

**Volunteers Green, Browns Court, Round Church Green
3 Parks Improvement Committee (ARPA Funds)**

Minutes from meeting held on March 12, 2026 Approved on April 22,2026

Members Attending: Kendra Ziskie, Denise Barnard, Fran Thomas, Tess Storrs, Jeanne Agner,

Members Absent: Megan Andrews

Guests in person: Gary Bressor

Guest attending virtually: John Linn, Martha Nye, Chuck Senick

7:00

Public comment on items not on agenda:

Fran shared that she received a letter from Mike Lawler, Richmond resident and member of the Richmond Community band, with his concerns about the changes being looked at for the plateau at Volunteer's Green.

This led to a discussion about having some type of community round table discussion/presentation to further explain why changes need to be made, how we came to the two possible designs and other background work completed at Volunteer's Green. This could be similar to the Volunteers Green Park Projects Community Feedback Meeting that we held at the Library Community Room on October 22, 2024. At that forum, we gathered input from community members regarding the playground, bandshell, and the restroom/ concession stand. We will continue to plan for ways to get more public input at future meetings.

Chuck Senick, board member of the Farmer's Market, is interested in being part of future discussions regarding the changes.

Martha Nye, Brown's Court neighbor, commented on the trees between the BC property line and the pickleball court that were intended to be sound barriers. New owners bought one of the lots and are planning to build a triplex. The owners want to take down trees to their property line, and Martha is concerned that would affect the noise for the neighborhood. We referred her to town management and the upcoming DRB meeting regarding that topic.

Minutes Approved from last meeting on November 20, 2025 with some minor clarification and editing changes. Fran abstained as she did not attend that meeting.

Next scheduled meeting: Wednesday, April 22, 2026

7:20

Agenda Items:

1. Volunteers Green

1. Update on the Feb 5th meeting with John Linn and Ben Bush from Hillview Design, Town Manager Josh Arneson, Director of Planning and Zoning Keith Osborne, Zoning Administrator Dante DeNault and Denise, Fran and Jeanne from our committee met to discuss the possible designs for the plateau which will house the new playground and possibly a new pavilion with restrooms. We received guidance regarding the steps we need to take in order to move the plans forward.

Hillview Design previously provided us with design ideas for the plateau , including placement of the playground and 4 designs for a new pavilion. One of things we learned at that meeting is that in order for any builder to determine cost estimates for the two pavilion options that we

chose, they would need to have more information including an engineering plan with a schematic design for each of those two options. That plan would include analysis and design of the structural framing and the foundations for the buildings proposed. Basically, we have to have an engineering study and estimate before we can get a building estimate. When we have a building estimate, the town could then go out to bid. The goal at this time is to get enough of a number for each version that we can present options to the town and community.

* Note: We learned later that Ben and John are not charging the town for their time for this meeting.

From the town staff, we learned what other steps have to be completed before we would have enough information to make a recommendation to the Selectboard for improvements for Volunteer's Green.

As a result of that February 5th meeting, Denise contacted Bob Neeld, Richmond resident, from Engineering Ventures and asked him if he would be interested in doing an engineering plan for us. Last week, he submitted his proposal.

7:25

2. Discussion of Engineering Ventures (Bob Neeld)'s proposal for Pavillion Design

* Note: See that report which was posted after this meeting's agenda.

John Neeld was not able to attend this evening's meeting. John Linn explained what that proposal meant. John stated that Bob Neeld has knowledge about flood plain work and that he has a strong reputation in the field. After discussion, a motion was made by Fran to "Recommend to the Select Board that they approve the proposal from Engineering Ventures PC prepared by Robert Neeld dated February 20, 2026 for the first three outlined fee proposal amounts "Schematic Design for Two Options", "Final Design for Chosen Options" and "Flood Plain Consulting" for a total amount not to exceed \$22,000 ". This motion was seconded by Jeanne and passed by the committee.

Denise and Fran will ask to be on the agenda for the next Selectboard meeting to present this information and to ask that funds be released from the Special Projects Reserve Fund earmarked for park improvements for this contract.

