

AMC Cold River Camp Conant Lodge Projects Planning Status Presentation  
Thursday, April 26, 2018  
7:30 p.m.  
Gary Munson, Facilitator, CRCC Chair

Amy Grover  
Bobby Kaufman  
Cheryl Poirier  
David Anderson  
Emma Crane  
Frank Mastro  
Garry Crane  
Gary Munson  
Jim Weston  
John Dean  
Laurie Barr

Lee Heald  
Lois Winkler  
Mark Winkler  
Mary Ahearn  
Nancy Hartle  
Nancy Kellogg  
Phyllis Rowley  
Steve Tobin  
Susan Ahearn

Approximately twenty phones called in – with approximately 25 people participating.

#### Opening

Gary Munson welcomed all and gave an explanation of the presentation process, followed by a thorough review of the online presentation (approximately 45 minutes), concluding with an overview of the pros and cons of the designs included in the presentation, and timeline.

#### Additional Committee Members comments:

Frank Mastro: I want to make several points. The handicap bathroom will be an all gender bathroom. The grill shed, which was required by NH Food Licensing, will be re-purposed, perhaps as a Wi-Fi center. The kitchen design will have to be approved by NH Food Licensing and by the Fire Marshall. No local permits are required, but of course any building will be up to all codes. The trail lunch table currently takes up 1/3 of the space of the Lodge in the morning. The proposed “L shaped” designs and some of the other designs capture space from the kitchen design which would then require a new layout of the kitchen. The designs also do not provide for a circular serving pattern which is needed for safety in food service by the crew. Two-way traffic is not safe and may be cause for accidents with crew trying to negotiate around each other.

Bobby Kaufman: There are major situations. The architect design could hold 15 tables, the capacity of 15 tables would have a huge impact on the growth of the camp. The design is 150% of the summer of 2017 proposal, it removes another window in the Lodge to the north. Good architecture should incorporate views and light, not remove them. This will darken the seating area and compromise the historical lodge. The kitchen enlargement is pushing the dining room west by 11’ feet, the reconfiguration of the kitchen should be such that the entrance stays where it is and not 11’ to the west. It is more than having beautiful woodwork, it needs to be

proportional to the lodge and not overwhelm it. I strongly urge a reconsideration of the size of an addition to the lodge and the growth potential.

Jim Weston: I want to recognize that the kitchen facility design can only be finalized when the dining room design is finalized. We need to understand that the kitchen design could change. We need to be careful in choosing what size we want the dining capacity to be: 12 or 13 tables. The design of the interior is very important, as is the layout of the tables, and using that and the views to make the space relaxed and inviting, and not industrial. We need to think about how to break up the large space, using little partitions.

Frank Mastro: I want to note that we are trying to design for three seasons, not just for the 9-week summer season. There are very significant different needs. The space must work for all of the other uses in all seasons, which helps to pay the bills and allows us to continue to maintain CRC.

Emma Crane: We should be looking at what is best for the future of CRC and not our own traditional personal views of keeping what we have now. We must allow for a handicap access bathroom and for flexible seating for the summer season and off seasons. I strongly support Anne's (architect Anne Whitney) plan with refinements from Frank; creating a rustic atmosphere in keeping with our current lodge.

Bobby Kaufman: I want to take a look at comments regarding the 15 tables in the directory. I have a major concern with 15 tables. (Gary Munson noted that was a committee file, and not part of the presentation file).

John Dean: The plan is for 12 or 13 tables, not 15 tables. We have never discussed 15 tables. Our goal is to set up the best dining situation for the camp for the future. I want to note Gary's point (in the presentation – "why do this, why now?") that we have the ability to do this now, or we can do nothing and just keep moving along. This could create a longer term problem for CRC if we don't move forward and think about CRC long term, and think in terms of attracting people for the next 50 -100 years with a well-functioning dining room and kitchen.

