

Schenck's Island / Merwin Meadows Study Committee  
Meeting Minutes – June 5, 2018

In attendance: Dan Berg, Peter Gaboriault, John Priest, Jade Hobson, Susan DiLoreto, Eric Fanwick, Ben Couch

Town representatives in attendance: Mike Conklin, Sarah Gioffre

The meeting was called to order by Dan Berg at 6:00pm

The first presenter was Milone and MacBroom, at 6:00pm

- Michael Doherty and Thomas Sheil presented
- Highlights of approach:
  - o think creatively, be the user
  - o integrate culture and ecology
  - o implement strategically
- Examples discussed included Uncas Leap Heritage Park – Norwich CT and Ethel Walker Woods – Simsbury, CT
- For design and implementation at Girl Scout camps: worked directly with the girls, solicited their ideas
- Photos were used to illustrate potential ideas for Merwin Meadows and Schenck's Island: examples of natural use, natural play spaces, river access
- Discussion of connectivity through town

Group discussion following the presentation: It's notable that they're working on the POCD as well – they're already plugged into the town's ideas. However, a concern is that they would then be approaching / facilitating both projects with a single voice / point of view.

The second presenter was Tavella Design Group, LLC, at 6:45pm

- Tom Tavella and Andy Bevilacqua presented
- Community participation, including stakeholder meetings and group site walks would be structured based on our needs and guidance
- They did site walks as part of preparing their response and expressed an understanding of the connectivity w/ the NRV and through town center
- Discussion included the issue of invasives and ways we could potentially tackle
- Provided some examples of natural play spaces
- Included a slide on potential funding sources, including CT and national grants
- Included discussion of operations and maintenance, post-build, especially around natural areas and plantings

Group discussion following the presentation: The presenters were knowledgeable, generally understood our goals and showed some creativity, but by comparison, the

RECEIVED FOR RECORD  
TOWN OF WILTON  
2018 JUN 11 A 8:43  
BY: LK

presentation was as well targeted to our project

The third presenter was Middeleer Land Design, LLC & Architects' Guild LLC, at 7:30pm

- Four presenters, two of whom have a long history w/ Wilton
- Designed the most recent renovation of Cider Mill School in the 1990's
- They articulated a thorough understanding Merwin Meadows, Schenck's Island, and the NRV
- Talked about greenway connectivity being important, including visual markers
- Considerable discussion regarding how to connect the two parks through town center, and the importance of doing so
- Phased approach to Merwin Meadows, initially focused on plantings, gateways, connectivity and access, with upgrade to structures to follow.
- Discussed opportunities to "sculpt" Schenck's Island for both community gathering and natural play
- Regarding invasives, acknowledged the challenges and focused on finding natives that can outcompete, and ideally avoiding chemicals
- They have some experience with community meetings and facilitation but would also look to us to help guide
- Notable examples of natural and landscape-driven interactive artwork, which could be a standout feature for Schenck's (or Merwin)

Group discussion following the presentation: The group very much liked the mix of Wilton knowledge, creative approach, prior relevant experience, an apparently deep understanding of our goals, and the diversity and "bench strength" of the assembled team.

The fourth planned presenter, Wesley Stout Associates, LLC, notified Mike Conklin via email earlier in the evening that they would be removing their name from consideration due to other project conflicts and an inability to devote sufficient time and attention to our project.

Following the presentations, the committee discussed all three, and was unanimous that Middeleer was the strongest contender with the most relevant presentation.

Dan Berg made a motion to recommend Middeleer Land Design / Architects' Guild to the Board of Selectman as our first choice bidder, noting also that Milone & MacBroom was our second choice and Tavella Design Group was our third, out of the nine RFP responses we received. The motion was seconded by Ben Couch. The motion carried unanimously.

Mike Conklin noted that the next scheduled activity of the committee was to present its findings to the Board of Selectman at their meeting on June 18<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Berg volunteered to attend that meeting and discuss the process and decision.

Peter Gaboriault made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Eric Fanwick, and carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:48pm.