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**Town of Exeter
Swasey Parkway Trustees Meeting
Novak Room
January 17, 2024
5:00 PM
Approved Minutes**

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1. Call Meeting to Order

9 Chair Staples called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM and introduced the members who were
10 present

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2. Introductions:

13 **Present were:** Chair Dwane Staples, Vice-Chair Darius Thompson, and Dave Short

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15 **Others Present:** Select Board Chair Niko Papakonstantis (remotely), and Jennifer Martel

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3. Public Comment

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**4. Approval of Minutes 11/15/2023 Bid Opening, 11/15/2023 Trustee's Meeting,
11/20/2023 Joint Meeting with Select Board**

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22 ***Mr. Short motioned to approve the November 15, 2023 minutes of the Bid Opening. Mr.***
23 ***Thompson seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed***
24 ***unanimously.***

25
26 Chair Staples recommended edits to the minutes of the November 15, 2023 Trustee's Meeting.

27
28 ***Mr. Thompson motioned to approve the minutes of the November 15, 2023 Trustee's***
29 ***Meeting, as amended. Mr. Short seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in***
30 ***favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

31
32 Chair Staples recommended edits to the minutes of the November 20, 2023 Joint Meeting with
33 the Select Board.

34
35 ***Mr. Short motioned to approve the minutes of the November 20, 2023 Joint Meeting with***
36 ***the Select Board, as amended. Mr. Thompson seconded the motion. A vote was taken,***
37 ***all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

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5. Jen Martel

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41 Jen Martel of Woodbridge Lane noted she has been a resident for eight years and is a
42 professional landscape architect and member of the Planning Board. She expressed concerns
43 with the proposed cul-de-sac design in the Parkway presented on November 20th. She emailed
44 her concerns to the Select Board. Ms. Martel felt the design proposed would do more harm
45 than good. She posted a copy of the plan. She expressed concerns with the design that adds

46 pavement and would remove approximately 5,000 SF of green space in favor of vehicular traffic.
47 She noted there would be an addition of 2,800 SF of impervious pavement in close proximity to
48 vulnerable wetland. She noted concerns with runoff, increased flooding and decreased
49 infiltration. She recommended the Heritage Commission be involved in any design. She noted
50 the Parkway was currently closed at Water Street for construction but questioned what will
51 prevent cars from going in. She noted the design has no curbing for safety and there is a gate
52 proposed and she questioned how that would be controlled and whether it would be a
53 galvanized metal swing gate. Ms. Martel noted the Parkway is only 24' wide and not wide
54 enough for two-way traffic and parking which should be 30' wide minimum to accommodate.

55
56 Ms. Martel indicated the Parkway was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, a famous landscape
57 architect, known as the father of landscape architecture in the US, who had co-designed Central
58 Park and a portion of Boston's "Emerald Necklace."

59
60 Ms. Martel noted that she understood the court mandate establishing a pedestrian only section.
61 She noted that there could be alternative designs for a one-way shared street. She proposed a
62 plan that would have 11' for pedestrian and bikes on one side and vehicles separated with a
63 buffer taking plowing into consideration. She recommended a 14' travel lane with 10' of parallel
64 parking and an added crosswalk. She noted there could be 24 parking spaces with two
65 accessible near the crosswalk. She indicated the pedestrian and bike path could be 1/3 mile.
66 She noted pedestrians would likely prefer to be on the water side.

67
68 Mr. Short asked why the traffic would flow north to south and Ms. Martel indicated it would
69 eliminate the left-hand turn.

70
71 Mr. Thompson noted he had proposed separation by jersey barriers. He noted a narrower road
72 would slow traffic down. Mr. Thompson stated that he liked her design, and it could be tried.

73
74 Chair Staples indicated he liked her proposal. He noted that he had a copy of the 1930 Olmsted
75 plan. He stated that he always believed the Parkway should be one way and open to
76 everybody to enjoy. He asked about presenting the proposal to the Select Board and how to
77 get the proposal out to the public eye. He noted there was a warrant article closing the Parkway
78 to the Pavilion. He noted he liked her proposal and thanked her for bringing it. He agreed the
79 plan should prevent use as a cut through.

80
81 Mr. Short noted a warrant article was coming up. Depending on how the voters vote there could
82 be an issue. He questioned whether it was premature to present the plan to the Select Board.

83
84 Select Board Representative Papakonstantis recommended watching the Select Board meeting
85 from last night. The Board discussed the Citizen's Petition. He thanked Ms. Martel for putting
86 her proposal together and noted that it was included in the Board's packet last evening. He
87 noted there was a warrant article two years ago and the roadway was discontinued by a judge
88 as a class V road. The road has been discontinued. He recommended waiting until the election
89 and until legal counsel weighs in. He reminded that the siphon project is still underway, and the
90 cul-de-sac design presented by the interim public works director was a draft step. Having a
91 committee of citizens was discussed at the November 20th meeting. There is another draft
92 design in the bullpen. There is a new public works director, and he would like to get his

93 feedback. He noted he would like to see the continued cooperation of the Board with the
94 community and trustees. He noted there is funding put aside.

95
96 Chair Staples noted that crosswalks can be more dangerous and would like to get feedback on
97 that. He recommended waiting until the March vote and asked that Ms. Martel be involved no
98 matter what happens. He thanked her for the thoughtfulness of her design.

99
100 Mr. Thompson recommended thinking beyond the immediate with recent flooding. He noted
101 concerns with electricity and water and making sure the Parkway can drain appropriately.

102
103 Select Board Representative Papakonstantis noted that the DPW did a great job responding as
104 well as police and fire.

105 106 **6. Turnaround**

107 108 **7. Tree Donation**

109
110 Chair Staples indicated that the Trustees wanted to get the Tree Committee involved further in
111 donations. They recently donated three elms that have been planted. Mr. Short will follow up
112 with Eileen.

113 114 **8. Planting along fence behind Harris Center**

115
116 Chair Staples indicated that plantings were discussed and there will be more discussion in the
117 spring.

118 119 **9. Tree Pruning**

120
121 Chair Staples indicated the Trustees had decided to wait until the ground freezes to address the
122 pruning of the birch and ash trees near the block building. Mr. Short noted the ground had
123 started to freeze but was not solid enough yet to support the bucket truck.

124 125 **10. Other Business**

126 127 **11.. Next Meeting Date**

128 129 **12. Adjourn**

130
131 ***Mr. Short motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:53 PM. Mr. Thompson seconded the***
132 ***motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

133 Respectfully submitted,

134 Daniel Hoijer
135 Recording Secretary
136 (via *ExeterTv.com*)