#### Comments and Q & A

Nancy Kellogg: I applaud the hard work by all, and I love the fact we have gone from the 10-person tables proposed, back to 6. I still feel that the proposed dining and kitchen footprints make the lodge look dwarfed. The lodge and its function are the heart of CRC. I first came to CRC in 1958, then came with my kids, and continue to come, and it is the same experience, it hasn't modernized and hasn't changed, which is a real plus. The thought of one big dining room, bigger than the Rec Hall, with 12 or 13 tables – well I wouldn't want to eat there. Even with noise abatement it is going to be loud and unpleasant. The way the dining room is setup up now; spread-out in multiple areas, I would love to see some of the tables kept on the fireplace side of the lodge, with lunch table against southern side. Expand the porch area to be bigger with a few

more tables. Create a smaller scale addition maintaining the feeling we have now, so that the lodge remains the center of camp. Those are my main issues.

Gary Munson: The size may be a matter of getting used to; initially it will feel large to all of us, especially from the outside. I don't feel that the architect would create a design that is not appropriate in size.

Nancy Kellogg: Humans are adaptable, that's not a good reason. For me, I want to maintain as much of the "Cold River-ness" that I started to experience in the 1950s and has been kept all these years. To go to a cafeteria room – I prefer the L shaped configurations.

Gary Munson: I have been in large dining areas where noise is not an issue. Nancy the feedback you provided earlier – could you put up in the website?

Brief discussion on how to add Nancy Kellogg's earlier email to the website.

Laurie Barr: I want to add our perspective to the table number and camp capacity. It's lovely that you want to address the manager family being able to sit down with the guests. I want to caution that having more seating available, and then filling that seating will change the nature of what camp is. We are at capacity now with the numbers that we "fill" camp with. The first two weeks with the families and kids feel very full. It's all full, the porch, grounds, scoop night, activities, hikes, everything. I don't think we will maintain the CRC feel if we add more; it is a slippery slope to add more seating in the dining room,

Gary Munson: The committees have discussed the number of tables extensively and have come to consensus that it is critical to "allow for" a 13<sup>th</sup> table. I understand the "slippery slopiness."

Laurie: I know some folks, long time campers, who came the first two weeks, and they didn't want to come back during those two weeks, or maybe not come at all, because it is a different kind of energy. For older folks, who may be used to camp not being full, it's not as pleasant for them. When everyone wants to sit of the porch, and it's packed and noisy, it's not the relaxing experience folks have come to expect. I urge caution - don't go down the road of adding more and more.

John Dean: Whatever we decide, whether it be 12 or 13 tales, the CRCC can set limits on the number of people we want to have in camp - 68 is the normal number. If we get feedback that there is a problem with guest happiness, we could have a harder 68 vs. a soft 68. We can deal with that so that the managers can sit down at meals and be able to seat one or two extra people.

Laurie Barr: One or two people is a slippery slope as well. I think it's good to not have a whole extra table of flex. The expectation is that it will be fine because we have that extra table. People get uncomfortable when camp is full and extra and different people are coming and going and are not in camp for the full week. Twelve tables are plenty and what this camp can maintain. And

you all know that we have accommodated lots of your people; family and friends that just want to stop by for dinner. Six more people is pretty chaotic, not only for the staff and the crew, but for you all too.

David Anderson: I really appreciate the thoughts and opportunity to speak, and to slow the process down, but still fall within the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary for fundraising reasons. I appreciate everyone's comments. I am super satisfied with my experience at camp; the driving thing is the similarity and stability from year to year, something we all value tremendously. I appreciate Bobby's comments and recommendations. I like Mark's design – it accommodates the kitchen, and handicap accessibility. Let's stick with what we have because it works well. I only see 1 or 2 weeks in August, so I'm not sure about other times. My personal feeling about the way things work, even on a crowded rainy day; it all works well for me, and has over a long period of time. I went over the drawings, and I liked Mark's. It looks like a reasonable solution. Sticking on another large addition does not ring true to us here in Wisconsin, but we really appreciate the effort that everyone has gone through.

Lois Winkler: Thank you to all for efforts in this. I was very pleased to hear that you are not expecting to start construction in the next year. I am very concerned about one large room with 12 or 13 tables, and I favor 12. It seems to me that one large room is the opposite of welcoming. What makes things welcoming are the people and people reaching out to newcomers. I think that the more intimate dining setting with different areas foster that welcoming sense and the ability to get to know newcomers and help them adjust to camp. Let's go back to the architect and find a more creative way of locating the dining tables, not in just one noisy room. I have had experiences with school construction – the architect assured us that noise would not be a factor and that it would be OK. Well guess what, it was not OK, it is loud.

Gary Munson: Just as a counter point – this is a touchy topic. Some of our guests feel a cliquishness, in that the porch area is where the veterans eat, and the kids eat behind the fireplace. We are sensitive to this. The notion of one room together also allows the opportunity to eat in groups of more than 6; moving tables together. My family is 6 but we would love to be able to sit with other people and have a conversation.

Lois Winkler: Is the feedback you are getting available to everyone, or only to committee members?

Gary Munson: Right now it is only available to committee, and this is something that I wrestle with - everyone seeing the feedback and arguing with each other. If you are making that as a request, I will discuss with the committee.

Lois Winkler: Could the feedback be summarized?

Gary Munson: We can consider doing that. I do wrestle with opening it up, and discussion evolving in an unhealthy way.

Mary Ahern: Is this recording going to be available? I've been trying to remember everything to share with my family.

Gary Munson: I hope so – we are still exploring the mechanics, but we hope to put it on the website, and if we can, we will.

Mary Ahern: Will there be another call in?

Gary Munson: There may be another call in in June and we hope to have discussions in camp as well.

Mary Ahern: I didn't want there to be a final decision with only a short amount of time to give feedback.

Gary Munson: There may be a recommendation by June, but we need approval with a "go" "no go" decision by the CRCC in November.

Bobby Kaufman: Are you giving the architect enough time to come up with a more creative solution that can respond to these comments?

Gary Munson: We will stabilize the prioritizations and use the May 3 committee meeting to address how to frame the instructions for the architect. Our goal is to have sufficient instruction for the architect to by the end of May.

Nancy Kellogg: A wonderful way would be to delay things, and have an evening discussion each week at CRC, along the lines of tonight's presentation, without making a final recommendation. Continue the conversations onsite with people that come to CRC. At the end of the summer take all that input from CRC campers and in the fall go back to the architect with the comments and ideas from campers. Really use the input from the CRC community based on their experiences. It will delay the project a few months but with a project of this scope, it will be more viable than just gathering information from the website.

Susan Ahearn: I want to note that the handicap bathroom door opening in, is an error. Also, the bathroom is in the middle of all the activity – it should be off to the side or off in a corner, not smack in the middle of everything. The porch vs lodge clique thing – I know that has been happening. If you could think your way to multiple dining porches vs. one big room that would make a huge difference on the aesthetics, and people not stuck off in the corner by the chimney. The large room concept doesn't make community.

Gary Munson: As a counterpoint, Nancy Grant sent a picture of the Echo Lake dining room that holds 90 people in a large rectangle with tables of 8. Nancy has a similar background with Echo - as manager, committee member and committee Chair. I asked her if breaking the space up

would make it more intimate. She stated the guests would hate that, because of their strong sense of community.

Lois Winkler: I've been to Echo and as a newcomer found the dining room very intimidating and not welcoming at all.

Gary Munson: There are different perspectives and we can contemplate that.

Molly Ahern: The drawing with the bathrooms at the end past the lunch table. You would have to walk through the crowd to use the bathroom, that doesn't make any sense.

Bobby Kaufman: That is just a schematic, no one would build it that way, it could be re-arranged.

Gary Munson: Are there any more questions or comments (silence)? I think we've hit diminishing returns. Thank you all very much and good night.

The presentation call-in ended at 9:06 p.m.