

QUESTION AND ANSWERS MAY 2021 STM ARTICLE 26

Question: The redesign of Town Common is well done, and I look forward to a fresh space. However, I have these concerns:

This project seems discretionary and I question whether proceeding now is justified given looming Covid expenses.

Answer: \$1 million of the project is funded by CPA funds, which are restricted to projects related to open space, historic preservation, and community housing. A portion of the project is proposed to be funded by the General Fund in the amount of \$364,000 in Free Cash. The funding for this project has been in the capital improvement plan for several years.

Question: The tables which have brought the Town together during Covid are largely absent from this design. The Town Common has never seemed more relevant and full of life than during Covid and the use of these tables was a major element. Are Post-Covid priorities fully realized in the design and might some changes/additions might be warranted given the lessons about community we have learned over the past year?

Answer: There are four handicapped accessible tables in the design and additional tables can be placed underneath the temporary shade structure that will be erected seasonally. The design of the open area is modular in nature and furniture can be adjusted to meet community needs. The design occurred during the height of the pandemic, and many features that are included reflect the increased utilization and desired potential of the common.

Question: The design incorporates a large swathe of grass which is high maintenance, not drought resistant, and is likely to require chemical maintenance to look nice. Should Town planning work to incorporate more climate resilient designs into our public spaces?

Answer: The Town will be specifying a drought resistant grass that can stand up to constant wear, similar to what we use on our athletic fields. The Town does not use chemical applications, instead we use cultural practices to organically encourage healthy root zones to crowd our weeds and preserve our grass.

Question: The design schematic makes it appear as though the parking spaces on GPA would be lost as the result of this redesign. Is that the case?

Answer: No parking spaces on Great Plain Avenue will be lost as a result of this redesign.