
XIII. Fresh Pond Reservation Public Facilities and Services Policy

A. Introduction

Public facilities and services supplied at Fresh Pond Reservation should convey a clear sense of the nature of the Reservation as a water supply land and urban wild while supporting important opportunities for recreation and education. Public safety, comfort and convenience are also key considerations in the design of facilities and the delivery of services.

“Public facilities” covered by this policy consist of buildings, areas of buildings, other structures such as fences and protective barriers, and above ground park furnishings (or public infrastructure) such as signs, seating, outdoor lighting, rest rooms, drinking fountains, trash receptacles, bulletin boards and police call boxes.

Building areas supplying public services are located in the municipal golf course clubhouse, sections of the Water Treatment Plant and golf course maintenance building. Public recreational structures include the tennis courts, basketball court, tot lot and concrete grandstands at Glacken Field. Facilities standards described in this document shall also apply to any barriers or park furnishings along the MDC Bikepath segment and bikeway intersections within the boundaries of the Fresh Pond Reservation.

“Public services” covered by this policy include the regular maintenance, routine policing and emergency response services necessary to protect the Reservation environment, including the water supply, and services to preserve and enhance the natural character of the Reservation. Also included are services to provide for public safety and to afford fair recreational and educational opportunities. Not covered by this service policy is the School Department’s Maynard Ecology center, located on the Neville Manor site, as it is not available for non-school use.

B. Public Facilities - Infrastructure and Park Furnishings

1. Outdoor Signs: Content and Design

Signage within the Reservation should establish and maintain public understanding that the unique nature and purpose of the Reservation is to serve as a water supply land which offers important opportunities for recreation and education in a naturalistic setting. To that end, all major identification, information, regulatory and commemorative signs should be of a special, unique and consistent design, giving the Reservation an identity as strong as that of the Boston Public Garden. All secondary outdoor signs should also be of special unique design, except as provided below, including all portable signs and temporary signs in addition to all fixed permanent signs.

To preserve the natural character of the Reservation, the signage plan should minimize the number of permanent fixed signs and locate as many signs as possible at parking lots, buildings and other structures.

Current exterior signs create separate identities for the various parts of the Reservation as parks, playgrounds and athletic facilities but no identity for the Reservation as a whole. As a result, Fresh Pond is commonly misperceived as a disjointed set of recreation areas set aside for special purposes just like other parks, playgrounds, athletic fields and athletic facilities elsewhere in the City. This widespread public misperception of the nature and purpose of Fresh Pond has greatly complicated the City's task of forming and implementing public policy for the protection of the water supply and the good of the Reservation as a whole.

The words "Fresh Pond Reservation" should be used on all major signs to establish that the parts of the Reservation are parts of a whole. For example, "Fresh Pond Reservation, Kingsley Park," and "Fresh Pond Reservation, Francis X. Glacken Field," and "Fresh Pond Reservation, Kingsley Park Regulations." In addition, signs identifying the Reservation itself should read "City of Cambridge, Fresh Pond Reservation" rather than "City of Cambridge Parks, Fresh Pond."

In addition, all major signs should include a unique identity symbol, or the words "Fresh Pond Reservation," or both. All secondary signs should also include the same symbol and words, except as provided below. The design for Fresh Pond should identify the Reservation with pure fresh water. The symbol might well incorporate the words "pure fresh water" in its design, along with the words "established 1884."

Designers with expertise in parkland signage should develop or review designs for signage and for the identity symbol. The Water Department, Recreation Division, Commission for Persons with Disabilities and the Fresh Pond Master Plan Advisory Board should review these designs.

Consideration should be given to the simple but dignified rural designs used by the Metropolitan District Commission (presented in the MDC's 1995 Graphic Standards Manual) and to the possibility of modifying the City's current urban signage standards (recommended in "City of Cambridge Parks and Playground Project Final Concept Designs for Graphic Standards and Sign Program Guidelines," October 31, 1997.)

