

**TOWN OF WELLESLEY
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
April 17, 2014, 7:30 PM
NRC Office, Lower Level, Town Hall**

Attending: Heidi Gross, Chair, Stephen Murphy, Vice Chair, Joan Gaughan, Raina McManus,
Lise Olney, Janet Hartke Bowser, NRC Director.

Guests: Mike Quinn, DPW, Caleb Brown, Deb Brown

Public Voice

Caleb Brown, a Wellesley High School student, submitted an application to use a section of Fuller Brook Park, between Grove and Cottage Streets, for the temporary installation of an “Art in the Park” project. He stated that he’d like to install approximately 10 high school student art works made predominately from natural materials that would be on display for two weeks. The NRC felt that this was an appropriate use of the park and Mike Quinn indicated that he will work with the student to find a good location for the project. Ms. Bowser will issue a park permit for the project and Mr. Brown indicated that he will send photos of the project to her once it’s completed.

Review and Approval of NRC/DPW FY14 Tree Planting Program

Mike Quinn, Asst. DPW Supt. for Parks and Trees stated that the FY 2014 Tree Planting Capital Program is underway for this spring and that the DPW is planning to plant a total of one hundred (100) trees under the program this year. Approximately forty three (43) trees will be planted on town properties and Mr. Quinn submitted maps showing the proposed locations. The remaining fifty seven (57) trees will be planted as street trees on private property under the provisions of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 87, section 7. Presently the DPW has ninety (90) residents and/or identified property locations on this year’s tree planting list. Based on past history of drop offs from the list due to sites not qualifying or residents not responding to our letters, he anticipates that the planned 57 trees to be enough for the back of sidewalk program and the majority of trees will be planted by early June. The use of the gator watering bags has proved to be effective and will continue. After the tree planting program is completed by the end of June, he will forward an updated and completed copy of the final planting plan to the NRC.

The estimated cost for this year’s planting program is:

Plant Material:	\$20,000.00
Planting Labor & Equipment	\$19,200.00
<u>Supplies / Watering Bags:</u>	<u>\$ 800.00</u>
Total	\$40,000.00

Based on the above information, Mr. Quinn requested approval from the NRC for the above cost estimate to be forwarded in an advance transfer to the DPW. **After a motion was made and seconded, the NRC voted 5-0 to approve the FY14 Tree Planting Program as presented.**

Discussion Re: Public Tree Planting Program - Background and History

The NRC discussed the history and background of the Town's Public Tree Planting program with Mr. Quinn. The Wellesley Public Tree Planting program started in the 1980's. and since then the Town started planting more than 100 trees per year. Ten years ago the Town allocated \$30,000 per year to the program and is now spending \$40,000 per year. The program's goal is sustainability and keeping the Town's street tree canopy intact. There are some trade-offs; some neighborhoods want flowering trees for historical reasons and the American hybridized exotics are often planted in difficult conditions. The Town is requesting a GIS survey to show the breakdown of tree species in Wellesley. Mr. Quinn indicated that he and DPW landscape planner Cricket Vlass are available to meet with the NRC members to further discuss the tree program as well as provide a tour of the NRC's properties.

2014 Winter Moth Caterpillar Control Program Revision

Mr. Quinn discussed with the NRC a revision to the NRC/DPW Winter Moth Control Program. He stated that in Wellesley and throughout eastern Massachusetts, the winter moth caterpillar has been defoliating trees during the spring. Under the authority of the Natural Resources Commission and the guidelines of the Wellesley Integrated Pest Management Policy, the Department of Public Works is proposing to defer the ground spraying town trees to control winter moth caterpillars, unless an identified tree is determined in need of spraying in order to survive. These exceptions will be treated with Conserve #SC, a spinosad based product, E.P.A. Reg. #62719-291. Hours of spraying will occur between 5am thru 10 am and will not occur after May 30th, 2014. All treated areas will be posted for 24 hours before and after applications. Mr. Quinn explained that the reason for this revised strategy is due to the on-going experimental effort by team of scientists led by Dr. Joseph Elkinton at the University of Massachusetts Amherst to control the winter moth in Wellesley. This team released approximately 1,000 parasitic flies at Centennial Park in Wellesley on May 9th, 2008, to help biologically control this invasive caterpillar that has been stripping the foliage from many kinds of deciduous trees in towns that stretch from the North Shore to Cape Cod. This fly, known as *Cyzenis albicans*, is an important natural enemy of the winter moth that has successfully controlled the moth in earlier invasions of Nova Scotia and the Pacific Northwest. Dr. Elkinton and his colleagues are confident that this fly will eventually suppress winter moth populations in Massachusetts to harmless levels. That is what happened in Nova Scotia, where the fly was introduced in the 1950s, and where winter moths have been at low levels ever since. It will take a few years, however, for a few thousand flies to catch up with a population of winter moths that numbers in the trillions. In Nova Scotia it took six years. The research team is also confident that the fly will not cause other problems. Research has shown that it attacks only the winter moth, and will not attack other species of caterpillars. With proper state government support it is hoped that the University of Massachusetts Extension Service will be able to keep working on this program to introduce this natural predatory fly to control this pest. The success of this biological control program will work naturally to minimize the need for future spraying of this invasive and destructive pest that is damaging private and public shade trees in Massachusetts. **After a motion was made and seconded, the NRC voted 5-0 to approve the proposed revision to the NRC/DPW 2014 Winter Moth Caterpillar Control Program.**

