



**Sandy Hook Permanent Memorial Commission
Newtown Municipal Center, Council Chamber
3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT**

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE PERMANENT MEMORIAL
COMMISSION**

The Sandy Hook Permanent Memorial Commission held a regular meeting on Thursday, May 10, 2018 at the Newtown Municipal Center, Council Chamber, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown. Dan Krauss called the meeting to order at 7:05pm and began with a moment of silence.

PRESENT: Dan Krauss, Joann Bacon, Brian Engel, Pat Llodra, Sarah Middeleer, Agni Pavilidou Kyprianou, Alan Martin, Tricia Pinto, Donna Van Waalwijk (7:15pm)

ABSENT: Joanne Brunetti

ALSO PRESENT: First Selectman Dan Rosenthal, Rob Sibley, Shavaun Towers (via phone call) two members of the public and one member of the press.

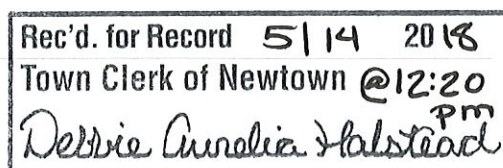
ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES: Mr. Martin moved to accept the minutes of April 30, 2018. Ms. Middeleer seconded. All in favor

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: **Richmond Jones**, 1 Obtuse Road, Hawleyville welcomed Dan Krauss to chairmanship. Mr. Jones said two designs have very stately walls and is concerned about graffiti and security. Mr. Jones feels if there was a teaching center and stage it would have long term success and bring more traffic to the isolated location. Mr. Krauss said security is being addressed with the Police Commission. Mr. Richmond would like to see the memorial built by the community. **Billy Taylor**, Meriden, spoke representing Congresswoman Esty's office, saying she has been watching developments. Anything that Congresswoman Esty can do to help for the remainder of her term, she and Mr. Taylor are happy to do.

Discussion on SH268: The commission reviewed SH268, a design that was submitted on time but not downloaded into the system. One commission member thought it was generic with no connection to Newtown. The sculpture was well received but not consistent with the other designs. Ms. Llodra moved to eliminate SH268 from consideration. Mr. Martin seconded. All in favor.

Further Discussion on Final Designs: *(notes relative to each design and feedback from Advisory Committee attached).* **SH37** - There was concern around the manipulation of the water bodies. Ms. Towers thinks this design is most invasive in terms of manipulation of site. Mr. Sibley said local, state and federal agencies would be involved in approval. There is a lot of manipulation of site but one of the benefits of the site is that it has the capability of being manipulated. Mr. Sibley likes the design and concept but said due to the work needed this design is the hardest, of the final four, to do; but that doesn't mean it's isn't possible.

The commission discussed what would be asked of the designers. Cost estimations will not be discussed at this time. First Selectman Rosenthal advised the commission to choose a design that speaks to them most; cost will be addressed during the RFP process. Ms. Towers suggested asking designers if their designs were beyond the means of the town, what value engineering they would suggest, understanding it will be an ongoing process. Ms. Middeleer is very concerned about the tree in this design. Mr. Martin moved to advance SH37. Ms. Pavilidou Kyprianou seconded. Motion passed 8-1 (Yes: Krauss, Bacon, Llodra, Middeleer, Pavilidou Kyprianou, Martin, Pinto, Van Waalwijk; No: Engel)



SH108: (*see attached comments*) Mr. Tavella feels the maintenance would be too high. Mr. Sibley feels this design is least impactful on water. Although the central garden is a personal favorite, Mr. Sibley is concerned about the density of plantings. This design would move easily through the process. There was concern the fountains would not be active in the winter on 12/14; Ms. Middeleer said the fountains could be attractive without water. Ms. Llodra said it could be communicated to the developer that the fountains are to be functional through 12/14. Mr. Martin moved to advance SH108 to the next level. Ms. Pavlidou Kyprianou seconded. All in favor.

