

Trustees of the M.N. Spear Memorial Library  
November 4, 2021, 6:30, on Zoom  
Minutes

- Members present: Michele Regan-Ladd, Kate Cell, Tim Logan, Melanie DeSilva, Savannah Ouellette, and Brad Foster
- Mary Anne Antonellis: Library Director
- Guests: Mark O'Malley (O'Reilly, Talbot & Okun), left at 7:12pm, Erica Soares (O'Reilly, Talbot & Okun), left at 7:12pm, Barbara Riley, Eric Stocker, Catherine Hilton, Clif Read, Erica Escobar, Jim Hemingway, Meryl Mandell, Mike Vinskey, Amanda Alix, Linda Scott, Diane Jacoby, Molly Moss, Meryl Mandell, Gail Fleischaker

Mary Anne made an announcement that the meeting is being held via Zoom due to the pandemic.

- Welcome guests
  - How to ask questions: use the raised hand function or send an email to [librarytrustees@shutesbury.org](mailto:librarytrustees@shutesbury.org) which will be monitored throughout the meeting.
- Setting the stage- Mary Anne Antonellis: We're considering the town-owned land behind Town Hall as well as town-owned lot 032. It is standard practice in a public project like this to conduct an environmental assessment on a property before undertaking a municipal construction project.
  - Land behind town hall: A phase one environmental site assessment was conducted which is a study of the historic use of the property. Such a study informs whether further investigation is warranted.
  - Lot 032: : A phase one environmental site assessment was conducted on 032 in 2010. Because of the historic use of the property, further testing at the time was warranted. Additional extensive testing was conducted on lot 032 in 2011 and 2012. Targeted soil samples at that time showed trace amounts of PCBs, and extensive follow-up testing could never duplicate those results and showed no issues of concern. DEP recommended clean-up of the lot and targeted soil sampling at the site of the old, demolished garage, at the location of a potential construction project, and at the location of former debris piles on the lot. As part of the most recent environmental testing conducted, soil samples were taken at 10 borings around where a library would be sited as well as back in the woods where there existed additional debris piles. Water testing was also conducted. It's not a requirement to test water for a project like this, but there is a monitoring well already at lot 032 so we went ahead and tested the water anyway (this testing was extra due diligence).
- Review of reports by Mark O'Malley (O'Reilly, Talbot & Okun). Note that all reports are on the [Small Library Project website](#).
  - Behind town hall- the phase 1 environmental site assessment looked at the history of the property, old maps and aerial photos, regulatory databases, and local information provided by the town. The report

found no recognized environmental conditions. There was historical use of the property as a burial ground where the town hall currently is, which was addressed in the 1930's. The monitoring well was clear, clean, and free of volatile organic compounds and PCBs. A trace amount of PFAS were identified at levels way below applicable DEP standards.

- Lot 032- 10 holes were drilled into the ground and soil samples were sent to a laboratory for chemical analysis. Most of the work was done in the front field portion of the property where a library might be sited with additional borings done in the woods where debris had been (B1-B8; B10): two borings were done where the old garage was; a boring was done behind where the garage was where PCBs were formerly detected in one test (those results were never replicated); two borings were done where a library may to be sited; one boring was done where the septic may go; three borings were done further back in the woods where debris had been. These soil samples were tested for volatile organic compounds, PCBs, petroleum. The soils samples were clear; no problems were identified. B-9, which is the furthest boring from the front of the property and far from where a library may be sited, is on the site of a former Air Force tower. Boring at this location yielded trace levels of volatile organic compounds under the reportable level and elevated levels of a chemical compound associated with gasoline which have to be reported to DEP.
- Meryl Mandell: Tell us more about the results on B9 and B10. How elevated were the levels and are they still within acceptable limits? Answer: B10 was clean. There was one reportable level in the testing on B9- the level for a chemical associated with gasoline- the amount found is exactly equal to the level that is reportable within 120 days to DEP. Note- this location is way out in the woods. Recommendation: Further soil testing; perhaps a test pit; there could exist an old underground tank left by the Air Force. Gasoline can migrate within a small 400 ft. area.
- Mike Vinskey: What is the Town's process and what will they do in response to this; more testing? Answer: This is beyond the remit of the Library Trustees so it's not an answer we can provide.
- Mike Vinskey: What does this information mean for the possibility of a new library on this site? Answer: The Library Trustees are presenting these findings to the public and are listening to feedback. We are still in the factfinding stage, and have not made a decision about our recommendation. Our process is to make a recommendation to the Select board. Eric Stocker- This is all very recent information and nothing has been decided at the Select board level.
- Diane Jacoby: Voters at Town Meeting approved a community garden site on the land behind town hall. This is the first time she's heard of the idea that this land behind town hall could be used for the new library. She's confused and wants to know if the Library Trustees are proposing taking land away from the community garden which voters approved. Answer: Both of these sites have been under consideration, and have been publicly announced as being under consideration from the beginning. Mary Anne has been in

