

Municipal Facilities Committee Meeting
April 14, 2025
Minutes

Councilor Eric Smith (Chair) called the meeting to order in Town Council Chamber at 10:00AM with the following committee members and staff present: Councilor Chip Lawrence, Councilor Steve Brown, Public Works Director Earl Gibson, Town Manager Sophie Wilson, Assistant Town Manager Caroline Pelletier

Key Discussion Points:

1. Skate Park Location

Began the discussion with a recap of project and proposed location at train station parking lot on Depot Street. The group discussed concerns from neighborhood residents about noise, safety, and management of the temporary skate park which has been seasonally located on this parcel. Staff shared that conversations with NEPRA (New England Passenger Rail Authority) included discussion of plans to expand the Downeaster service. In addition to the expected increase in activity at the station, NEPRA raised safety concerns regarding locating the temporary skate park adjacent to the train station. Councilors talked with skate park representatives about alternative potential permanent skate park sites including Holbrook parking lot, school areas, Hunter Road Fields, and the Freeport Community Church.

Committee members expressed commitment to working with the group to find a suitable location and stated that the Town was not rejecting the project; however, have significant concern about the currently proposed location. Next steps for the permanent skate park included:

- Councilor Smith will draft a formal response to the emails received;
- Councilor Brown will work with staff and group members to identify site location matrix and explore alternative locations; and
- The Committee expressed that a final proposal would need to include a comprehensive management and maintenance plan.

2. Temporary Skate Park Considerations

Staff reported that they had not yet received a request to install the temporary skate park this year. The students who had championed the park have graduated and have likely moved on to other locations and/or priorities. Given the concerns raised

by neighbors and NEPRA, if staff receives a request to install the temporary skate park this summer, the Town Manager will bring the request to the Town Council, likely with an alternative location and updated “rules” proposed.

3. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Monday, May 12th at 10AM in Town Council Chamber. The agenda will include updates on both permanent and temporary skate park as well as discussion of the Public Safety Building RFQ.

Next Meeting: May 12, 2025 at 10:00 AM