SH233: At the last meeting this design moved forward with a passion vote. Ms. Bacon thanked the commission for allowing the vote but upon further consideration is not inclined to move this design forward. Ms. Bacon moved to eliminate SH233 from consideration. Mr. Martin seconded. All in favor.

SH240: (*see attached notes*) Mr. Tavella thinks this is an elegant, well thought out design. Ms. Berke ranked this design her number one choice. Mr. Sibley said the small water feature will need maintenance. The paths around the ponds are more structural than what currently exists. The permitting process would be relatively easy. Mr. Sibley said an accessibility path is necessary for maintenance. There is no round-about in the parking area. Mr. Sibley believes this design is the most feasible of the final designs. The commission finds this design feasible and appealing, with a beautiful overlook. Mr. Engel questioned whether the ponds required maintenance or would they be left natural. Ms. Middeleer believes if this design is chosen a maintenance plan would need to be created. Mr. Sibley noted that as long as the over story is maintained the pond will self maintain. Care and custody can be included in the RFP. Ms. Van Waalwijk moved to advance SH240. Ms. Llodra seconded. All in favor.

Mr. Krauss announced the designer for SH37 is Daniel Affleck (and Ben Waldo) of Berkley, CA; the designer for SH108 is Justin Arleo, Arleo Design Studio, LLC of Tempe, AZ and the designer of SH240 is Joan MacLeod, Damon Farber Landscape Architect of Minneapolis, MN.

Chairman's Transition: Mr. Krauss has not had any communications with designers through the Sandy Hook Permanent Memorial email. Mr. Krauss has access to the email account as well as the Facebook account and will have access to the website in the coming days.

Next Steps (Timeline): The commission reviewed draft letters and made some edits. One letter is to all that submitted designs that were not moved forward for consideration and one is to the designers of the top three designs. Ms. Towers suggested a third letter be sent to the ten designers that made it to the top thirteen but did not advance to the top three. A phone number should be given to designers for direct contact relative to questions. Mr. Krauss went over the timeline with the commission. A list of questions will be created for each designer relative to their designs. The Council Chamber is reserved, tentatively, for May 29, in case a special meeting is needed. The commission chose July 10 and/or July 17 as dates for designers to present, in hour increments, during the day. A decision on the final design will be made at the regular meeting of Aug. 9. Public Building & Site will be involved in writing the RFP; the commission will remain involved, including being informed of value engineering. Ms. Towers said she believes after a design is chosen the designer should present a proposal, which include design fees and the creation of construction documents. This would get the project to the point where it can be put out to bid. Mr. Sibley is comfortable with the timeline of having a firm selected by spring of 2019. Mr. Sibley will look into the mandatory referral.

ADJOURNMENT: The regular meeting of the Sandy Hook Permanent Memorial Commission was adjourned at 9:41pm.

Attachments: Feedback from Advisory Committee; Notes/Requests for Design numbers SH37, SH108, SH240

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Marcinek, clerk



Sandy Hook
Permanent
Memorial
Commission

April 10 , 2018

Feedback from Advisory Committee

Joe Daniels Former President, National September 11 Memorial & Museum
Attending meeting

Allison Blais Chief Strategy Officer, National September 11 Memorial & Museum
Calling into meeting

Robert Mitchell Principal, Mitchell Architectural Group, PC
Unable to attend.

I probably gave enough comments to everyone already. Get the one that sings.

Thomas Tavella, President, Tavella Design Group, LLC

The following are my thoughts

It comes down to SH31 & SH240 for me either one would be a great memorial and asset to the community

SH31 - Well conceived, my initial thoughts were this was one of the better designs submitted.

One concern is the manipulation of the two water bodies. Will the Town Conservation or inland wetlands allow this?

SH108- I was on the fence with this one. It lacks the grace of the others. I also feel the maintenance will be high. The serviceberry grove would be a monoculture, I would suggest a blend of different species.

SH233- This lacks the flow of the others. The path in the memorial grove is situated so plant material blocks visitors from getting close to the water mirror.

SH240- This is an elegant design and very well thought out.

