

China Lake Assess Feasibility Committee
Minutes of Aug 10, 2012

The meeting was opened at 3:08 pm at the China town office.

In Attendance: Sheri Wilkens, Dale Worster, Jenny Clair, Janet Preston, Dan L'Heureux, Steve Hughes, Paul McDonald

Old Business: We met with Andy, one of the sellers of the Candlewood property on Saturday morning, August 4, to discuss the sale of the property. The meeting went well. The figure \$710,000 came up during the conversation as a reasonable "starting point". Dan reported that Andy ran the figure by his partners and they became "hardened to" \$800,000.

New Business: Dan reported that the assessed value (for tax purposes) of the property is:

\$569,000 for the 3 acres on the west side of Lakeview Dr.
50,300 for the 6 acres on the east side of Lakeview Dr.
\$619,300 total

The remaining 21 acres for sale is assessed at \$495,000. The Town is not interested in buying this parcel.

Timeline: Because the November election will have a higher turnout than the town meeting in March, our goal is to seek public approval for buying the property on the November ballot. This give us a very short time line. Paul is in favor of waiting until the town meeting in March. He is concerned that there is not enough time for public hearing and other ways to educate the public.

History: Dan located in his research some documents regarding articles related to acquiring a public beach. In April 2007, voters agreed to accept and match a grant from Fairpoint of \$25,000 for such a purpose. A Lake Access Reserve Fund was also created at this time to hold the funds. In 2008, voters decided to move \$59,025 from a Ceska Reserve Fund to the Lake Access Reserve Fund. These two votes reaffirm the fact that a public beach is a long time wish of the members of the China community.

Other properties: Jenny suggested that we investigate other potential properties, so we are sure to explore all our options. It was decided that Dan L'Heureux would contact the Austin's and the Gilman's regarding their properties on the lake to see if they might be interested in selling it to the Town. Both are on Lakeview Dr with a beach and could potentially meet our needs.

Dale remarked that the town beach will represent the "face" of China. How it looks will reflect how the public views the community. He also affirmed the feeling that we should look at other properties. We don't want the sellers to think we have no other options. He asked Dan to find out about eminent domain and whether or not we would have that option. We would prefer to avoid using that tactic, but it might be helpful to know more about it during our negotiations.

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Our priorities for the property are:

- easy lake access (handicap accessibility)
- safety - located in a central area, not down a remote fire road
- parking
- space for other activities such as skating
- building with bathrooms, possible teen center

Representative: We have made contact with realtor David Cosgrove as a possible representative of our interests. Dan will ask David to ...

- a. explain to us why we might benefit from having him represent us,
- b. find comparable properties to give us something to compare to,
- c. to see if there are other properties in China that might be suitable for our purpose.

We are hoping that David will be able to share this information at our next meeting on Friday, August 18th.

Fundraising Advice: We may need advice about how to go about asking for support from donors who might be able to contribute significantly. Sheri mentioned someone from Colby College. Janet's cousin and Erskine employee Nina Tilander might also be able to lend advice. Janet will continue to "perfect" the solicitation letter that will go out to local businesses. We should take care that we do not request support from the same people for the beach and Thurston Park. Sheri, who is also on the Thurston Park committee, noted that they will target environmental groups for support for Thurston Park, rather than local businesses.

Offer amount: Each member of the committee was asked to give a figure they think we should offer the sellers. Paul recorded and averaged them. The result was \$638,000. We will compare this to any comparable properties David Cosgrove comes up with and ask him if this is a reasonable offer.

Next meeting is scheduled for Friday, August 17 at 3:00 p.m. at the China town office.