

May 18, 2017 - Fresh Pond Reservation Master Plan Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Submitted: Sam Corda – September 7, 2017

Advisory Board Members in Attendance:

Janice Snow (Chair), David Kaplan, Susan Agger, Jim Barton, Doug Brown, Janet Burns, Adam Corbeil, Jennifer Letourneau, Candace Young, Claudia Thompson and Jamie Porreca

Advisory Board Members Not in Attendance:

Lauren McPherson-Siegrist, Ann Roosevelt and Deborah Masterson

Water Department in Attendance:

Sam Corda, Tim MacDonald, Vincent Falcione, Martine Wong

Public in Attendance:

Catherine Pedemonti (Friends of Fresh Pond)

Meeting opened at 6:07 pm

Meeting Minutes: S. Corda

Item 1: Review Agenda

No changes

Item 2: Meeting Minutes

The March meeting minutes review and approval was tabled until the September 2017 meeting.

Item 3: Watershed Managers Report

DCR Greenway Lighting Update: The City will be contracting two separate ecologists to review the potential “environmental” impacts to the Pine Forest, relating to the flora, fauna and habitat. The Community Development Department (CDD) is also planning an abutter meeting to discuss lighting. Janice Snow noted that she and Jim Barton along with a City Council member who had voted for the Master Plan met with City Manager DePasquale on May 1 to review the issues the Board raised in its January letter to the Manager including the City’s lack of an ecological study, a safety study, and lack of consultation with the Advisory Board and review of its policies. They also requested that CDD consider alternative illumination strategies along the forest segment of the Greenway. Jim Barton suggested that the safety argument that has been used is not reliable and needs to be further addressed, including a site visit. Both were told that an ecological study will be conducted.

The CDD has been working with the Water Department on locating a Hubway bike station near the Water Treatment plant.

Drainage and Community Garden Project: This project to relocate a section of the Perimeter Road to better protect the Reservoir from runoff has started with tree removal, stumping, railroad track and tie removal, as well as, existing Perimeter Road removal.

Landscape Maintenance: Vinnie Falcione has been working with our landscape contractor to continue spring clean-up and replanting’s as needed. Continuing follow-up maintenance at Glacken Slope and Black’s Nook.

Item 4: DCR Greenway signage before and after Pine Forest

Signs were suggested to be posted to inform the users of the Greenway at the Kingsley Park and Huron Avenue bridges that they are entering a forested wetland habitat in the Reservation which is closed at dusk. Signs will follow the standard formats that have been developed and approved. The Watershed Division, under Dave Kaplan, will initiate the signage, defining type, size, language and location. Janice Snow offered to compile Board member sign content suggestions.

Item 5: Condition and Future of White Pine Stands near Lusitania

Janet Burns reported that a widespread Northern New England problem with a fungus attacking white pines and causing the browning of pine needles and weakening the trees. She wondered if the browning of needles she observed on some pines in the NE sector of the Reservation indicated the fungus was spreading in the Reservation. Vinnie Falcione will contact the UMASS Extension School to see if there is anything that we can do to help or replace any affected White Pine stands with alternative conifer species and report back to the Board at the September meeting.

Item 6: Golf Course Landscape Report

Recreation Director Adam Corbeil reported that Alex Martin has been hired as the Greens Pro for the golf course and has been working closely with the Water Department. The DEP has established new regulations for underground storage tanks (USTs) and will be inspecting the gasoline tank sometime in August. The tank is in need of repairs that will be made for the short term; the tank will likely need to be replaced in the future with capital project funds in a future fiscal year. Stream "C" banks have been mowed with a raised mower. The City is moving to "electric" lawn mowers for noise reduction and environmental benefits.

Item 7: Envisioning Alewife Working Group on the Impact of Development on Fresh Pond

Doug Brown made a presentation on Envision Cambridge for the "Quadrangle", that covers about 130 acres, north of Concord Avenue and south of the commuter rail lines, of the basin, including the 100 and 500-year flood plains. The full buildout projects up to 3900 residential units, 60% buildout projects 20,000 jobs and 2000 residential units. Most units, some 2800 have been built since 2010, 98% residential. Many office and retail workers are commuters. To protect new housing units from expected sea level rise and increased rainfall from climate change, housing units are not allowed on first floors. Basements cannot be occupied and are expected to provide temporary storm water storage in a flood. The additional Reservation berms along the Parkway designed to screen the relocated Perimeter Road, from the Parkway traffic, have been raised a few feet with the idea that they will limit the flow of flood water into the Reservoir. Board members noted that the additional housing in Alewife will put pressure on the Reservation landscape and increase maintenance and management costs and little new green space has been set aside in the basin for infiltration of basin storm water to protect the Reservoir.

Item 8: Fresh Pond Day Final Preparations – May 20, 2017

Susan Agger will be there all day at the Ecology table, with Janet Burns, Jim Barton and Deb Masterson and Janice Snow signing up for shorter periods to inform the public about the Advisory Board's role and Master Plan projects. Doug Brown signed up to take down the tables and displays.

Item 9: Advisory Board Meeting Schedule for 2017-2018 Term

The proposed meeting schedule for the upcoming year is as follows: September 7th (changed) and November 16th, 2017 and March 15th and May 17th, 2018. Please let Janice Snow know if any of these dates do not work.

Item 10: Preliminary Agenda for Sept 21*, 2017 Advisory Board Meeting

***(Note that on July 15, the September meeting date was changed from Sept 21st to Sept 7th due to a conflict with Rosh Hashanah)**

Sustainable landscape Maintenance Plan, Conservation Commission (ConCom) presentation, ConCom citizen representative Advisory Board Member, signage, Fresh Pond Day summary and DCR Greenway.

Item 11: Public Comment

No comments

Dave Kaplan moved and Doug Brown seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:33pm.