There was discussion about these two options. Our committee wants to keep two options for estimates, as we are assuming the price will be quite different. Bob Neeld's focus will be on the actual structure but other flood information as well. Other costs will include demolition of the current restroom/concession stand and the bandshell, site work, landscaping and installing a new playground and fence. We will also need to consider costs for restoring the area where the current playground is so that it is more flood resistant and usable for the Farmers Market, Fourth of July and more.

Gary Bressor gave feedback regarding the two proposals. He stated that he likes the triple gabled pavilion, but would like to see the pitch of the roof a little steeper to more closely resemble the roof pitches in the neighborhood. . He felt that the single gable pavilion would look more like a shed and would not have the same character as the triple gable option. He acknowledged that the triple gable option would be more expensive. Gary commented that he thinks that this building is something that is going to be there for probably 100 years, that we should consider doing private fundraising or somehow find the extra money to build a building that the town would be proud of. There was further discussion of some ways to present these options to the townspeople and various ways that additional money could be raised. Several members acknowledged that our committee's task is to get a plan to recommend to the Selectboard for improvements to Volunteer's Green with public input on those plans.

8:05 - Gary mentioned that he was interested in the boundary line information for Brown's Court before he left, so we moved that topic up on the agenda time line.

Brown's Court Boundary Line update : Mc Carthy's boundary line needs a simple boundary adjustment for a small triangle of her property that juts into the park. The owner is willing to do the boundary adjustment but is awaiting the town lawyer to sign off. Oliver and Carrol property has a small piece that overlaps the entrance to the park. This is also a boundary adjustment and the property owners are waiting to hear from the town lawyer.

8:10 Volunteer Green Continue:

3. Discuss steps to proceed (tabled this item until we have further information)

Overall design of plateau

Pavillion - demolition and construction

Playground a. Demolition of old playground and restoration of that area

b. Updated inspection and condition of current structure

b. New Playground and fence location- specific (part of overall design)

4. Discuss roles for volunteers (tabled this item until we have further information)

5. Discuss presenting VG tentative plans - Table on 4th of July, Farmer's Market, etc. (tabled this item for future meeting)

6. Presenting update to the Selectboard

Denise and Fran are on the agenda for the March 19 Selectboard meeting to update them on the progress of our committee and to request that funds be released for the work on the parking lot at Brown's Court (see below). They will ask to include on the agenda our proposal for Bob Neeld's engineering design.

8:15

2. Funding and Budget

-The town continues to wait for more of the FEMA reimbursement

-Status of funds- Kendra and Fran are keeping track of all current spending

-We will discuss additional funding ideas at a future meeting. Grant writing, fundraising, etc. Several of our committee members stated that our task is to gather enough information to recommend an overall plan for Volunteer's Green to the Selectboard.

8:17

3. Browns Court

1. Parking lot status -

Fran and Denise met with Josh Arneson, Town Manager and Pete Gosselin, Highway Foreman regarding the installation of the parking lot this spring. Pete Gosselin and the Highway Department will be installing the parking lot. The funds for the materials (\$9691.50 cost as of today) will come from the ARPA/Reserved Funds and the labor funds will come from the Highway Department. The work is expected to be done in two days. Fran and Denise are on the agenda for the next Selectboard meeting to update the Selectboard on the status of the project. The parking lot plan was previously approved by the Selectboard and the DRB, however the Selectboard will have to approve the individual line item to purchase the materials.

2. Spring mulching

Fran and Denise will look at possible donations for mulch around the cedar trees that were planted last fall. The Friends of Pickleball will help us to organize volunteers to spread the mulch.

8:30

3. What's left to finish up this project?

- Ballfield and benches - will check with Josh/Little League on the status of this
- Kiosk and signage - Jeanne and Denise will work on this
- Bike rack - Fran and Denise will each contact a community member about donation or availability of other funds.

4. Planning for Selectboard Update

Project at BC- Denise and Fran are on the agenda for the next Selectboard meeting as discussed in previous sections.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:52

Submitted by Jeanne Agner