At Glacken Field, an urban playground, the Recreation Division should use both the City's standard urban park signs and appropriate special Reservation signs. The Recreation Division will continue to use signs of its own design to manage play on the golf course. Other signs and signs addressed to the general public should incorporate key elements of the special Reservation design.

2. Signage Types: Permanent Fixed Signs, Portable Signs and Temporary Signs

Permanent fixed signs serve a host of public purposes. They include providing for public safety, facilitating law enforcement, facilitating trash collection, protecting the water supply, educating the public about the Reservation and protecting the environment and sensitive wildlife habitat. They also include informing people of rules, regulations, ordinances and other laws. They also include directing people to public facilities, directing persons with disabilities to accessible pathways, directing the flow of traffic around the pond and directing public attention to rights of way.

Portable signs and temporary fixed signs are key public information resources for safely managing permitted events and for clearly explaining to the public the need for and the nature of maintenance, restoration, and redesign projects. Road races, cross-country meets and other permitted special events bring many visitors to Fresh Pond who are unfamiliar with its history, purpose and regulations. Special signs may be needed to inform participants in such events of routes to be followed, areas closed to intensive use, regulations regarding food and drink, use of parking lots and other related matters.

The designs adopted for the Reservation shall be the designs for all fixed permanent signs, portable signs and temporary fixed signs at the Reservation, except as may be necessary to meet any special requirements of the Fire Department and Police Department, and Commission for Persons with Disabilities.

The designs adopted for portable signs and temporary fixed signs must be used for all permitted special events, such as road races, cross-country races and by Cambridge public and private schools (see below).

Selecting effective designs based on the above design standards for permanent fixed signs, portable signs and temporary signs at the Reservation will be an important first task for the Water Department along with the Fresh Pond Master Plan Advisory Board, and the Recreation Division.

3. Outdoor Signs: Control, Content and Placement

The Water Department should control the content of all signs marking entrances to the Reservation and should jointly determine with the Recreation Division content for entrance signs at the Glacken Playground/Field and the Municipal Golf Course. Depending upon the location and purpose of the signage, either or both departments should control the design, size, number and location of all signs under plans approved for the purpose by the Fresh Pond Master Plan Advisory Board.

The content of all signs within the Reservation will make clear that users are entering a landscape owned by the citizens of Cambridge for the protection of their drinking water and for the enjoyment of the public. Signs, temporary or permanent, barring or limiting access to particular Reservation areas should state clearly and succinctly the reason for the access restrictions and avoid any language that implies these public

lands are reserved for private use. See Educational Policy (Section X) for details on signage language, style and design.

No one shall place any signs in the Reservation without the approval of the Water Department, or where appropriate, the Recreation Division. Other City departments should formally request the approval of the appropriate department to place signs of any kind in the Reservation.

Approval to place fixed permanent signs in the Reservation will be granted only to other City departments and public agencies for legitimate public purposes, and will not be granted to private individuals and organizations. Such signs shall meet the standards established by the Advisory Board.

Sponsors of permitted educational, recreational and special events may apply to the appropriate department for approval of such portable signs and temporary fixed signs as they may need for their immediate purposes. They shall prepare their signs using materials of standard design supplied for the purpose gratis or at cost. They shall place them at locations designated by the appropriate department. In addition, they shall prepare and place such signs as the Recreation Division or Water Department may require. They shall place their signs at designated locations at specified dates, and remove them within a specified time.

Once signage design standards have been approved, the Water Department and Recreation Division should prepare an initial overall plan specifying the approved design, content, size, number and location of the exterior fixed permanent signs they wish to place, retain or replace in the Reservation. The Advisory Board should then review the plan.

Exceptions to the policy of minimizing the number of permanent signs and restricting their location to developed areas may be made to protect the water supply and to provide for public health and safety.

A Reservation-wide signage plan should include a schedule for placing or replacing major signs or supplementing or complementing existing major signs with special Reservation signs.

