



Town of Brewster

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Office of:
Select Board
Town Manager

MEMORANDUM

TO: Select Board
FROM: Peter Lombardi, Town Manager
RE: Proposed Charge for Reconstituted Drummer Boy Park Advisory Committee
DATE: March 30, 2023

In Summer 2020, the Town received \$33,000 in state grant funds through the Community Compact best practice program to develop an updated Master Plan for Drummer Boy Park. Originally purchased by the Town in 1988, the first Master Plan for Drummer Boy Park was adopted by Town Meeting in 1995 and has informed the Town's overall approach to the property since.

With these grant funds, the Town hired a consultant, CDM Smith Inc., to review the park's condition and uses, help develop plans and designs for expanded or alternative uses, estimate costs for such plans, and conduct public outreach regarding the park's future. To shepherd this important work, the Select Board formed an ad hoc Drummer Boy Park Advisory Committee charged with evaluating existing and potential future uses of the Drummer Boy Park property and developing an updated Master Plan to present to Town Meeting. The committee was appointed in Fall 2020. The seven (7) member committee was comprised of one (1) representative from the Recreation Commission, one (1) representative from the Council on Aging, one (1) representative from the Natural Resources Advisory Commission, and four (4) Brewster citizens at large.

Given their proximity to the park and shared interest in its future use, representatives from the Brewster Historical Society, Brewster Conservation Trust, and Museum of Natural History were invited to attend and participate in the committee's meetings on a regular basis. The committee was supported by the Natural Resources Director, the Council on Aging Director, the Recreation Director, and the DPW Director.

From December 2020 through June 2021, the committee met and developed a series of schematic concept plans that culminated in the presentation of a recommended plan to the Select Board in June 2021.

The goals of the plan were to:

- Preserve the character of the park and enhance the views of the bay
- Collaborate with the Brewster Historical Society and the Brewster Conservation Trust in preserving the character of the complex and enhancing its use
- Plan for increased use and provide additional access to and throughout the park
- Identify park use areas

The plan identified two implementation phases. The first focused on improving parking, pedestrian access, and stormwater infrastructure. The second identified amenity upgrades to the playground, gazebo, and replacing the storage building (old gift shop structure) with a shade pavilion. Recognizing that the Town was then in the early stages of planning for a potential elevated boardwalk to Wing Island from Drummer Boy Park via the adjacent Cedar Ridge Reserve property, that possibility was referenced in the plan.

The plan was presented to and unanimously adopted by Town Meeting in November 2021. Following the Town Meeting vote, the Select Board disbanded the committee in December 2021. In May 2022, Town Meeting appropriated \$75,000 to advance design and permitting for Phase I improvements as outlined in the plan. The Town hired Horsley Witten to help develop their design plans and assist with permitting.

In parallel with these actions related to Drummer Boy Park improvements, the Town secured \$50k in state grant funding to advance design and permitting for a new boardwalk to Wing Island and a \$30k contribution from a then anonymous donor via the Brewster Conservation Trust. Town Meeting approved \$50k for this project in November 2021. To ensure coordination between the two projects, Horsley Witten was hired to assist in these efforts as well.

In August 2022, the Town hosted a public forum focused on conceptual plans for the Wing Island boardwalk. Many residents expressed concerns about this proposal over the ensuing months. At the same time, Horsley Witten developed conceptual plans for Phase I improvements to Drummer Boy Park, seeking to formalize parking, improve drainage, and provide better and safer pedestrian access. The anticipated costs of this work were approximately \$750k. In November 2022, Town Meeting did not approve the \$255k appropriation proposed by the Town for Phase I, in large part due to concerns about the connections between this work and the proposed boardwalk. Following that vote, all design work was suspended and no further action has been taken in advancing Drummer Boy Park Master Plan implementation. The Town continues to maintain the property, including making repairs to the playground.

In March 2023, a Special Town Meeting was convened to act on three citizens petitions. Article 3 originally sought to rescind the Drummer Boy Park Master Plan vote by Town Meeting of November 2021. Ultimately, Town Meeting voted to refer the 2021 Master Plan to a newly reconstituted committee to be appointed by the Select Board in

consultation with the Moderator who would then report back to Town Meeting in May 2024. Although this process will be led by this new committee, there is currently no funding in place to support their efforts, outside of Town staff time.

For the Select Board's consideration, I offer the following draft charge for the committee:

PURPOSE: The Drummer Boy Park (DBP) Advisory Committee will re-evaluate the 2021 Drummer Boy Park Master Plan and will deliver a report to the May 2024 Annual Town Meeting. This report may include an updated Master Plan, but any such plan shall not incorporate or include any new means of access to Wing Island. The DBP Advisory Committee is an ad hoc committee.

APPROACH: The DBP Advisory Committee will review the overall goals and recommendations identified in the 2021 Master Plan and will determine whether any changes are appropriate. This review process should consider other recent Town strategic planning documents, including but not limited to the Town's recently updated Open Space and Recreation Plan. It should also account for ongoing community input regarding potential future public uses of the Sea Camps properties. The DBP Advisory Committee will conduct public outreach and solicit resident feedback in developing their report for Town Meeting.

MEMBERSHIP: The DBP Advisory Committee will consist of seven (7) members to be appointed by the Select Board in consultation with the Moderator and will include: one (1) Natural Resources Advisory Commission member; one (1) Council on Aging member; one (1) Recreation Commission member; and four (4) members from the community at-large. The Select Board will make appointments to seat the new committee as soon as is practicable. The term of committee appointments will be through May 2024. The Select Board will appoint a liaison to the DBP Advisory Committee. The DBP Advisory Committee will be supported by the Natural Resources Director, COA Director, Recreation Director, DPW Director, and/or Town Administration as necessary. Non-voting representatives from the Brewster Historical Society, Brewster Conservation Trust, and Museum of Natural History will be invited to attend and participate as appropriate.

Once the Select Board approves the committee's updated charge, we will then post an announcement on the homepage of the Town website and on the Town's social media platforms soliciting letters of interest from residents interested in serving. The Select Board will then follow their standard committee appointment policy; however, in this instance, that process will also include the Moderator in the initial screening phase. Consistent with that policy, recommended candidates will be included in the FYI section of a future Select Board packet 2 weeks in advance of formal appointment.