



TOWN OF WATERTOWN
Conservation Commission
Administration Building
149 Main Street
WATERTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS 02472

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Marylouise Pallotta McDermott, Member
Charles C. Bering, Member
Patrick W. Fairbairn, Member
Maria P. Rose Member
Jamie O'Connell, Member

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MINUTES

Meeting Date: Wednesday, December 5, 2018, 7:00 PM in the Philip Pane Lower Hearing Room

Conservation Commission Members Present: Leo Martin, Patrick Fairbairn, Maria P. Rose, Jamie O'Connell, Marylouise Pallotta McDermott

Absent: Charles Bering

Also Present: *Lisa Feltner, Town Council, Gideon Schreiber, Senior Planner, Ethan Davis, Bike and Ped Committee (BPC), Peter Centola, Recreation Department, Jesse Hammond, BPC, Elodia Thomas, Resident, Libby Shaw, Trees for Watertown, Maria Saiz, BPC*

Staff Present: Steve Magoon, Acting Agent Susan C. Jenness (2.7.19 rev)

Martin Chaired.

The first item on the agenda for the meeting was the following.

- 1. Review - Arsenal Park Planning Process** – Review of the 25% concept draft plan based on the recommendations made by the Conservation Commission at the March 12, 2018 meeting.

Danielle Mellet from CDM appeared to discuss the 25% plan as it stands in the current stage it is in.

Mellet reviewed the history of the site as a 13.7acre park designed by John Wacker and Associates in the 1980s.

The Preliminary Concept Plan in this discussion was presented in March of 2018. The plans being reviewed at this meeting were based on the recommendations made by the Conservation Commission at the meeting back in March.

For the presentation that night, the existing plans had a highlighted magenta line that showed the 200 foot buffer lines in the park.

Mellet had enlarged plans for better detail to illustrate the design changes, storm water plans and the estimated costs for the Conservation Commission that reviewed the following items.

- The plans stay within limits of existing park including with updates
- Playground equipment
- has been added with 2 composting toilets
- Splash pads have been expanded
- Shelter has been added for shade
- Parking has been changed to 2 ways, with 1 way in additional parking in the south.
- The amphitheater in the woods has been converted to natural play area
- There is a new entrance gateway
- There is a north and south entrance to the bikeway
- Building 421 area- will house basketball courts and they scaled down from 6 to 3 tennis courts, with room for pickle ball-
- The lawn knoll will house a stage for performances
- The knowl will be a gateway connection from the east with a promenade, and pedestrian walkway to the Commanders Mansion

The 25% plan included the refinements to the concept and was shown in a PowerPoint presentation.

Mellet explained that CDM is working with skate park designer. A sample of the skate park was included in the plan which CDM proposes to be placed adjacent to Multipurpose Court to create a nice overlook for the other adjacent courts.

Play features included areas for 2-5 ages playground and one for ages 5-12. Both areas are fully accessible with rubber safety surface within existing footprint of play area with bathrooms closer to the playground

The Proposed Fitness Area is an all in one inclusive piece that has instructional diagrams on all equipment that CDM has used in other parks.

Some of the changes to the Concept to 25% Plan included the following items.

Swapping the Skate Park and Community Garden as the skate park is louder and fits in better next to basketball and multipurpose park. The Community Garden was thought to fit in better next to tennis courts where a lower volume of noise would be anticipated.

Removing the planted berm as it created a challenge and blocked the entrance way, improved the bikeway and pedestrian connection to the park. The Arsenal Park sign was relocated. A sediment fence will be installed during construction.

The Preliminary Storm Water Report categorized this project as a redevelopment project and the results were found to meet all standards for storm water management.

To minimize disturbance to the park, raingardens will be added where they are needed. Water quality swales will be added to hardcourt areas and deep sump pumps in parking lot.

A lot of invasive species were discovered in the wooded area and there are plans for the removal which may help to gain views to the river.

The Opinion of Probable Cost was listed on page 13 and concluded that the 25% design with 20% contingency \$4.3 million dollars

Magoon brought up some items he wanted to clarify.

Magoon asked Mellet to discuss the Naturalized Play Area contained in the natural footprint of Amphitheater. Mellet reported that Columbia Cascade all natural wooden features would be used. An embankment slide will be installed with Step Climbers to get to top of embankment slides. A portion of the seating area will be maintained.

