

## Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee Meeting

June 9, 2020

**Members Present:** Tania Lillak (Chair), Tonia Bandrowicz (Vice Chair), Richard Smith, Angela Ippolito, Sarah Koch, Verena Karsten, Sierra Munoz, Molly O'Connell (Senior Planner)

Not present: Danielle Strauss (Recreation Director), Marzie Galazka (Dir Community & Economic Development)

Tania Lillak calls the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

- 1) Minute taker- Richard
- 2) May 12 Meeting
  - a) Minutes were unanimously approved – Toni moved and Richard 2<sup>nd</sup>
- 3) Action Items:
  - a) Stormwater/Greenscapes: Kelly in DPW is working on outreach to the community; Greenscapes can help with this. Town has reached out to them- awaiting a response. What else could Greenscapes provide? Salem, Peabody, and many communities in the Cape Ann area are in the coalition. Verena asked what other towns are doing with Greenscapes; Kelly will contact Salem.

**Action Item:** Follow up with Kelly regarding Salem's experience with Greenscapes.

- 4) New Business:
  - a) Harold King Forest entrance- neighbors have been parking vehicles and preventing visitors to the forest from finding parking. The Town has been asked to intervene; there is a cleanup weekend scheduled and access is needed.

**Action Item:** Follow up with Town regarding parking problem.

- 5) 2020 Open Space Plan Update
  - a) Survey – up to 90 responses to date
  - b) A presentation of survey results to the Select Board is planned in July.
  - c) Molly is finalizing edits on previously written plan sections.
  - d) Cleaning up Airtable, adding new ideas
  - e) Draft is planned by the end of August
- 6) Community Development Update
  - a) 0 Archer Street: Marzie has been in contact with the seller's broker. Asking price is \$900,000 and assessed value is \$34,000; owner at this point is unwilling to negotiate.

Marzie requested that the broker contact her if the seller is willing to negotiate. There are Land and Water grants the Town can apply for, but town is not ready yet. Current town fiscal conditions will not allow paying for appraisals or matching if the town successfully applies for a grant to purchase this parcel.

**Action Item:** Marzie and Molly to review other options.

- 7) Tree Task Force – No updates, meeting this Thursday 6/11. Tree bylaw has been discussed with town counsel. Revisions have been drafted and sent to the Town, but no response yet. Because Spring Town Meeting will be limited in what it covers, the bylaw approval will not come until the Fall town meeting. The State law only covers street trees, but the TTF is recommending that it cover all public trees, including those in parks and on school grounds. There is no jurisdiction over trees on private property. TTF Has proposed a memorial tree program, which would require a map of parklands to identify available locations and species. Coordinate with new school project?
- 8) School Building Committee – two public meetings are coming up- preliminary alternatives next week and a project overview on 6/30.

**Action Item:** Future letter outlining planting of native plants and protection of conservation land.

- 9) Conservation Commission:
  - a) Phillip Beach (bath house) – Toni drafted a letter describing the issues with building on this site and requesting monies be used for other purposes. The OSRPC voted unanimously to sign it; CC will review letter on Thursday for potentially having both committees sign it.
  - b) The Town Manager does not want to shut down discussion on a bath house at this time.
- 10) Organic Lawn Management: Task force met 19 May. 300 people have signed the petition favoring organic lawn management. There is interest in the issue in Nahant, since Nahant children play on sports field in Swampscott, and more people there may sign the petition. Meeting with Board of Health has not been set, since they are busy with Covid issues. Task force is applying for a TURI grant, and will update last year's application.
- 11) Swampscott Conservancy: Algae presentation by Dan Pinkerton took place on Zoom; some other presentations have been cancelled. Nature in the neighborhood articles have continued to be published. DPW has installed the stone steps for the Salem connecting trail head at the dog park. Members meeting has been postponed because of Covid- next meeting on Zoom 6/24.

12) Rail trail: Construction on the first section from Beach Bluff Avenue to the Marblehead line is starting 6/15. Massachusetts Trails Fund and Solomon Foundation have funded this, no town funds are being used.

13) Historical Commission: Railroad Station and Fish House- no news to report.

14) Planning Board:

- a) Zoning changes are being proposed to allow outdoor seating in public sidewalks on Humphrey Street. The state has passed legislation enabling this. To be discussed at the Select Board meeting 6/10. The seating would be in place from May 1- Oct 31, and the bylaw would be in effect for two years.
- b) Proposal is to reroute pedestrian traffic into the present parking lane on the southbound side of Humphrey Street from the Fish House to the monument; seating areas on the sidewalks would be defined by planters and ropes. Bikes and cars would share the southbound lane.

**Action Item:** Follow up with Molly regarding closing of streets to allow car-free recreation.

15) Recreation: Programming in July will take over four parks 5 days per week from 9AM to noon to allow for smaller groups and more distancing.

16) Grants: Park grant for open space due early July.

17) Interpretive signage: Historical Commission is proposing to fund two signs as they have funding in this year's budget. More could be funded with a Massachusetts Humanities Council grant. Angela has identified seven signs that would be important to create- list is attached. Richard has seen some commentary on the Mass Historical Commission listserv about the durability of the type of signage currently under discussion. Marzie will be meeting with Justina this Friday to discuss the process as we will need someone to design the layout and language. Nancy Schultz offered to work on a grant to secure additional funding.

18) Green Corridor: Tania will begin putting together a policy proposal for the next meeting. Gino Cresta should be invited to join the discussion.

**Action Item:** Tania to start policy writing. Other committee members should contact Tania if they can assist.

Next meeting is Tuesday July 14, 2020 Via zoom

Toni moved to adjourn, Angela seconded. Adjourned at 8:39 pm

Minutes taken by Richard Smith

List of recommended interpretive signs attached

Angela Ippolito

**Preliminary recommendations for interpretive signage**

June 2020

Interpretive Signage: This list reflects Points of Interest, History, Former site of, Green Corridor connection. Priority to #1-7.

1. Town Hall: Elihu Thomson House, Mudge Estate, Linscott Park, Library
2. Olmsted District: Swampscott Land Trust, Olmsted plans, road layout, plantings
3. Fish House: History, Industry, Dory, Lobster Pot
4. Johnson Park: Former Site of: New Ocean House
5. White Court/Blythswood: Former site of; ROW (easement) to water
6. Palmer Pond: conservation area, bird sanctuary
7. Ewing Woods
  
8. Cemetery: National Register old section, Andrews Chapel (not on priority pedestrian route)
9. Harold King Forest (issues with parking, entrance)
10. Upper Jackson Park (where would this be located?)
11. Railroad Depot: History (this site not ready for signage)
12. Rail Trail (this site not ready for signage)