



**Sandy Hook Permanent Memorial Commission**

Newtown Municipal Center, Council Chambers

3 Primrose Street, Newtown CT 06470

June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at 7:30PM

**PRESENT:** Kyle Lyddy, Steffan Burns, Alan Martin, Donna van Waalwijk, Tricia Pinto, Joann Bacon, Joanne Brunetti, Agni Pavlidou Kyprianou, Sarah Middeleer, Dan Krauss, Brian Engel

**Meeting was called to order at 7:34PM**

**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:** Commissioner Martin moved to accept the minutes of the regular meeting of May 12, 2016. Seconded by Commissioner Krauss; the motion passed.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

**Dottie Evans:** 1 Reservoir Road, Newtown

Beginning to feel encouraged by the Committee. Dottie has been thinking about what an acceptable site may look like and one that may meet the criteria located in a place where there's no conflicted uses and where there's peaceful contemplation, remembrance purposefully. Looking forward to working together.

**Richmond Jones:** 1 Obtuse Road, Newtown

Suggestion: Open Space in Fairfield Hills Community be designated Sandy Hook Memorial Park. Reserved for the victims.

**Renata Adler 198 Hattertown Road, Newtown**

No one is objecting to a designated space. Bulldoze in a natural space, pave in a natural space would be unfit. Instead how nice would it be to include living things – a cycle of living things.

**Mary Wilson , 12 Whipoorwill Hill Road**

Thank you for coming to the Board of Selectman. It helped answer questions and clarity where we stand. Appreciate the chart with the numbers, but think if we just keep it to numbers we may miss things.

The commission invited **Joe Hovious** to come and speak in regards to his correspondence to the Commission on why the High Meadow doesn't make sense and is opposed to the location. That document is attached here.

Kyle Lyddy agreed that there are fair points in Mr. Hovious' remarks and that it was important for the Commission to be sensitive to where we stand with the High Meadow and to be open about communication and thoughts from those opposed to the site. Kyle explained that it was the hope to not talk too much about the High Meadow this evening to instead focus on the other locations that were proposed. Agni Pavlidou Kyprianou wanted to ensure communication moving forward was accurate for the community.

Mr. Hovious mentioned he would be open to being a resource for the Commission moving forward if there were specific questions they had on land they were looking into. Kyle Lyddy thanked Mr. Hovious for his comments.

**LOCATION DISCUSSION:** As the last PMC meeting the Commission had tabled discussion on the High Meadow with the opportunity to bring it back should there not be any secondary locations that fit the criteria.

At the last meeting, three Fairfield Hills locations were provided to the Commission by George Benson of the Land Use office. Each Commission member was asked to visit the sites on their own in an effort to provide feedback.

Fairfield Hills Site #1 (beyond the cul-de-sac) and Site #2 (above the tree line in the High Meadow) were discussed as being too similar to the High Meadow with immediate and visible access to the trails. It was discussed that it would be counter productive to include those into the discussion if High Meadow was going to be eliminated. Both of these locations are considered Open Space and the Commission may get similar push back to these locations.

Site #3: The wooded area while walking up the trail from the cul-de-sac on the right. This location was visited by some Commission members during Relay for Life and while a baseball game was going on. The liveliness of the crowd (including a DJ) was easily heard and would be difficult for visitors of the memorial to attend during noisy days like that. Fairfield Hills is to be known as a vibrant hub and therefore that location was thought to be too noisy with the sounds of baseball bats and music.

Kyle Lyddy motioned to remove all three Fairfield Hills locations from consideration. Seconded by Commissioner Martin; the motion passed unanimously.

Other locations that were looked at included a private parcel of land on Valley Field Road. Donna van Waalwijk pointed out that this location was too residential and we would get severe pushback from residents in the neighborhood. She explained how we don't want to just settle for a location.

Kyle Lyddy motioned to remove the Valley Field Road from consideration. Seconded by Commissioner van Waalwijk; the motion passed unanimously.

Another site that was looked into was off of 302 near Ferris Farm. Commission members left this option on the table in an effort to allow all Commission members to visit the site on their own time. Kyle Lyddy said it was important to ensure we are thinking outside of the box here, but this location may be too far removed from Sandy Hook. This location was left on the table for the time being, understanding of course the disconnect/distance to Sandy Hook.

A secondary location that was brought up was a location off of Nunnewauk Road and Wasserman Way. The Town Land Use Office was going to be looking into this parcel and the Site Selection Sub Committee was going to be working with the town to understand any concerns. The sub committee will follow up with the Commission at the next SHPMC meeting. There was serious enthusiasm about this location and is going to be seriously looked into moving forward with the town.

Ann Astarita provided the Commission a list of seven locations to consider which is attached. These locations were presented to her from other members of the Community in which she compiled and sent to the Commission. The maps of these locations were not provided at the Commission meeting. Alan Martin stated he would look into the locations with the sub committee but thought some of the locations provided were already looked at by the Commission. Some of the proposed locations were discussed as entering on the Treadwell Park side and not the Dickenson Drive side. Maps of these locations were to be forwarded to the Commission to identify the locations on their own. Kyle Lyddy stated he was appreciative of the input and hoped that this was the start of a more collaborative effort moving forward.

Commissioner Sarah Middleleer introduced a location in the Fairfield Hills Campus that would put the memorial into the fabric of the town. The courtyard of the Municipal Center, which is approximately 100 feet by 100 feet. She knows that this isn't a secluded place, but it would be a place of honor. She introduced it to the Commission to think outside the box and has asked Commission members to follow up.

#### **GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING A DESIGN:**

The Commission looked at a document that had been prepared for the Commission in an effort to simultaneously work on design guidelines along side the location process. This document was presented as a first draft understanding there are moving parts to the process (i.e. location and community feedback). The Commission went through this document and asked individuals to come back at the next meeting with updates, changes or questions based on what was presented.

This document was created by the Design Selection Sub Committee who worked independently on information gathering from other communities who had been

through tragedies (9/11 Memorial Commission Guidelines, etc.). Information was also tallied from the information gathering stage of communication between the 26 families, emergency personnel, parents of students enrolled at SHS on 12/14, staff members employed at SHS on 12/14 and through four community wide forums.

The distribution of this document will be made to other town officials and groups to ensure visibility to the document.

The purpose of this document is to provide a clear set of guidelines/process for individuals who want to submit a design to the Commission. This, to ensure what the Commission is receiving back to the group is relevant and on track to what the 26 families and the Community have asked for in communication.

**COMMUNICATION MOVING FORWARD:**

It was mentioned that holding Community forums for the full community again might be an important next step for the Commission and to follow in the footsteps of the Community Center Commission who used creative ways to accurately let the Community know where we stand on certain issues and where we are in the process. The Commission agreed that it will be important to accurately, without error, communicate to the town on issues; it was discussed that this may be done as we get closer to identifying a location.

It was discussed that even hosting informational forums to fill people in on where we are would be appropriate.

Also it has been identified as a problem that it is too difficult to find information on the town website. The Commission agreed that it would be important to use the SHPMC website as the main communication to ensure people aren't clicking through tons of links to access what they need.

Kyle Lyddy stated he would draft a Q&A based on most recent information for distribution and that we should be more creative in its distribution beyond just the Municipal Center. Senior Centers, NYA, Town Hall, etc.

**Meeting was adjourned at 9:48PM.**

**Respectfully Submitted,  
Kyle Lyddy, Chairman of the SHPMC**