The Multiuse Path which is a 12 foot-wide pathway will be the entrance to Arsenal Park parking lot and to the south Greenough Blvd. Mellet said that the area will be striped so that it has 2 lanes with additional signage

At this main gateway entrance the berm will be removed for better for vehicular and pedestrian circulation. Mellet explained that the Arsenal Park Sign will be supported on Granite and the medallion will be moved next to flagpole at splash pad near the new facility entrance of the park.

Water quality swales will be used because it is a raised surface. Mellet explained that to propose deep sumps for the area around parking lot would mean deep digging, and stormceptors would be possible but add much more to the cost.

Rose commented that the plans looked great to her and that much was under the jurisdiction of Parks and Recreation. Rose was concerned with water quality and suggested the use of swales. Mellet explained that this would be too challenging. Rose suggested that once the NPDES permitting goes into effect every redevelopment will be subject to the standards set forth in the permitting process. She said that she liked all of the equipment and referred those issues to the Recreation Department for comment.

O'Connell suggested the use of storm ceptor system so that the sediment from the parking lot would not enter into the Charles River.

Fairbairn was interested in whether or not the tennis courts would over time satisfy the needs of the community. Schreiber said that the Town went into rigorous details to ensure they did the best they could providing tennis court space. Elodia Thomas, a resident who was present said she has 5 courts behind her house that are only fully occupied on the rare occasion when the tennis team is using them.

Peter Centola, Recreation Director itemized the tennis courts available to the Town through the department under his management.

- 5 at Victory Field,
- 2 at Casey where they reduced it from 3,
- 3 belonging to the DCR behind the rink
- 2 at Moxley Park.

Fairbairn suggested that skateboarders would like to take up more space at times and wondered if they could use the space allocated to the multicourse for that purpose. Mellet said that they were deliberating how they could implement the use of safety boards there. Magoon stated that the multi-use space intends to have boards in use there.

Fairbairn inquired about the lighting and wondered if they would be using LED light such as in effect at Victory Field and if they would be on a timer.

Peter Centola explained that the power of the lights at Victory Field will go on as a result of a timer, but the lights will only activate when someone arrives.

Martin shared the following comments.

Sheet L-2- The legends have items not shown on drawings.

Sheet L-3

Is the parking lot to be rebuilt including sub-grade or just resurfaced, both are indicated on drawing set.

Delete dugouts

Explain entry nodes.

Not sure about the hardscape, amphitheater or turret overlook.

Add trees in the expanded picnic/grill area

I do not think metal archways over the entries were necessary.

Add a covered table at the tot lot.

Explain the hatching on the promenade.

Sheet L-4

Any more CB's needed in the entrance/parking lot
Purpose of the extra walkways behind the Amphitheatre/shade shelter

Sheet L-5 No halfpipe?**Sheet L-6**

Cover over accessible picnic table
Swings include at least one handicap swing
Any sub-grade improvements in area of the park that have settlement issues
Nice idea in the old amphitheater area
Discuss the fitness equipment

Sheets E-1 thru E-3- He never received them.

Sheet E-4

Explain the 3 black dots along the SW path.
Details on lighting on promenade path.
Explain lighting in the parking lot.
Explain other lighted areas.

Pedestrian lighting
Promenade
Commanders Mansion
Basketball
Tennis
Multipurpose Court

Public Comments

Elodia Thomas- There is no rendering of an amphitheater and issues with erosion, irrigation for grass, potential for muddy slopes. She also thought that the skate park is noisy and suggested moving it down and away from the Community Gardens.

Magoon said that the Town worked with Community Gardens and the majority of them seemed very happy to be where things are happening

Lisa Feltner said she was not confident the amphitheater will be used. She also thought the skate park would be good use there beside the amphitheater.

Feltner inquired if the Community Gardens will have raised beds there and if there would be enough lighting in the parking lot and for the Cross Country Course.

Magoon explained that Community Gardens is operated by their own organization, raised beds on top of concrete and that the fencing seems expensive

Schreiber explained that the skate park is slated for active part of the park.

Thomas wondered who will be in charge and if any group can just go and use the space. Peter Centola explained that he has a system to allow users to gain authorization to use the other facilities in the jurisdiction of Recreation Department. She also referred to a park in Somerville that has an area to climb for the older kids and provides raised beds.

