

Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee Meeting – September 13, 2016 Minutes

Time: 7:05 PM – 8:55 PM **Location:** Town Hall 1st Floor Conference Room

Members Present: Mary Webster, Chair; Jim Olivetti, Clerk; Toni Bandrowicz, Richard Smith, Tania Lillak, Vice Chair; Angela Ippolito, Planning Board Chair; Pete Kane, Director of Community Development; Danielle Strauss, Recreation Director

Members Absent: Sarah Pruett

Resident: Eric Ganezer

The minutes of the July meeting were unanimously approved.

Jim Olivetti will begin serving as Committee Clerk, Tania Lilak received unanimous Committee approval to begin serving as Vice Chair.

1. Removal/replacement of playground at Phillips Park

Danielle reported that at the Sept. 12th meeting of the Turf Field Advisory Committee the inclusion of a playground to replace the existing playground at Phillips Park was addressed. Danielle has strongly argued for inclusion of a playground in the overall plan for the new athletic field complex at the Park. The plan current as of this meeting has 3,000 square feet allocated for a playground. There will be further discussion among the TFAC at their next meeting on site (Sept. 19th) as to the best location for the playground. Danielle stated that she would ask the OS&RPC for support if she feels she needs it as the fate of the Phillips Park playground is determined.

2. Johnson Park comment form

Pete asked for improvements/changes to the feedback form for the Johnson Park redesign submitted by Tufts graduate students. There were no substantial changes recommended by the Committee. Pete will send the final version of the feedback form to key town committees for their feedback on the proposed design in the next week or so. The next step would be to obtain a rough cost estimate for the design. Angela, Pete and Danielle suggested that there may be good sources of grant money available for this project.

3. Superior Park playground

Eric Ganezer, a resident from the Superior Park neighborhood thanked the DPW for their hard work to prepare the ground and install new equipment, and thanked the OS&RPC for its support. He brought up a concern that the neighborhood would have liked to be consulted for their ideas before the work was done, although the outcome was certainly welcomed. Feedback from children using the park was that they missed a climbing structure to replace the old “jungle gym”. Danielle said she would keep a lookout for such equipment on sale and for possible extra money available in the future for it. There is also a problem with someone leaving out food for feral cats and other animals that poses a potential safety issue for children using the playground. It was suggested that the neighbors could call the Animal Control Office

for assistance. An event to celebrate the dedication of the renewed park is scheduled for September 25th. Danielle will provide balloons, cupcakes and juice and will say a few words of celebration. Other publicity, including a robocall, Facebook announcement, and Reporter article are planned. For the Love of Swampscott also offered promotional support.

4. Greenwood Ave RFP public meeting comments

Jim reported that he spoke at the meeting on September 1 co-led by Naomi Dreben and Peter Spellios about the desirability of preserving open space in connection with the development of housing at the Greenwood Avenue school site. His comments were picked up in articles both in the Swampscott Reporter and Lynn Item. Peter replied to Jim after the meeting via email stating that he supported preservation via a restriction or easement of the wooded area behind the existing building down to Fuller Ave. and saw the benefit of creating a pocket park on Greenwood Ave. that would preserve the view shed down to the harbor.

5. Lynn Item article "Swampscott Awarded Grant to Fight Flooding Issues" published 8/24.

The Committee discussed the article. Toni suggested using some of the grant money for creating a berm and/or rain garden called for in the Johnson Park design. (see #2 above). Tania will contact Gino to see if this is possible.

6. Complete Streets presentation at Planning Board.

Angela provided a summary of the presentation, as Pete had to leave the meeting. The thrust of the Complete Streets program is to encourage the town to focus on where in the town the needs for street improvements are greatest. Not all streets need all of the recommended features. Pete is asking for feedback on the proposed "Complete Streets Policy" by October 12. Mary indicated that this will be on the top of the agenda for the October OS&RPC meeting.

7. Other business

Tania reported on her recent meeting with Gino Cresta. The second phase of the tree inventory is being completed, but it is likely not all the trees have been inventoried. A report is to come. A work order has been created to open up the overgrown entrance to the Harold King Forest walking trail, and to restore the "No Dumping" sign in the parking lot. The DPW is short staffed and needs more workers. The Committee agreed that we should attend the Finance Committee budget review meetings after the new year to support increased staffing of the DPW. With regards to the organic lawn maintenance program, Gino felt it would be best to do it in-house. It was suggested that we work with the Athletic Field Committee to come up with a solution. Tania to contact Josh Field, head of the AFC regarding this.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 11.