4. Fencing and Protective Barriers

Fencing and protective barriers within the Reservation should offer the least intrusive appearance, harmonizing with the natural aesthetics of the landscape while meeting reasonable long-term cost and durability requirements. With the exception of the Glacken field complex, to which existing City fencing standards apply, a variety of up-to-date fencing and barrier alternatives from a variety of knowledgeable sources should be collected, analyzed and reviewed by the Advisory Board and Water Department

before new Reservation standards are published and before any new permanent fencing or permanent barriers are installed. See “Fencing: Design,” below.

Different types of permanent barriers, temporary barriers and seasonal barriers will be required for varying purposes in different parts of the Reservation. In specified areas, barriers will necessarily take the form of permanent, temporary or seasonal fencing of appropriate design and height. Elsewhere in the Reservation, permanent barriers shall take the form of appropriate vegetation.

Permanent fencing is required at the Water Treatment Plant and around the Reservoir, at the Glacken Field recreation complex, along portions of Huron Avenue, Grove Street and Concord Avenue, at the golf course clubhouse and maintenance building. The barbed wire fencing along parts of Huron and other boundary sections of the Reservation presents a negative, neglected and hostile sense of the Reservation; also, the barbed wire interferes with pruning of adjacent trees and tall shrubs and should be removed as soon as is practical.

Temporary fencing designed to remain in place for six months to three years will be needed throughout the Reservation to protect vegetation in areas being rehabilitated and to allow vegetative buffers to establish themselves. Temporary fencing should be of a single, standard design different from any designs used for permanent fencing in the Reservation. Small plaques or durable signs should be affixed to all temporary fencing explaining its purpose. See Education Policy (Section X) for signage content and style standards. Also see temporary signage standards, above.

Seasonal fencing designed to remain in place up to six months may be needed on the golf course and will be needed in undeveloped areas of the Reservation to protect sensitive plants and wildlife habitat during growing, breeding and migratory seasons. Snow fences are well known to the public as seasonal barriers, and might well be the appropriate type of fencing to use.

5. Fencing: Design

The City has adopted design standards for permanent fences for most parks and athletic fields. The City’s standard fencing design standards will apply at Glacken, except for the hillside (see below) and may be considered appropriate for boundary fencing along Huron Avenue, Grove Street and Concord Avenue and for the golf course clubhouse and maintenance building. A special fencing standard is necessary elsewhere in the Reservation to counter the widespread public misperception that the Fresh Pond Reservation is no different from any other park or recreational facility. For example, nothing but unobtrusive, erosion control fencing should be allowed to impede the view on the Pond side of the field.

The perimeter or Reservoir shoreline, fencing presents a complex and somewhat different set of criteria than do most other park or athletic field fences in the City. Such standard athletic and neighborhood park fencing is designed to define the area within which users may safely play, separated from busy sidewalks, streets and private property. These fences do not create visual barriers between the users and the resource because the users are “inside” the fence. Except for tall safety backstops, most urban playground fences are low serving to separate multiple areas of play or to separate spectators from players.

The Reservoir shoreline fence has been erected to keep people and dogs out of Fresh Pond because it is our public water supply, and as such, the fence is higher than average park fences. At the same time, Fresh Pond is considered the most beautiful, City-owned water resource, and is the centerpiece of its only park with a wild character. The Reservation’s users must look through or beyond the shoreline fence to enjoy the Pond, its coves and shoreline.

The City has the opportunity to create a unique fencing system along the irregular shoreline of Fresh Pond that reinforces the idea of a protected water supply and of Fresh Pond as a singular City recreation resource. A creative rethinking of the entire shoreline barrier issue might include the selection of different sections of fence as most appropriate for creating or enhancing views of the pond and the consideration of varied fencing materials and heights.

The Water Department should confer with fencing design experts to recommend and produce alternative design plans for the perimeter fencing. The plans should demonstrate the capability to preserve and enhance the aesthetic qualities of urban wilds and natural areas using cost-effective barriers to provide for public safety and protect sensitive natural resources of critical importance. The plan designers should also demonstrate the capability to create systems of fencing composed of sections linked to one another but differing in design and/or height.