Maria Saiz a member of the Bike and Pedestrian Committee was interested in connection for regular commuters who will use this as a cut through to the river path.

O'Connell clarified that DCR does not light their paths and has a problem with lighting the path down to the river. Saiz wondered if lights could be activated by walkers or riders and then go off when they are exited.

Saiz said there is a large amount of activity there and that this is a major connector to the river. She anticipates the weekends this will be very busy and that there is a need for clearly defined delineation on the path-separating bikes and runners and walkers by signage-shared space scooters electric bikes approaching the park. She asked for deep consideration on how we put the connectivity of the park together?

Martin said members of the CC discussed lighting the path during their site walk.

Andy Compagna a member of the Bike and Pedestrian Committee said that there is great balance, and varied activities too. He said his concerns are for safety. He reiterated a comment made by Saiz that once the greenway to Fresh Pond is completed, use in this area will naturally increase.

Thomas wondered if bike groups can expect plowing

Compagna inquired about the ADA compliance of the path and hill.

Ethan Davis from the Bike Pedestrian Committee expressed a need for barriers to protect the kids at the natural park area, and around the multi- use court for the children kids learning to ride their bikes and skate on their own in safety.

Compagna also asked if Perkins school was brought into the public process on the planning. Magoon said Perkins was at our meetings.

Magoon explained that the Planning Department was interested in getting to a place where they could recommend moving forward on the plans. He asked for the Conservation Commission to clarify if they were ready to move forward and make recommendations, or, if they wanted the plans to come back before the CC again.

O'Connell said she felt that overall, they were a lot more suggestions we need to get clarity on.

Magoon agreed and said that they could take more time on the plans and discuss the plans again in January.

Rose pointed out that the new amphitheater would be creating more pavement and adding additional impervious space.

It was decided that planning would come back to the next CC meeting with changes.

2. Minutes- November 7, 2018 Meeting

After a brief discussion, a motion was made to accept the minutes from the November 7, 2018 meeting as modified.

Motion: Rose made a motion to accept the minutes as modified. O'Connell seconded Rose's motion.

Vote: The three members of the CC who were present and eligible to vote on the minutes agreed unanimously to accept the minutes as modified.

3. Agent report

- a. Update on new Conservation Commission Agent- The candidate the Town was looking at did not work out. The Town's search continues.
- b. Update on new members for the Conservation Commission- The Town Manager has reported to have at least one candidate on file seeking a position on the CC.
- c. Update Whitney Hill Report- Rose has documentation on file regarding the specifics of the items the CC would like the Town to provide assistance in obtaining them. She will work on reporting back to the Conservation Office by the next meeting.
- d. Status report on tree graffiti issue at Whitney Hill-Chris Hayward, the Town's Tree Warden is aware of the issue after being briefed by the Acting Agent. Hayward is in the process of determining the best way to address the graffiti. Fairbairn offered to go out on site with Hayward if necessary to assist him in locating the affected trees.
- e. Update on Filippello Park construction, Peter Centola, Manager of Recreation reported that the majority of construction will be completed by December 22, 2018. The surfaces of the park will be painted in the spring of 2019. Centola officially thanked Gideon Schreiber and Steve Magoon for their contributions to the process. He further stated that Marylouise Pallotta McDermott has been a driving force in the creation of this park, and that he regretted not having mentioned the late Diana

Proctor as was pointed out by Town Councilor Kounelis. Charlie Breitrose has written a nice article for the Watertown Tab and also there is some information on the local Cable Access network about the current status of the construction process of Filipello Park.

- f. Update from November 7, 2018 Informational Meeting- U.S. Army Corp of Engineers cap maintenance work at the Watertown Yacht Club in accordance with Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA). Magoon reported that he received an email from Kate Atwood at the Army Corp of Engineers since the November 7th meeting with the following update.

The Army Corp of Engineers will enforce a time year restriction of April 1st to June 15th for the herring run.

Also, the permit exemption under CERCLA is located at 42 USC 9621(e) and it provides that no Federal, State or local permit will be required for the portion of any removal, or remedial action conducted entirely onsite, where such remedial action is carried out in compliance with this section. Because of this, no permits were required in this project.

Motion: Pallotta McDermott made a motion at 9:15 PM to adjourn the meeting. Rose seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 PM.