The only criticism would be on the boardwalk. It is very rigid. With some work, I feel it could be softened to match the rest of the design.

Best of luck on the 10th looking forward to hearing the results.

Shavaun Towers Principal, The Project Studio for Landscape Architecture and Spatial Studies
Attending Meeting

Rob Sibley Town of Newtown, Deputy Director of Planning
Attending Meeting

Deborah Berke, Dean, School Of Architecture, Yale University

I am unable to attend the meeting on May 10. I agreed to serve on the design jury in my capacity as the Dean of the School of Architecture at Yale. It is an honor to be able to contribute in some way. I am sorry I will not be able to meet you or fellow jury members this week.

I have ranked the four designs in order of my preference with #1 being first. I believe all are good, an indication both of the quality of the submissions and the hard and careful review work of the design jurors.

1. SH240
2. SH108
3. SH37
4. SH233 – I do not think this one should be built. I think the 'memorial grove' makes the design unnecessarily complicated.

NOTES/REQUESTS FOR DESIGN NO. 37

This design was very well received by not only the commission, but by victims' families and the wider community. The way the victims are memorialized, as well as the beauty of your renderings, moved many people.

ENTRY/PARKING

1. In order to have an adequate planted buffer between this site and the NUSAR property, please align parking in a single row, facing the site (east). Add to planted buffer on the northwest side of this area.
2. Minimize "corporate" feeling to drive and parking.
3. Provide plan and perspective drawings of entry pavilion, along with depiction of any proposed signage. Is any seating proposed for the pavilion?

PATHS/OTHER ACCESS WAYS

1. Some of the commission members are concerned about the complexity, expense, and environmental impact of the braided path network. We would be interested in seeing a simplified treatment of this area, or, alternatively, your reasons for proposing this level of complexity in the path design. Part of the concern lies with the number and length of proposed retaining walls. Are they necessary to provide for an accessible path system to the memorial area? Are portions of the accessible path ramps? If so, please note type of proposed railing.
2. We need a way for maintenance and emergency vehicles to get closer to the main memorial area. Please look at the path on the northeast, leading toward the memorial bridge, for a way to possibly make this into a service road. Could the handicap parking go at the end of this drive (near the bridge) as well? This might allow for fewer retaining walls (see note above) and a simplifying of the accessible path system.
3. Elevated boardwalk over pond: Please provide more information, visually and in labels, about the materials and construction of this element. Keep in mind ways to minimize cost and environmental impact, as well as the need to have the design be in keeping with its site and surroundings, without sacrificing the design integrity.
4. Please note proposed surface materials of all paths and roads.

MEMORIAL AREA

1. Please provide detailed drawings and notes regarding pool with sacred sycamore, showing how the survivability of the sycamore is assured. The commission is concerned about limiting the root spread of such a large tree, as well as having heated water at its base in winter. Also, please address how maintenance of this tree would be done.
2. Eliminate sacred soil as a planting medium or construction material; by state law it must be sealed (see original instructions about sacred soil in Guidelines for Submitting a Design).
3. Another concern about this area was the apparently extensive use of concrete. If indeed the seat walls and other walls are concrete, consider bringing in other materials, at least in places, more in keeping with the New England vernacular and the rural character of the site's surroundings.

PONDS/WATER FEATURES

The commission is concerned about the extent of work being proposed on the existing water bodies, because of environmental impact, expense, and permitting challenges. Is there a way to retain the essence of your design without completely changing the existing aquatic system?

OVERLOOK

Please provide more detail about the design of this area and access to it. Please estimate the percentage of existing hemlocks that will need to be removed to execute this element, and what measures will be taken to protect the hemlocks not slated for removal.

NOTES/REQUESTS FOR DESIGN NO. 108

There are several aspects to this design that moved many people, as well as an overall treatment of the site that shows sensitivity to the program as well as a well-tuned sense of design and scale. Some criticisms of the design include the perception that it seems somewhat rigid and fussy, as well as potentially high maintenance.

