

CAMDEN RIVERWALK and PUBLIC LANDING DESIGN WORKING GROUP
Minutes of Meeting
July 22, 2013

1. Review of Third Community and Stakeholder Meeting:

TYLin Design Team: Sarah Witte:

Forum #3: The points made most often on the comment boards, in conversations and in emails:

RIVERWALK:

1. Requests for a green space (esplanade) between road and sidewalks: The Team agreed this would be possible only where the ROW is sufficiently wide.
2. People want information on tax incentives as they relate to granting easements: The Team found a “Public Benefit Rating System” that can be used to assign values to easements to open space or granting public access to determine a percentage tax break that reflects that value. The Town can decide whether or not there is interest in the process.
3. People want to see more of the trail laid out on the plans: The Team *will not* illustrate sections of the trail that cross private land until easements are in hand. The only portions of the trail shown are on Town land and lands belonging to willing landowners. In order to illustrate the ultimate goal of the project to follow the river as closely as possible, and to put that path on record, a labeled line will be drawn down the middle of the river.
4. Make a visual connection between the sidewalks and the trail sections that is graphically clear. People also want information available about the trail sections: The Team suggests using stencils of familiar symbols as one idea and asked for any other suggestions.
5. Use Tannery site as trailhead for walking both north and south: Although many recommendation that the entire site be made into a park, working that concept into the design is beyond the scope of the Team’s design contract. The Town needs to ensure that

Sarah Witte informed the group that the owner of the Camden Villas is open to discussion of a path along the river to reach Knowlton Street, but the Team has not yet been able to schedule a meeting to further discuss this idea.

The Team’s overall impression was that they were impressed by the degree of support for the project and the amount of positive feedback they received.

Questions and comments from the Working Group:

Ray Andreason: When the final report comes out will it include an annual maintenance cost? If the group is going to suggest rewarding those granting easements with tax break, people should know exactly what additional costs the Town will incur. Maintenance estimates will be included.

Anita Brosius-Scott: She asked that information on the trail’s role in increasing community viability and increasing property values is included in the next public presentation.

PUBLIC LANDING (Public comments from Forum #3):

1. Railings: People want to know if they are required, but many don't want railings at all. Ms. Witte informed the Working Group that the Town has asked that railings remain on the Plan as an option. The Team will show a railing that has minimal visual impact and cost that design out. They are still looking at what the exact requirements will be re: insurance and regulations.
2. Materials: Materials used should be conducive to Camden.
3. Day Sailers: The Team had requests from the boat's owners and others to leave the sales tables along the Boardwalk.
4. Commercial Street: Safety of pedestrians was a major concern.
5. The alleyway's textured pedestrian surface should be shown on the Plan.
6. The Hoist should be part of the plan. One option the Team has discussed to keep the work area clear of pedestrian traffic is to hang a platform out over the harbor -- DEP regulations would come into play using this option. Otherwise, they will move it back onto the Boardwalk.
7. Lighting: Low level pedestrian lighting was requested along the boardwalk and sidewalks as well as down-lighted fixtures for the parking areas.
8. There should be bike racks on the Landing.
9. Green Space: The Team will show how the various options they have discussed when they present the actual Plan.
10. Don't remove parking: This request is in conflict with other comments made, and the Team has worked to balance the desires of everybody.
11. Bell Buoy Park: The Park was popular as a way to clean up that part of the Landing so it is useable.
12. Utilities: The preferred recommended option is to bury lines, and cost estimates for doing so will be provided, although townspeople may not be willing to foot the bill.
13. Deliveries: People cautioned the Team about leaving room for delivery trucks to maneuver. Box trucks can be accommodated but the Team needs to know how the Town feels about excluding tractor trailers from the area.
14. The Bridge: The comments opposed to a bridge far outweighed those in favor.
15. There was great support to move/improve the bathrooms, and for showers.
16. People were in favor of moving the Harbor Masters shack to the proposed location.
17. People want to retain parking spaces that face the water.
18. They want to keep benches for seating on the Boardwalk.
19. Snow management concerns need to be taken into consideration as they revise they Plan.

