

Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee Meeting – August 8, 2017 Minutes

Time: 6:15 PM – 8:40 PM Location: Phillips Park and Town Hall First Floor Conference Room

Members Present: Tania Lillak, Vice Chair; Richard Smith, Toni Bandrowicz, Jim Olivetti, Clerk; Pete Kane, Director of Community Development

Members Absent: Mary Webster, Chair; Angela Ippolito, Planning Board Chair; Sara Pruett, and Patrick Jones, Selectman Liaison.

The first part of the meeting was a site visit to the path from Phillips Park to Eisman's Beach. A quorum was determined to be present and the meeting opened at 6:15 pm. Trisha Malphrus, Chair of the Commission on Disability, joined this part of the meeting. It was concluded that the path from the parking lot to Puritan Road was in rough shape, particularly the uphill section near Puritan Road, and would benefit from grading, fill, and resurfacing with stone dust or other suitable material.

The sewer cover will need to be leveled during this process. It was also suggested that the asphalt be removed from the path in between the trees on the eastern path. No Dumping signs were also suggested.

The town should consider possibility of altering the intersection of the sidewalk and path to create a berm of sorts to reduce runoff and erosion down the path. There is apparently also a right of way from the parking lot to Humphrey Street which is densely overgrown and probably crosses wetland. The committee members present agreed that extending that section of path to Humphrey was of low priority given the access afforded by Bondelevich Way.

The meeting continued at the Town Hall reconvening at 7:10.

The minutes of the July 18, 2017 meeting were approved.

Mary Webster has stepped down as Chair of the Committee. By unanimous vote, Tania Lillak was elected Committee Chair. Toni Bandrowicz will become the new Vice Chair.

Review of last meeting's action items

- Monuments: Richard broached the topic with Ben Franklin and Justina Oliver of developing a policy for placement of new war memorials on town open space. He received feedback that there should be such a policy townwide, although Monument Ave. seemed to be the main focus.
- Tree Advisory Task Force: Jim will contact Verena Karsten and Patti Jones to set up initial meeting with Gino. Tania wants to be in the loop.
- Gino Cresta invitation to future meeting: Tania will continue to try to reach out to Gino. Pete noted Gino has been very busy with sewer upgrades around town.
- Eagle Scout project: Toni reports that there is no visible progress on the town forest Eagle Scout project. She will make inquiries with Danielle Strauss.
- Invasive plants: Toni reported that there has been no progress on assessing invasives on conservation lands.
- Temporary ice rink: Jim said he would contact Danielle to determine her position on securing a temporary ice rink facility for the town. (Objective #31)

VOTE: The Committee voted unanimously that it send a comment on the landscaping at the Machon School redevelopment project similar to what the Conservation Commission sent. It stated its view that invasive plants be avoided, native plants be used where possible and that organic lawn and plant care practices be implemented.

Action:

Toni and Pete will prepare the comment and forward it to appropriate contact.

Agenda Items

- Blythswood Conservation Easement: There was general agreement that the next step in developing public access to the easement is to walk the site with Gino Cresta to plan for improvements allowed under the easement and draft management plan.

Action:

Toni will send Gino an email to set up the site visit at Blythswood. In addition, she will include a statement of concern about the condition of Foster Pond that was raised by a resident.

Relating to Foster Pond, the Committee also discussed access to the pond and noted what appears to be a town-owned parcel off Foster Road that abuts the pond. There also may be an additional parcel that Aggregate would be willing to sell to the town that could provide access to the pond.

Action:

Pete will do further research on both parcels and report to the committee.

- Prioritizing OSP objectives that required capital expenditures: The Committee began the process of prioritizing those objectives identified at the July meeting that involved capital expense. One conclusion that was reached was that a number of plan objectives involving public way improvements could be packaged as one budget request for capital expenditure. The major item in this package would be the Blythswood easement development, but it would possibly also include the creation of a ADA-compliant path from Jackson Park to the high school parking lot, and improvements to the Eisman's beach to Phillips parking lot, and the path along the playing fields at the high school. Pete noted that an estimated cost of these projects would need to be obtained from potential contractors.

The Committee noted that a large number of the objectives identified in July would be better addressed as new line items in the town budget or funded by existing or new grant monies, rather than through one time capital expenses.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 12, 2017.