Discussion Regarding Trees Removal Issues in Fuller Brook Park

Ms. Gaughan stated that several neighbors are concerned about number of trees that are being taken down in the park. Ms. Gross reported that a detailed vegetation assessment was completed

by Tree Specialists as part of the Fuller Brook Park Preservation Project and that more than 170 dead trees have been taken down. Mr. Quinn reported that invasive, dead, and diseased trees have been taken out and will continue to be taken out. Ms. Gross reported that an algorithm has been developed by Mr. Seaborn and B. DuPont from the GIS Dept. and that there are approximately 3,027 trees within the Park. Mike reported that most trees that have been removed will be replanted as part of the preservation project and trees that have fallen and are blocking the brook will be removed and that the continuing attrition of trees will require on-going treatment or removal.

Plant Removal and Foraging Issues in Centennial Reservation

Two new signs have been installed in Centennial Reservation at the Maugus Ave. and Oakland entrances to discourage plant removal and foraging. The signs reference the Town Bylaw and NRC regulations that prohibit removal of vegetation, which are enforceable by the police.

Change in Abutter Notification for Public Shade Tree Removal Hearings

Under State Law, all public shade trees that are proposed to be removed must be posted and a legal ad placed with the hearing date and time. In the past, the NRC has also notified approx. 10 abutters for each tree to be removed, but this has become quite a time consuming effort and Mr. Quinn recommended that the process be revised so that each tree will be posted with a hearing notice rather than sending letters to abutters. Mr. Quinn stated that he will continue to speak to anyone who has a tree right in front of their house that needs to be removed.

Request for Town Forest Signage

Ms. Gaughan reported that the old butterfly garden sign should be taken out since the garden is no longer maintained. Mr. Quinn stated that a temporary sign can go in and as a winter project he would have his staff make a wooden "Town Forest and Longfellow Pond" sign.

New Fuller Brook Park Committee

Mr. Murphy nominated Ms. Gross to represent the NRC on the new Fuller Brook Park Committee that will include a representative from the NRC, Historical Commission, BPW, Friends of Fuller Brook Park, and the appointed moderator. **After a motion was made and seconded, the NRC voted 5-0 to appoint Ms. Gross as the NRC's representative to the New Fuller Brook Park Committee.**

Wellesley Country Club Tree Removals

Ms. McManus stated that she had received several inquiries regarding trees being taken down by Wellesley Country Club in preparation for their new maintenance facility. Neighbors wanted to know if the trees were subject to Wellesley's Tree Preservation bylaw and if so, if the Club was following the new rules. Ms. McManus had contacted Michael Grant, Building Inspector, who informed her that many of the trees were subject to the bylaw and that he was working with the Club to put a Tree Plan in place.

New Business/Continuing Business/Liaison Reports

Appointment of NRC Rep. to the Town's Outdoor Lighting and Noise Study Committee

As outlined in a recent memo to the NRC, the Planning Board will be conducting a Noise and Outdoor Lighting Study and has requested that the NRC appoint a member to serve on the

Committee. Based on issues raised by residents and members of the Planning Board, the Board has determined that it is necessary to study and analyze existing and anticipated uses of outdoor lighting and noise emitting uses/facilities/equipment in the Town, to determine existing and potential impacts to the health, safety and welfare of the residents and visitors to the Town, and to make recommendations to address existing or potential issues, which may include recommended policies and amendments to the Town Bylaw and Zoning Bylaw. To further this effort, the Planning Board decided it would establish the Study Committee to execute the study. Planning Staff views the first charge of the Committee as identifying and scoping problems associated with outdoor lighting and noise and their scale. To understand the issues better, the Planning Department recommends visiting the website of The Friends of Brookside, led by Laura Fragasso and NRC member Raina McManus, which have compiled a list of sources of information pertaining to outdoor lighting (<http://friendsofbrookside.org/projects/lighting/>). It is anticipated that the Committee will identify that there are impacts associated with outdoor lighting and noise. Should this indeed be the case, it is expected that the Committee will analyze the source of the impacts, the time of the impacts, who is impacted, and other issues. Further, the Committee will study design objectives, existing regulations, regulations from other municipalities, laws, best practices, and technologies such as lighting and noise emitting devices, and prepare draft regulations for consideration by the Planning Board. It is entirely possible that the Committee might recommend that there be a long term outdoor lighting and noise committee; however, the Planning Board expects that the commitment of this Committee shall initially require approximately six meetings and its charge will focus on developing zoning regulations.

