concentrate on our goals and figure out how to pay later.

Travis then asked for a vote of hands in support of play areas.

Travis then talked about site amenities: benches, picnic tables, trash cans, bike racks, public art.

Travis asked about interest in restoring the ball field, making the backstop safer.

A comment- First find out if there are people who want to play ball.

Mary noted that the baseball field can also be used for soccer, kickball, other games or events.

Travis asked for a vote of support for maintaining the ball field.

A comment-I do not see us becoming an event center, just for the town essentially.

A comment-talk about the "look" what is the image? what kind of environment do we want to create? overall image.

A comment- if it has a city feel it would not work here.

There followed more talk, how whatever is done should not clash with our existing buildings.

A comment- concert area affected by road noise?

A comment-be respectful to neighbors, incorporate with library.

Travis then said: lots of great ideas, lots of good input, general sense of support. Our plan is to revise plan, and have action items to accomplish in 3-5 years, our proposals can be posted on the town website.

Mary said this is an initial discussion. She said a sense of community is what we are looking for.

A comment-we want to keep it from looking 'designed'.

A comment- The Bremen Conservation Commission has hope for the first phase of the project at least being underway in 2020, Maine's Bicentennial.

Travis said there will be another public meeting opportunity. The community will make the decisions-need stewardship to move a project forward.

We thanked Travis.

The meeting ended at 8:15

Respectfully submitted by Terry Marsh (for the BCC)