Design criteria for the perimeter fence should reflect established City standards for durability of materials, ease of maintenance, and effectiveness of deterrence to animals and people. The department should add appropriate additional criteria including minimizing the visual barrier created by the fencing. Also, durability criteria should include a requirement that materials be capable of withstanding the weight of vines and the presence of moist vegetation. Ease of maintenance should include a requirement that severe damage to small sections of fence can be fixed by replacing those small sections rather than entire large sections. Effectiveness of deterrence should include a requirement that the fencing system be designed so as to prevent it from being undermined by dogs or people.

The Water Department should create suitable aesthetic criteria specifying, for example, that horizontal supports for vertical elements be placed at heights above or below eye levels for the majority of men and women, without imperiling the strength of the fence. Criteria should also specify, for example, that apertures be as large as possible, consistent with deterring people from climbing the fence, preventing people from getting a hand or a foot caught in it, and preventing small children from putting their heads through it.

The Water Department should also confer with experts in the field to create criteria for temporary and seasonal fencing and recommend several alternatives.

The construction schedules may dictate the trial use of fencing that is not the result of a comprehensive design review at the new Water Treatment Plant, along the shoreline opposite the treatment plant, and/or along the shoreline at Weir Meadow. However, no quick decision need be or should be made regarding the design of permanent fencing to replace the current fence around the perimeter of the Reservoir or preclude the replacement of those trial sections when adjacent sections are replaced, according to the Fresh Pond Reservation fencing design standards.

6. Outdoor Seating

With the exception of Glacken Field and the Municipal Golf Course, where standard spectator seating and park benches are appropriate, Reservation seating should be designed to enhance the natural character of the Reservation. Outdoor seating designs should be created with professional assistance and formally adopted by the Water Department and Master Plan Advisory Board. Such seating may include designs for use of wood and stone in natural form rather than fabricated form. To protect the ecology of the slope below Glacken Field, any fixed seating should be well away from the hillside. Any seating placed near the Fresh Pond side of Glacken Field shall be screened out of sight of the Perimeter Road below the hillside.

Natural seating may be located at a limited number of selected sites to permit people to stop and enjoy a variety of natural settings, such as at Little Fresh Pond, at the edge of the Old Field/Birch Grove, and at Black's Nook. This seating will afford views into the selected sites and may also afford views of Fresh Pond, but will be located well back from the Perimeter Road and from pathways to avoid causing interference with pedestrians and other traffic. The natural seating will also be located so as not to visually intrude upon the natural setting or impede appropriate physical access to it.

Wooden benches are appropriate to use in Kingsley Park and in the immediate vicinity of the Water Treatment plant. Seating elsewhere in the undeveloped areas of the Reservation should be natural seating of wood or stone.

Kingsley Park seating recommendations should be part of a more formal Kingsley planning process especially friendly to families with young children, to elderly people, and to persons with disabilities. Based on that review, the Water Department should present recommendations to the Master Plan Advisory Board for the design, number and location of benches at Kingsley.

The Water Department should also undertake a study of alternative locations for limited natural seating and should present recommendations for the selection of locations and for the design and placement of natural seating at those sites.

7. Restrooms

Restrooms should continue to be provided for the general public at the Water Treatment Plant and the Municipal Golf Course clubhouse. Restrooms should continue to be made available to golfers at the maintenance building on the course.

8. Outdoor Drinking Fountains

Outdoor drinking fountains should be made available to the general public at the Water Treatment Plant, near Kingsley Park and at Glacken Field, and should be located so as not to result in interference with foot traffic, bicycle traffic or play. The Water Department should recommend locations for fountains at Kingsley Park and at the Water Treatment Plant based on the completed Kingsley Park study mentioned above.

9. Trash Receptacles

Trash receptacle design and locations should offer the least intrusive appearance, harmonizing with the natural aesthetics of the landscape while meeting reasonable long-term cost and durability requirements.

Containers may be placed where major wide pathways join the Perimeter Road, but should not be placed along those pathways or inside areas with a wild character.

The Recreation Division and Water Department should determine how many trash receptacles are needed to handle normal recreational use in different parts of the Reservation. The location and type of trash receptacles at Kingsley Park and Glacken Field will be determined during the redesign phase for these areas.

