

Combe Florey Parish Council

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An extraordinary meeting of Combe Florey Parish Council
was held in the village hall on Tuesday 5th October 2021
at 7.00pm

Minutes

Present: Cllrs Robin Cleverly (chairman), Simon Hawes, Peter Tayler, Nick Weeks.
9 parishioners

1. Chairman's welcome

The Chairman welcomed everybody to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Cllr Jana Truby, Mike and Jane Cobb, Bob and Tessa Smith, Sally and David Osborne, Tom and Lynda Flitton

3. Declarations of interest

None

4. Finance approval

- a. To approve remaining expenses for Nick Weeks (£50.20)
- b. To approve cost of water testing (£170 ex VAT)

Proposed Cllr Cleverly, seconded Cllr Tayler. All in favour.

5. To consider the following planning applications:

A. Planning application 11/21/0013

Erection of first floor side extensions and single storey lean-to rear extension at April Cottage, Combe Florey (Eve)

After discussion the Parish Council resolved to support this application. It considers the two planned first floor extensions to be in keeping with the existing building; they have a lower roof-line, and the same footprint.

The property is in the conservation area but set well below the road and the key view along the road is not affected

6. To discuss plans for the village garden and agree budget:

- a. Response from planning officer

The Chairman said that he had approached the Somerset West and Taunton Council to see if any planning permission was required for the proposed work, especially as the garden is in a conservation area. The response was that no special permissions were required.

From planning officer (response quoted in full): *“As the Parish Council own the land any proposed seating and any of the proposed structures below would not require planning permission and would be permitted development under Part 12 Class A of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 2015 (as amended) which states that*

A. The erection or construction and the maintenance, improvement or other alteration by a local authority or by an urban development corporation of—

(a) any small ancillary building, works or equipment on land belonging to or maintained by them required for the purposes of any function exercised by them on that land otherwise than as statutory undertakers;

(b) lamp standards, information kiosks, passenger shelters, public shelters and seats, telephone boxes, fire alarms, public drinking fountains, horse troughs, refuse bins or baskets, barriers for the control of people waiting to enter public service vehicles, electric vehicle charging points and any associated infrastructure, and similar structures or works required in connection with the operation of any public service administered by them.

As long as no building, works or equipment exceeds 4m in height or 200 cubic metres in capacity.

As far as fencing is concerned, as per Part 2 Class A of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 2016 (as amended), if this is to be erected adjacent to a highway used by vehicular traffic then it should be no higher than 1m – otherwise it will require planning permission. If the fencing would not be erected adjacent to a highway used by vehicular traffic then it can go up to a height of 2m without needing planning permission.

The above regulations are irrespective of whether the land is within a Conservation Area or not. However, I would suggest that any fencing is kept to a minimum as it can look very out of place in a rural area, and that if it is desired to erect fencing it is not close boarded but of the picket or post and rail variety and a low height. Planting may be a preferred option and if you would like a site visit and landscape advice we can provide this for a fee of £130.”

Notwithstanding this advice on fencing, Gavin Cox said he reserved the right to erect a solid fence on his field that surrounds the village garden on two sides.

b. Receipt of grant for new hedging from Close-the-Gap community hedge fund (£434)

The Chairman explained that the PC had been made aware of the fund to promote hedging but as there was a short deadline a speculative application had been made. The application has now been approved but without any commitment at this stage to proceed; the funds are to be released against invoices.

There was some discussion about the hedging and the decision was taken to proceed with the purchase of hedging plants, to be planted in November, and to make use of the hedge fund grant.

c. To agree overall objectives, plans, and timing for garden development

The overall plans for the garden had been discussed previously and involved a general opening up of the garden to make it more usable and with lower maintenance, additional seating and larger area of turf.

The Chairman also said that the PC would like to register the garden as a village green that would give extra legal protection in the future.

d. To agree budget of ca £2000 to include:

- i. Planned new seating (4 rustic benches – ca £400?)
- ii. Proposed new turfing (ca £400)
- iii. New planting (ca £200)
- iv. Contingency for hire of digger and other professional horticultural services (£1000)

A comment was made that there should be enough contingency in the budget in the event of later shortfalls and to avoid a partially completed project. The Chairman said that he felt that there was enough at this stage, especially if parishioners in a working party could help with the work free of charge, and the PC could in any case approve additional funding in the future if required. The PC has sufficient funds to support this project.

This budget was proposed by Cllr Cleverly, seconded by Cllr Hawes. All in favour.

e. Agree dates for first working party

Saturday 23rd October 10.30 was set as the date for the first working party.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm