

March 19, 2015 - Fresh Pond Master Plan Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

submitted by Sam Corda - September 17, 2015

Advisory Board Members in Attendance:

Janice Snow (Chair); Jennifer Letourneau; Janet Burns; Claudia Thompson; Susan Agger; Jim Barton; Dave Kaplan

Advisory Board Members Not in Attendance: Doug Brown, Deb Masterson, Ted Pickering, Ann Roosevelt, Paul Ryder

Water Department in Attendance: Sam Corda; Tim MacDonald; Vin Falcione

City Manager's Office/Community Development Department in Attendance: Taha Jennings; Bill Deignan

Public in Attendance: Barbara Armistead; Zeyneb Magavi

Meeting opened at 6:08PM

Meeting minutes: S. Corda

Item 1: Review Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda

Item 2: Meeting Minutes

Jim Barton moved and Claudia Thompson seconded the motion to accept the November 20, 2014 minutes as written with the inclusion of the Susan Agger handout on the CPs Science curriculum at the Reservation.

Item 3: Watershed Manager's Report

David Kaplan discussed both the Kingsley Park and Drainage/Community Garden Projects.

Kingsley Park – Phase I: The full opening of Kingsley Park will be delayed until at least July to establish the various grasses and plantings. The contractor is completing the punch list items.

Drainage/Community Garden Design: The preliminary design of the relocation of the pond path to the rail road right-of-way and relocation of the community garden—to the crossing on Fresh Pond Parkway—is underway. Any “specimen” oaks/plantings will be identified and tagged to be kept. The project schedule is to be developed.

Landscape Maintenance Update: The temporary fencing at Kingsley Park will remain until the planting and grasses have properly established. An additional 20 to 25 trees purchased through the DPW's contract will be planted at various locations throughout the Reservation. The Perimeter Path will be swept and potholes repaired before the annual City Run.

The CWD will be working with DPW implementing a tree monitoring program to detect any Emerald Ash Borer Beetles.

Item 4: Reservation Projects Status

Proposed DCR Greenway (within the Reservation): Bill Deignan, Transportation Program Manager/Community Development Department – distributed a handout titled “Watertown-Cambridge

Greenway Update” which describes the general plans and public meeting schedules. He noted that DCR has selected the designer, VHB, which will do a survey of the RR right of way.

Board members raised the following issues followed by Mr. Deignan’s response:

Has DCR considered alternate locations for the path and the feasibility and desirability of separating the walking path from the bike path as it enters the Reservation?

Deignan: The path would be multiuse, not just for bicycles; the tracks will be removed and rail bed “sealed” with the paved pathway with drainage swales. They have not considered alternate locations in the Reservation. State money and private funding is paying for the path design on the RRROW.

What input will the Water Department and others have on the design?

Deignan: The City will be working with DCR and the Water Department, Water Board and Advisory Board on the design which is open to discussion. No construction funds as of yet have been appropriated. A public meeting will be held sometime in June The design of drainage structures and plantings will be reviewed by the Water Department, Water Board, Advisory Board (for its recommendations) and Conservation Commission and must be approved by the Water Department, Water Board and Conservation Commission.

The railroad right-of way (RRROW) below the Huron Avenue pine forest is not directly included or excluded in the Master Plan recommendations; but it is included in the related Stewardship Plan. The Master Plan Land Use Policy vegetation and lighting provisions are relevant to all areas of the Reservation.

Mr. Deignan noted that no decision on lightning has been made, but nighttime use, when the Reservation is officially closed, may raise lighting issues.

The Water Department noted that the drainage details will determine pathway feasibility. The Department and Board agreed that the existing multi-use pathway connection running north (from the plant entrance) within the Reservation has worked well.

The Department and Board pointed out that any plantings must be “native” as required in the Fresh Pond Reservation Master Plan.

Design of Perimeter Road access, if any, must first be must be run through the Water Department and it must have proper drainage.

Capital Project Planning: The Blacks Nook long term plans, Glacken Slope phase 5, Kingsley Park phase 2 project may be extended farther in the future to accommodate the costs and scheduling priorities for the Drainage/Community Garden Projects, from the Treatment Plant to Sozio Corner, along the RRROW.

Item 5: Planning for Fresh Pond Day

Fresh Pond Day will be held on May 30, 2015 from 11am to 3pm. Volunteers were signed up, locations identified and displays, activities and signs defined.

The idea of honoring Chip Norton annually was further discussed. Board members agreed that the “Cycle to the Source”, which is a cycle ride from Fresh Pond to the Hobbs and Stony Brook Reservoirs (the Source), would be a great venue to remember Chip by.

Item 6: Pilot Signs Program

Janet Burns moved and Jim Barton seconded the motion that the signs that were defined for Lusitania Meadow and Maher Park, with minor edits, should be the basis for future Area ID signage at Fresh Pond. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Item 7: May 21 Preliminary Meeting Agenda

Walkabout, 2015-2016 meeting schedule, future Master Plan projects, Fresh Pond Day plans and ordinances relating to Fresh Pond.

Item 8: Public Comment

The two attendees were supportive of constructing of an off-road bike path in the Reservation linking the Watertown section to the Fresh Pond Parkway section and the Minuteman Bikeway.

Janet Burns moved and Jim Barton seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:58pm. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.