communication with the chair of the Recreation Committee since before town meeting. A library would not interfere with the community garden space. In fact, a library would create a water source for the community gardens. The Recreation Committee is excited about the prospect of the library being built there. The library would enhance the community gardens and the community gardens would enhance the library. The Select board has jurisdiction over town property and will decide based on a recommendation from the Library Trustees where to site a new library, and then at Town Meeting, citizens will be invited to vote on whether to accept the grant should we be offered the grant. We went back to the drawing board at the beginning of this project, looking at the two viable town-owned parcels.

- Mike Vinsky: There was no mention at Town Meeting of the possibility that a library could be going behind town hall. He's concerned that conversations with the recreation committee could have been happening not in open meetings. He is concerned that the town voted to allocate \$20,000 for community gardens behind town hall and now there might be a library there too. He thinks the process is very odd. Answer: We have made clear publicly that we were considering and testing both of these sites. We posted on NextDoor that we were considering and testing both of these sites. This has been transparent; it's been discussed in Trustee meetings which are open to the public. There's nothing about a potential library site that precludes the use of that space for a community garden. The other option is for water to come over in buckets from the fire station. It would also allow people to drive closer to the gardens if we have a library close by. Mary Anne has had conversations with the chair of the Recreation Committee, and the Recreation Committee has discussed it in their meetings which are open to the public. Community preservation grants are not fiscal year grants, so the grant can be used when it's needed.
- Meryl Mandell: This is a dynamic process. New information is coming in all the time. The Trustees have made an unbelievable effort to reach out and share information regularly and as widely as possible, and if people aren't listening, there's nothing that can be done about that. The information is going out in Town Announce, has been posted on a very active website, etc. To say that this process is not transparent, that issues aren't being considered, or that the process hasn't been fair, is not accurate. It's heroic what the Trustees are doing.
- The Trustees are working very hard to keep up with the timeframe and the demands for information, so if people miss things it's understandable.
- Amanda Alix: Is it true that if the town decides not to develop lot 032 that we will not have to do any sort of cleanup if the DEP decides that's required, or will we have to clean up the parcel regardless of whether or not anything is built there? Answer: We are required to report within 120 days, and within those 120 days we would conduct further testing, conduct remediation, or take other steps before reporting to DEP. No matter what, it has to be reported to DEP; no matter what, more investigation has to be done. Depending on the results of this further investigation, further remediation may or may not be warranted. Regardless of whether a library or any other building is sited there, steps will need to be taken to make sure the parcel is

clean. If nothing is built on this parcel, action still needs to be taken. We cannot and will not be able to avoid DEP action by decide to site the library some place else. The town has to deal with this regardless. If the library is sited at lot 032 and it's determined that remediation is required, it would not be part of or relevant environmentally to the library project; it would be the town's responsibility. Either way, the tests don't have a direct impact on the library project since it's so far away from where the library would be built, but if there needs to be remediation, the easiest access to the back of the site may be from the front of the site next to the library.

- Mike Vinskey: 120 days from when to seek further testing? Answer: Dealing with this problem is not within the scope of the Library Trustees. It's 120 days from the date of the report which is on the Small Library Project website.
- Mike Vinskey: It's not a library problem, but if the library is built on that site and the town has to remediate it, then you have a library in the path of the remediation. Does the site selection have to be complete by December 3? What's the thinking of the Library Trustees? Answer: The Library Trustees are still in fact-finding mode. We have heard the experts and asked them questions; we have 100 pages of reporting to review; we have had public meetings and have listened to the comments and questions, including from Rita Farrell last night in regards to accessing the location in question for possible remediation, and we are reflecting on those. We will be undertaking very serious deliberations. Monday evening we'll weigh the pros and cons and see if can make a decision, and make a recommendation to the Select board. This is very serious and we will take the time we need before the December 3 deadline.

Documents discussed at the meeting:

- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Parcels O-47 and ZO-43, Cooleyville Rd.
- Summary of Groundwater Analytical Results Parcel O-47, Cooleyville Road
- Lot O-47 monitoring well laboratory report
- Limited Subsurface Assessment 66 Leverett Road, Parcel O-32

Next meeting: Monday, November 8, 7:30pm.

Respectfully submitted by Melanie DeSilva, Secretary, Library Board of Trustees