Generally, containers should be placed so they can easily be emptied into vehicles traveling over hard surfaces. But some containers will need to be placed in locations that can only be reached by crossing athletic fields and other grassy areas. Light vehicles which leave no ruts should be the only vehicles which the Recreation Division and Water Department permit to cross such areas.

10. Bulletin Boards

During recent years, large bulletin boards have been used to inform and educate visitors at several highly visible locations in natural areas. Bulletin boards at such locations as Little Fresh Pond and Black's Nook have served important informational and educational purposes; however, in the interest of maintaining the natural character of such sites, and of not intruding upon them visually, substitute bulletin boards should be placed elsewhere.

Bulletin boards should be restricted to parking lots and building areas at the Water Treatment Plant, the golf course clubhouse, the golf course maintenance building and other structures in the Reservation, as may be appropriate. Educational materials, brochures, maps and the like should be made available at the Treatment Plant and other building locations for users to carry with them in lieu of more visually intrusive bulletin boards (See Section X).

11. Bicycle Racks

Bicycle racks, meeting the City's criteria for security, durability and functionality should be located in the parking lots adjacent to the new Water Treatment Plant and MDC Bikepath and adjacent to Glacken Field.

12. Outdoor Lighting

General Provision 7 of the Land-Use Policy (Section IX) of this Master Plan permits outdoor lighting within the Reservation as required for the normal, regular operation of the Water Treatment Plant and the Neville Manor complex and for approved recreational purposes at Glacken Field. Such outside lighting is to be designed to minimize upward light-throw. The Water Department, Recreation Division and Fresh Pond Advisory Board will review and set standards for any new or replacement lighting within the Reservation.

C. Public Services

1. Routine Maintenance

Under the supervision of the Recreation Division, the Department of Public Works should continue to maintain the Glacken Field complex, including the tot lot, tennis courts, basketball court and other hard surfaces. The Recreation Division will continue to maintain the golf course clubhouse and parking lot, and will take responsibility for the grounds within 25 feet of the clubhouse. The Water Department will maintain the slopes of Glacken Field and the slopes below the clubhouse and any vegetated or fenced erosion control barriers at the tops of these slopes.

The Recreation Division will continue to maintain the golf course maintenance building, the golf course pumping station at Little Fresh Pond, and the golf course itself, extending from the clubhouse around the great pond to Black's Nook.

The Recreation Division, in consultation with the Water Department, will be responsible for enhancing and maintaining important natural areas and water and wetland features on the golf course and adjacent to it, including North Pond and its environs, the emerging wetland at the 8th Tee, the small ponds between Fairway 1 and Fairway 9, the 9th Fairway Channel, the wetland where that channel enters Little Fresh Pond, and the Little Fresh Pond shoreline from the mouth of the channel along Fairway 9 and Fairway 8 around to the pump-house at the 8th Tee, which is used to water the golf course.

The Recreation Division and Water Department should jointly execute a maintenance plan for the exterior fenced areas along the Reservation boundary. These extend from the clubhouse westward along Huron Avenue to Grove Street, northward along a portion of Blanchard Road, eastward along Concord Avenue to Black's Nook and then from the entrance to Neville Manor to the rotaries at the shopping center. The Recreation Division should directly supervise the areas bordering the golf course. The Water Department should supervise the remainder of the fenced areas along the boundary.

Fenced boundary area maintenance should include regular removal of trash on both sides of the fence, removal of invasive vegetation as necessary according to approved methods, and maintenance and pruning of desired vegetation, including trees. When tree removal or major limbs are involved, plans must be reviewed by the City Arborist. Ideally, a single entity will perform the boundary maintenance work which should include the two Concord Avenue entrances to the Reservation, any gates which may be installed there, and removal of trash from outside and inside the entrances. Trees along the Fresh Pond Parkway and Huron Avenue boundaries will be cared for as part of this maintenance plan and supervised by a certified arborist.

