

Bromfield House Committee  
February 24, 2021  
7pm  
Zoom Meeting

Members Present: Rich Maiore, Steven Ford, Pam Marston, SusanMary Redinger, Bill Ference, Pat Jennings

Public attending:, Jim Lee, Pete Jackson, Dan Daly

Rich Maiore called the meeting to order at 7:07pm.

Mr. Ference shared the results of the survey. There were 262 responses and 90 comments. He reminded committee members that the results are only indicative of those who responded and are not statistically valid in terms of representing all residents.

Question one asked about selling the land/house together. Responses were largely split between strong for (34%) or strongly against (30%). Most people responded that the best option in this category is to sell the house as a residential property (55%).

Question two was about retaining the land but not the house. Again, the responses were mostly split between strongly agree (35%) and strongly disagree (24%) with the rest of the responses split across the middle. The most picked options for this category were to create a community park and leaving the land open.

There was very little support for gifting the land to the Nipmuck Nation (10% strongly in favor; 46% strongly disagree).

There were many open responses and Mr. Ference recommended that members read through the responses on their own time.

Members discussed what they felt the survey numbers represented and how the information might be used. There is no obvious choice from what respondents indicated.

Mr. Maiore said that next move is to winnow down the options.

Members agreed to take the option of donating the land to the Nipmuc Nation off the list given the responses.

**Category 1:** Sell the house and the land.

The committee then discussed doing some work to determine the value of selling the house as a private residence. Ms. Jennings offered to reach out to two realtors and get estimates on the sale price of the house, as well as what kind of restrictions could be put on the use of the house. She will work with Ms. Marston who may reach out to a third realtor so we have three estimates.

Ms. Marston said the historical commission will be discussing putting the house into the historical district and potentially posing that to the town at an upcoming ATM.

Option #2 in this category (convert to senior housing) is similar to option #3 in this category (affordable housing). Mr. Maiore will work with Chris Ryan to come up with the feasibility of those two options.

**Category 2:** Sell the house but keep the land.

Members agreed to remove the dog park option from further consideration.

Park/outdoor classroom development (landscaping costs). Ms. Redinger offered to come up with a ballpark figure on that option.

Mr. Maiore had asked the town administrator and facilities manager for a basic estimate for filling in the foundation hole and removing a septic/gas tank which came in at \$50,000. That figure was need so that it could potentially be placed on the warrant for the May ATM. If the house were to be deconstructed there could be a training opportunity for the fire dept. for burning the house. Jeff Hayes (the facilities manager) will also give an estimate on demolition/remediation of the house.

The option of using the land for athletic fields was discussed. According to Mr. Lee, the Charlie Waite field (installed about 10 years ago), which was fairly level land, and had some water issues cost in excess of \$185,000. Parks & Rec has a basic estimate on what the costs would be to develop the lot into an athletic field. Mr. Ference will reach out to Parks and Rec to see if they have any estimates on developing the land for this use.

Mr. Ford will reach out to some architects about the value of parts of the house (e.g. windows/handles/wood).

It is possible that this committee could simply put forward a recommendation to sell the house but keep the land without determining the ultimate use of the remaining lot. There are fiscal constraints with the current budget that may not allow for a large expenditure on any option, and it might be difficult to work up a completely developed option by ATM. For now, committee members will continue to gather information.

**Public Comment:**

Pete Jackson: Suggested setting a timeline for buying/moving the house. Staging for demolition, etc. Also consider maintenance costs for the land. Would like to pull in the Bromfield Trustees to weigh in on the options. Profits from the sale of the house would go to the trust for scholarship.

Jim Lee: Suggested having concrete ideas for development of the land rather than just selling/demolishing the house and leaving it empty. Most cost beneficial to the town would be to sell the house and the land.

Dan Daly: There may be an assumption by residents that the proceeds from the sale of the house would benefit the town vs. the Bromfield Trustees so the responses need to be considered in the light of that question being unresolved.

Mr. Ference suggested putting together a rating/scoring form of some sort. Members agreed to come to the next meeting with the information they had collected and be ready to work on the rating system.

Next meeting will be March 10<sup>th</sup> at 7pm.

Ms. Redinger made a motion to adjourn. Ms Jennings seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:37pm by unanimous vote.

Submitted respectfully,

SusanMary Redinger