2. and 3. Review of the Proposed Redesigns

The Team presented their initial proposals for the actual designs which included many details added by Ms. Witte. They discussed these changes in some detail and asked for feedback from the Working Group. The Group was impressed with the proposals and the degree to which the Team had addressed the many concerns expressed at previous meetings. Additional changes will be made based on feedback from the Working Group, and the final designs will be made available for public viewing for the first time at the September meeting.

4. Next Community Meeting – Location and Approach:

Although other locations were discussed, the Working Group believes the Middle School offers a better situation for viewing slide presentations, and it offers more flexibility for seating and for the placement of display boards. In addition, there is a trail segment that will lead to the school, and there are discussions about using the Riverwalk and access to the river in the school's curriculum – the group recommended that the September 9 meeting be held at the Mary Taylor Middle School on Knowlton Street. Mr. Hodges will confirm the date and time and announce the actual location when he has confirmed the information.

The group suggested having visuals of the proposals available for the public to view before the meeting starts. It will make it easier for them to understand the Power Point presentations if they are already somewhat familiar with the proposal. Sarah Witte suggested that they could show the Power Point presentation on the screen in a continuous loop because it will have some explanatory notes included. They suggested that Ms. Witte should zoom in on some of the slides where important design details and areas like the cross sections will be hard to see otherwise. It was also suggested that the Public Landing project be presented first. That is what most of the audience will have come to hear and discuss, and they take a chance on losing a good portion of the audience if the Riverwalk is done first. The Group liked the way using "Post-Its" to gather comments on "Visiting Boards" worked at the previous meeting – that component will be included in the September meeting as well.

Mr. Hodges suggested presenting the design as a set of components, many of which can stand alone. This may keep the project from being seen as an "all or nothing" option.

Anita Brosius-Scott suggested leading the Riverwalk presentation with the "Good News" about how the project can improve property values. They should also suggest ideas like a point system that can reduce property taxes on a sliding scale when various kinds of easements are granted. There was a question regarding whether riverfront property would still be taxed as "shore frontage" if an easement is granted to walk along the river. If it is not, that might be an added incentive to property owners to allow access.

5. Closing Thoughts:

The Group was positive about the upcoming meeting and the public seeing how the designs show that the Team had listened to the specific concerns raised by citizens and made changes accordingly. They believe that all the concerns have been addressed, and were highly complementary of Ms. Witte's work that brought the designs to life.

Anita Brosius-Scott asked that the Team find time to meet with the Pathways Committee to hear their comments on the design sometime before the September meeting.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 pm

Respectfully Submitted, Jeanne Hollingsworth, Recording Secretary

Project Team:

Brian Hodges, Camden Development Director
Darin Bryant, TYLin International, Consultants' Project Manager
Sarah Witte, Landscape Architect Terrence J. Dewan & Associates
Dan Bannon, Baker Design Consultants
Katherine Kern, TYLin
Mike Thompson, Environmental Consultant, Penobscot Environmental

Camden Working Group:

Ray Andreason: Chair of the Parks and Recreation Committee
Anita Brosius Scott: Camden Pathways Committee
Staci Coomer: Chamber-of-Commerce who will serve as an interface with local businesses
Ken Gross: Library employee in charge of grounds (Amphitheater and Harbor Park) and events
Doug Johnson: Chair of the Conservation Commission
Gene McKeever: Chair of the Harbor
Barrie Pribyl: Camden Downtown Business Group
Pat Finnigan: Camden Town Manager
Steve Pixley, Camden Harbormaster
Beth Ward, Acting Director, Parks and Recreation Department
Steve Wilson: Camden CEO and Planner

Alternates:

Robert Davis: Pathways Committee
Ed Libby: Parks and Recreation Committee and Dam Committee
Roger Rittmaster, Conservation Commission

ABSENT: Members: Meg Quijano, Martin Cates, Rick Seibel, Stuart Smith and Cassie Snyder;
Alternates: Flint Decker, Kathleen Bachus, Ben Ellison, Nikki Maounis and Ray Williamson