The Water Department should be responsible for maintaining the Water Treatment Plant, Kingsley Park, the parking lots at the park and the Water Treatment Plant, Weir Meadow, the Perimeter Road and designated pathways, and the Little Fresh Pond shoreline from the mouth of the 9th Fairway channel along the Perimeter Road to the pump-house. The department should also be responsible for important natural areas and water and wetland features along the golf course, including the vegetated Fresh Pond side of the 9th Fairway channel, the old field and birch and aspen grove between Fairway 7 and Fairway 6, Black's Nook and its shoreline and forested environs along Concord Avenue and North Pond. The Water Department should also be responsible for Lusitania Field as a natural area, educational resource and low-intensity recreation area.

While the City of Cambridge has ownership and maintenance responsibility for almost all land in the Reservation, the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) and the Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD) own small segments of Reservation land and play a role in the management and maintenance of these areas. Specifically, these areas are associated with Fresh Pond Parkway, the MDC Bikepath and the Kingsley Park Bridge. Table 4, below, summarizes this situation.

Table 4. Ownership and Maintenance Responsibility for Non-City-Owned Land on or Adjacent to the Fresh Pond Reservation

Location	Ownership	Maintenance Responsibility
<i>Fresh Pond Parkway road and sidewalks</i>	<i>MDC</i>	<i>MDC</i>
<i>Fresh Pond Parkway landscaping (on MDC right-of-way)</i>	<i>MDC</i>	<i>MDC</i>
<i>Bike path on pond side of Parkway</i>	<i>Cambridge and MDC, based on property</i>	<i>Cambridge and MDC maintain their own sections. Water Dept. will remove snow from both.</i>
<i>Bike path on business side of Parkway</i>	<i>MDC</i>	<i>MDC</i>
<i>Kingsley Park Bridge</i>	<i>MHD</i>	<i>MHD - except the bridge will be re-striped as shown on Fresh Pond Purification Plant plans</i>

2. Routine Policing and Emergency Response Services

A Security and Enforcement plan for the Reservation prepared by appropriate departments should be presented to the Master Plan Advisory Board for its comment and for public comment at one or more public meetings.

The location and maintenance schedule of police call boxes should be reviewed. The Electrical Department is responsible for the operation of police call boxes.

Appropriate Recreation Division and Water Department staff should be given the responsibility, authority and training necessary to enforce applicable rules, regulations and ordinances to ensure that everyone makes safe and respectful use of the Reservation, and to ensure that everyone takes the safety, enjoyment and interests of other visitors into account. In that regard, Water Department staff will have an important continuing responsibility both to educate as well as enforce.

The Security Plan should provide for regular police visibility patrols along the Perimeter Road throughout the year, to protect the Reservation when Recreation Division and Water Department staff are not on duty, and for regular weekend visibility support for Water Department staff at parking lots during periods of peak usage.

In addition the Water Department staff should receive assistance from appropriate departments to enforce parking restrictions in Reservation parking lots, particularly in controlling parking problems on weekends during periods of peak usage.

The Master Plan Advisory Board should invite the Police Department to attend appropriate general meetings or public meetings on safety and security at least once a year.

D. Public Facilities: Buildings and Structures

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Buildings and structures open to the public and available for general public use include the Municipal Golf Course clubhouse, sections of the Water Treatment Plant and golf course maintenance building, and the tennis courts, basketball court, tot lot and concrete grandstands at Glacken Field.

1. Golf Course

The Master Plan Land-Use Policy provides for minor expansion of the clubhouse but otherwise severely limits the placement of additional land within the Reservation under hard surfaces anywhere in the Reservation.

2. Glacken Field

The Land-Use Policy calls for a comprehensive design study of the Glacken recreation complex, and for comprehensive renovation of the area.

3. Water Treatment Plant

The Water Department will hold public meetings and conduct educational programs using a dedicated meeting room and display area at the new Water Treatment Plant. The Department will also invite the public to visit a portion of the plant; however, the meeting room and display area will be reserved for Water Department use.

The School Department's Maynard Ecology Center will remain on the Neville Manor site and will not be relocated to any other site within the Reservation.