

Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee Meeting – February 9, 2020

Members Present: Tania Lillak (Chair), Verena Karsten, Richard Smith, Sierra Muñoz, Michele Barden, Molly O’Connell (Senior Planner), Angela Ippolito (Planning Board Rep)

Not present: Tonia Bandrowicz (Vice Chair), Marzie Galazka, Danielle Strauss (Recreation Director)

Public: Jim Smith, Ken Stoll, Laurel Jefferson

Meeting called to order at 7:07 by Tania Lillak.

1. **Minute taker:** Richard Smith
2. **Public Comment**

Jim Smith: Recent storms have flooded Puritan Road and the lower portion of the park. Last week’s storm drove up to a foot of water on Puritan Road and required a front end loader to remove sand and debris. Plantings at Polisson Park were uprooted by the recent storm.

Ken Stoll: Has contacted nurseries and landscapers who agreed that plantings in this environment would not survive storms.

Laurel Jefferson: Seconded her neighbor’s comments.

From Tania, Chair: Review of this project is being delayed pending review by DEP.

Angela Ippolito also has photos of storm damage.

3. **Approval of January 12, 2021 Minutes:** Committee unanimously voted to adopt the January 12 minutes. Richard moved to accept, Verena seconded.
4. Action items from last meeting: Will be addressed in this meeting.
5. **New business:** Michele Barden was officially welcomed to the Committee following her Select Board appointment.
6. **2020 OSRP:** Molly sent out the final 2020 plan revision for any final comments; final plan will go to Select Board and Planning Board in February for approval and letters of support. There was discussion of wording on prioritizing redevelopment of previously developed parcels over development of undeveloped open space. Errors on ownership around Palmer Pond are corrected in the maps. Verena proposed adding parcel 11-742 adjacent to the Harold King Forest for potential acquisition for open space.

Action item: Get any final edits to Molly ASAP.

7. **Community Development:**

- A grant application is going out on Feb. 26 for Rail Trail construction between Humphrey Street and the Middle School.
- Johnson Park is to be reviewed by DEP. They are waiting for a survey.
- The Windsor park redesign is in progress; a public meeting will be held in the near future.
- The Town has received a grant for improvements to walkability and bicycle travel on Walker Road, including sidewalks and bike lanes. The improvements are currently in design, and a neighborhood meeting will be scheduled soon.

Action items: Review DEP comments on Johnson Park, Windsor Park redesign and Walker Road improvements designs when they are available.

8. **School Building Committee:** The Sustainability Subcommittee met recently, with a focus on the school design, systems selection and solar panels. A landscape design for the school is being developed; the building is now located along the south side of the site. The Conservation Commission wants to meet with the SBC, with OSRPC to participate. At the recent presentation on traffic, the traffic consultant suggested that the Town consider bussing to reduce traffic to the site. The easement across the UUA property is not confirmed.

9.

10. **Tree Advisory Committee:** The TAC has sent letters to the White Court developers regarding a prior commitment they had made to donate to the Tree Fund. This was based on a water line easement from the Town they ultimately did not need. The TAC will be proposing an increase to the annual tree replacement budget, as the current allocation cannot keep up with the loss of street trees. The proposal is to increase the budget from \$10,000 to \$40,000. The TAC is assembling a grant proposal for maintenance and replacement of the trees on the Town Hall lawn; Community Development will assist. They are also exploring developing a map and cell phone tour of the historic trees on the property. TAC is installing wood duck boxes in the wetlands in the Harold King Town Forest.

Action item: Follow up on letter of support to the Select Board for increasing the tree maintenance budget.

11. **Organic lawn maintenance:** The town is committed to organic practices. Marzie has spoken to Gino about implementing this in the spring.

Action item: Sierra and Tania to find out specifics for town education purposes.

12. **Swampscott Conservancy update:** The Conservancy is holding a webinar this evening on “Walden Warming” about the impacts of climate change in Thoreau’s Concord. There is an upcoming presentation by David Townsend author of “Retracing Steps – an Exploration of

Nature and history on Northshore”; working with Danielle on organizing hikes; working on new trails in Harold King. The Conservancy has been participating in discussions with the SBC, and has drafted a letter describing steps that should be taken to mitigate the environmental impacts of the proposed construction. The Conservancy plans to sell bat houses as a fundraiser.

13. **Hadley School Reuse Advisory Committee:** Verena reports that the Reuse Committee has started to meet. Steve Perdue is to chair; there are 20 members. They are meeting every two weeks. Regarding a partial demolition option- the original building dates to 1911; the annex was built in 1925 and is stylistically consistent with the older portion.
14. **Conservation Commission:** The School project will likely have to be reviewed by the Cons Comm. The Rail Trail will come back to Cons Comm in March; they are awaiting responses to questions posed by the Conservation Commission’s consultant.
15. **Rail Trail:** Will a ribbon cutting be possible in the spring with Covid restrictions? Possibly a cleanup day- Michele could help organize.

Action item: Michele to contact Marzie to set up the trail cleanup day.

16. **Historical Commission:** No update on interpretive signage. There was some discussion about historical considerations in the seawall repairs at King’s Beach. If the DCR wants the railings brought up to code before they take over maintenance, this would alter the appearance of the railings, which appear very similar to those in historic photographs.
17. **Planning:** No update
18. **Recreation:** No update
19. **Grants:** A proposal for improvements to the Harold King Town forest was submitted today.
20. **Air Table review:**

1. Conservation Restrictions- one is being developed for Jackson Woods
Action item: Molly to follow up.
2. DCR takeover of King’s Beach- Town is working on the seawall. Questions about railing and historic appearance vs. current code requirements.
Action item: Molly to follow up with Gino and Richard to follow up with Historic Commission
3. Explore options for new trails connecting the Harold King Forest to Forest River trails: the Conservancy is looking at possibilities, but no decisions. Creating an alternate path around the boulder field in the HK Forest.

4. As part of developing maintenance plans for specific sites, make provisions to protect unique flora and fauna.

Action item: Molly to re-word for 2020 plan.

5. Monument Avenue memorials placement- this has been dormant since no new proposals have come forward. Contact HDC about taking the lead on this. Placement of benches is also an issue; can donations be directed to tree planting?

Action item: Richard to follow up with Historic Commission.

21. Green Corridor Update: Toni connected with Gino to schedule a walk of the green corridor but that has been postponed until the snow is gone. There is a multiyear street repair schedule; walkability/bikeability improvements should be coordinated with this.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 9th, 7 pm

Adjournment: Motion by Richard, second by Sierra. Meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm