

Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee Meeting MINUTES – November 9, 2021

Members Present: Tania Lillak (Chair), Sierra Muñoz, Brian Longin, Michele Barden, Richard Smith (Historical Commission), Molly O'Connell (Senior Planner), Toni Bandrowicz

Not Present:, Marzie Galazka, Danielle Strauss (Recreation Director), Verena Karsten (Ad Hoc Member, Tree Task Force), Polly Titcomb (Select Board), Angela Ippolitto (Planning Board)

Meeting called to order at 7:04 pm by Tania Lillak

1. Minute taker: Sierra

2. Public comment

No commenters

3. Approval of minutes from October 12, 2021 meeting

Sierra motioned to approve minutes as recorded; Richard second, all approved

4. Action items from last meeting's minutes:

#11 but now #5 Playground maintenance - Molly emailed Gino for update.

Action item: Molly to follow up with Gino

11/09/21 Update: Gino responded positively to the suggestions. Molly will continue to follow up about implementation.

#19 but now #64 Fosters Pond – Marzie, Toni and Michele met with Weston & Sampson. Engineering proposal was very high.

Action item: Michele to gather reports and find gaps in available information

11/09/21 Update: Michelle continues to gather information for Fosters Pond data.

#65 Kings Beach designation

Action item: Molly to follow-up with Justina and Angela

11/09/21 Update: Molly discussing with town about seawall updates. Question about ARPA funds and other funding opportunities, but no confirmation.

#21 but now #29 Vernal Pools - Update on vernal pool identification project w/ Swampscott Conservancy: Erica Oberlin has completed surveying but there are technical difficulties with the HeritageHub state of MA online reporting system that have prevented her from inputting data to the state system and moving forward with official designation. She's working with them to try to get logged into the system to move forward.

Action item: Sierra to provide update at next meeting

11/09/21 Update: : no update; Toni reported that Erica is still waiting for response on request for designation

#17 Train depot and Fish House

Consultant and Harbor Commission to organize public forum on pier. October 28, 2021 at 7 pm. Resiliency to be a primary focus of the project.

Action item: Angela to send an email to Peter regarding Train Depot and Molly to follow up re fish house

11/09/21 Update: several OSRPC members attended 10/28 meeting; discussion of impacts of pier on Fish House and regional recreation and open space. Project scope seemed limited.

New airtable item #69: Develop and publish literature on interaction with wildlife.
Discussion re: Animal Control officer position: Town to hire someone new. In the interim reaching out to Dan for help.

Action item: Toni and Molly to provide update

11/09/21 Update: Molly reports that there has been a hire made for the Animal Control Officer but they have not started yet. Toni discussed goal from Swampscott Conservancy to still work with Dan to build out some PSAs and literature about bats, other wildlife interactions.

Airtable #1-Determine number and size of monuments on Monument Ave.

Brian volunteered to be the OSRPC liaison.

Action item: Schedule a meeting with the Historical Commission and Historical District. Molly will coordinate with Richard, Jer and Brian from the respective committees to meet.

11/09/21 Update: Richard and Brian attended discussion and questions remain about timeline for creating new monuments, locations, how to prioritize new monuments (donations, requests, etc). Discussion of creating a white paper or set of recommendations to help the town determine placement and future monuments. Recommendations to work with Gino and maintain the goals of open space within the guidelines of the OS plan.

Airtable #3 – Design of roads, light posts etc. focus on Olmstead.

Action item: Michele to provide update at the next meeting.

11/09/21 Update: In progress; Michelle continues to review designs and potential changes.

5. New business – Tania

Update on historical find at garage at Town Hall – bronze plaques from veteran's arboretum were found, attempting to get them this Friday.

6. OSRP Airtable review – Goals 5-10

#5: Develop playground maintenance, equipment replacement, and safety program

This has been completed, see action items.

#6 Limit impact of school construction on conservation land on conservation land and other open space.

Discussion of elementary school and Ewing Woods: Conservation Commission has oversight of project design due to location close to wetlands. ConComm Discussion of how OSRPC can continue to support conservation efforts on new school and other projects. Suggestion to file an amicus brief with ConComm when new school comes up for permitting to affirm conservation concerns.

Jackson Woods will have a conservation easement (CR), anticipating Town Meeting discussion to add to the deed.

Will continue to have a representative to receive updates from School Building Committee (currently Sierra).

#7: Create site specific maintenance programs in collaboration with DPW and Recreation Depts (and include planning for protection of unique flora/fauna)

Discussion of Ewing, Palmer, Blightswood areas. Discussion of additional properties; Cassidy Park entrance is being redone as part of Phillips Beach entrance.