ENTRY/PARKING

1. In order to provide adequate screening, the eastern edge of entry drive will need new plantings to fill in under the existing trees. Screening should be both dense and tall; both sides of the entry drive need to be well screened.
2. The proposed mountain laurels on part of the entry drive and along the northern edge of parking area should be supplemented with larger, denser screening plants - the neighboring property, NUSAR, may in the future contain a large warehouse-type building and associated driveways, parking, etc.
3. Could seating be provided at the memorial entrance area?

PATHS/ROADS

1. Accessible path from parking area: please show any necessary retaining walls, giving their height and length. Also please specify the type of railing to be used. One criticism of this area mentioned the severe appearance of the "switchbacks." Is it possible to soften this approach without making this path inordinately long? Question: are the landings adequately spaced to comply with ADA requirements?
2. Please note proposed surface material(s) for all paths and roads.
3. Please provide more detail about the design of the proposed bridge.
4. Possibly consider moving the handicap parking near the end of the maintenance drive and providing an accessible path to memorial area from there.

MEMORIAL AREA

1. The commission is concerned about the proposed perennials in the beds, since they will not be attractive in winter, when the event's anniversary occurs. Please revise these planting beds to include groundcovers and low shrubs with winter interest (they need not all be evergreen, but some evergreen plants would be good).
2. A criticism of the Amelanchier grove was that it is a large monoculture. Consider bringing in some other species in the area outside of the core memorial area. Alternatively, consider making the area around the memorial a wildflower meadow (a way to bring in the pollinator-attracting perennials you'd proposed for the memorial area), leaving the serviceberries just in the planting beds.
4. If you propose irrigating the planting beds, please provide some basic information about the system.

Cont'd. on reverse

WALLS

1. Please provide a perspective drawing and more detail about the seat/retaining walls on the slope between the memorial area and the ponds.

BENCHES

1. Benches are shown in the rendering of the memorial area. Please provide more detail about their design and construction.

NOTES/REQUESTS FOR DESIGN NO. 240

Many features of this design appealed to the commission and community. The memorial grove seems to be an inviting space, and the individual stone elements with empty chairs for the victims was moving to many. Following are notes and questions regarding aspects of the design that we would like to see addressed and, in some cases, modified.

ENTRY/PARKING

1. The eastern property boundary at entry drive needs to have additional screening plants to fill in under the existing overstory. Drive should be densely screened from neighboring properties.
2. Is the white line shown along one side of drive a path, or wall?
3. Is it possible to shift the orientation of the parking spaces toward the site? This way, people won't have to cross traffic to leave or get to their cars.

PATHS/ROADS

1. Please indicate surface materials for all paths and roads.
2. Accessible boardwalk/ramp from overlook to memorial area seems very long and might be a difficult trek for people who can't walk easily. Is it possible to minimize the length? Please indicate the type of railing proposed for this boardwalk, as well as the proposed material. Are landings adequately spaced along ramp to comply with ADA requirements?
3. Maintenance access road: please provide an area at the end where maintenance crews can park a truck and possibly leave equipment, mulch pile, etc. Consider possibly moving handicap parking nearby this area as well, thereby perhaps allowing for a shorter ADA path to the memorial area.
4. Please provide information about the design elements shown along the woodland path.

MEMORIAL AREA

1. One concern of the commission is that the breathing lawn seems somewhat oversized and that it would invite activities like frisbee throwing and other games. Please consider reducing the size of this area and in turn possibly enlarging the footprint of the memorial grove. Another thought we had was to plant the breathing lawn as a wildflower meadow, with a couple of mown paths through it. If it's important to preserve views across it when visitors are seated, this area could possibly be planted with a low-growing native grass.
2. Is it possible to eliminate the steps from memorial grove across the reflecting pool, for the purpose of accessibility? Or is the breathing lawn accessible from the other side?
4. The colored glass beads over the community arbor are a lovely idea. Please address concerns about durability and maintenance and briefly describe how they are installed.