Action Item: Toni will review plans and report back to OSRPC.

#8: Develop a partnership/committee that includes representatives from ConCom, Swampscott Conservancy, Tree Task Force, and DPW to cohesively work together on plans for improving and maintaining open space

This is ongoing. Discussion of overlapping conservation goals and partnership opportunities.

Action Item: Toni will send email connecting reps re: partnership.

#9: Ensure provision of playground/green space of the same square footage or more on site if property is re-used

Hadley Re-use Committee has concluded work/submitted recommendations to SB.

Action Item: Molly to provide updates from SB at upcoming meeting.

#10: Explore feasibility and grant opportunities for timber management and invasive species removal for Harold King Forest, as recommended by Forest Stewardship Plan

Ongoing projects include habitat restoration (wood duck boxes, invasives removal, etc).

Conservation Commission now has an expedited permitting process for knotweed removal which is an option for future removal efforts. Discussion of future efforts by Conservancy to build out recommendations and management strategies.

7. School Building Committee update

Town-wide vote passed to support building new school at Stanley site; SBC meeting is concurrent with OS so Sierra will update on any actions after next SBC meeting.

8. Community Development update

-Johnson Park – no new updates, design is currently on hold. Most of the improvements at Johnson Park are subject to Chapter 91 permitting. Marzie asserts that we should address storm surge and flooding issues before we make any investments to the park. Submitted a grant application seeking grant funding for the design of sea wall, but to date still have not received any notification. Molly continues to checking in with the state agency regarding the grant and will update OSRPC.

-Phillips Beach/Cassidy Park – as previously stated contract for the work at the Beach entrances was awarded to JAM Construction. There will be mobilization within the next few weeks and work will be on ongoing over the winter (weather pending) and will be completed in

the spring, in time for beach season. Details of the design can be found on town website (Community Development Department) under community projects.

-Need to check with Danielle about better options for bathroom facilities for Philips. Will have a water and shower station there as part of the new project.

-Windsor Park -stated cost estimate exceeds renovation budget. Have submitted a grant request to seek assist with ADA compliance at this park. If funded this would provide the gap in funding and allow for construction to start. Requesting funding from Town Meeting scheduled for December 13, 2021.

-Clark Playground – we are starting to work on the redesign of the Clark School Playground at Abbot Park. Due to limited funding, considering planning the redesign in phases.

-Design of the open space at Paradise and Walker Road. Seeking proposals from landscape architects for the design and improvement of area as an entryway into the Olmsted District.

9. Task Force update – Tree Advisory

- The DCR grant applications for Town Hall (Heritage Tree Care, Strategic Tree Planting) were submitted.

- \$40k budget appropriation for public shade trees: Fall Planting will start next week. 25 trees arrived and will be planted in front of residents' homes.

- Veteran's Arboretum - 37 bronze plaques were recovered from the carriage house, cleaned and inventoried; collaborating with the Historical Society on this. Will publicize this inventory as a fundraiser for potential replanting and to learn more about its history. Challenge will be to find the right space for replanting.

-Considering a "tree give-away" in the Spring. Smaller trees will be given away to interested homeowners. re: <https://treeboston.org/get-involved/tree-giveaway-program/>. Will discuss with Marzie and OSRPC

10. Swampscott Conservancy update

Recent talks organized as joint program with the UU on extreme weather and community resilience: Tree Equity with Speak for the Trees Boston, Community Climate Resilience with Melanie Garate from Mystic River Watershed Assoc.

Cleanups are being organized at Ewing Woods and Forest River Trail at dog park area will occur on Sunday, November 21, at 10 am.

11. Committee/Department update – Conservation Toni

No update.

12. Committee/Department update – Rail Trail Michele and Marzie

Seeking Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) federal funds to support construction of the trail (\$7M +). This includes entire length of the trail and a bridge over Paradise. Thanks to Angela and the Swampscott Planning Board for their support in securing

an easement to create an onramp or a set of switch backs to access the trail from Paradise Road (former gas station - near Clark School). Town engineering team will work on the design.

Will seek grant funding from the Mass Trails program to advance the design through construction (75-100%). To date, Friends of the Swampscott Rail Trail paid for the 25% design. Still waiting for the repair stations - they are scheduled to be delivered in December.

13. Committee/Department update – Historical Richard

No update.

14. Committee/Department update – Planning Angela

No update.

15. Committee/Department update – Recreation

No update.

16. Other business that may properly come before the committee

None.

17. Confirmation of next meeting date – Tuesday, December 14, 2021

Adjourned 8:49 PM.