Ms. McManus volunteered to represent the NRC on the Committee and disclosed that she has worked on noise and lighting issues for the Friends of Brookside (FOB) and wanted to ensure that there is no conflict of interest between her NRC role and her FOB role. It was the sense of the NRC that there is no conflict of interest and they thanked Ms. McManus for offering to volunteer on this important committee. **After a motion was made and seconded, the NRC voted 5-0 to appoint Ms. McManus as the NRC's representative to the Town's Outdoor Lighting and Noise Study Committee.**

Co-Sponsoring Sustainable Wellesley/Green School's Film "Idle Threat: Man on Emission"
The NRC was asked to co-sponsor this film event by the Sustainable Wellesley organization and agreed to do so and assist with publicizing the event.

Director's Report

Fuller Brook Park Preservation Construction Project – Phase 4 Update

Ms. Bowser reported that Phase 4 construction project was overwhelmingly approved at Annual Town Meeting and that the CPC funds will be available immediately and she will keep the NRC updated on the status of the project.

Housing Authority Encroachment onto NRC Land at 109 Barton Road

Ms. Bowser stated that she was informed by the Building Inspector of a possible encroachment onto NRC land by the Wellesley Housing Authority at 109 Barton Road. After conducting an investigation and site visit, Ms. Bowser confirmed the encroachment and met with Deborah Guyot, Director the Wellesley/Needham Housing Authority to discuss the situation. Ms. Bowser reported that the Authority is currently building a new garage at this location and is in the

process of securing a wetlands permit for the work. The encroachment area includes 6 parking spaces, which is needed by the Authority to provide parking for visitors. A portion of the parking lot is on NRC land and Ms. Bowser will address the encroachment with the Wetlands Protection Committee and the Housing Authority. Currently, there are stormwater management issues on the site with run-off going into wetlands area, which may be addressed with the installation of permeable pavement. Funding for permeable pavement may be possible.

Boston Globe Article on NRC's LID/Rain Garden Projects and Green Wellesley Campaign

Ms. Bowser stated that she was recently contacted by Boston Globe reporter Rachel Lebow, who is writing an article on municipal efforts to address stormwater issues, and Wellesley had been identified as a leader in public LID/rain garden installation efforts. Ms. Bowser stated that the article is scheduled to run in late April.

Review of NRC FY14 Capital Budget

Ms. Bowser reviewed with the NRC the status of the FY14 capital budget projects.

Establishment of Town Staff Land Use Committee

Ms. Bowser stated that a Staff Land Use Committee was recently formed to improve coordination and communication among Town departments regarding land use, permitting and development issues and projects. One issue the group will focus on is an effort to coordinate permitting through the Town's MUNIS database system.

Update on Morses Pond Comprehensive Management Plan

Dr. Ken Wagner, the NRC's Morses Pond Manager, reported that weed harvesting will begin after the annual plant survey is complete in about a month. Michelle Jacobs from the Friends of Morses Pond reported that May 4 is Morses Pond clean up day. Dr. Wagner will be submitting a spreadsheet with the list of all activities that will take place at the pond. As previously reported, Dr. Wagner will be using a less-toxic material for the Phosphorous Inactivation Unit this year and will be examining options for installing an automated system for material application.

NRC Environmental Education Film Series – “Six Degrees that Could Change the World” on April 29th

As previously discussed with the NRC, Ms. Bowser stated that she and the NRC's Environmental Education Coordinator, Laura Kiesel are organizing an environmental film series as part of the NRC's Green Wellesley Campaign's effort to inform Wellesley citizens about aspects of sustainable living, climate change, and toxins, as well as engage them in making small but significant changes in their daily lives. The first film was “Simple Steps to a Greener Home” that was well attended on Feb. 25th. The film was followed by a brief discussion by former NRC board member Dr. Sarah Little, who offered simple step-by-step green cleaning recipes for your home and a Q & A session. Ms. Bowser stated that the film series will be held bi-monthly and that three additional films will be shown.

Fuller Brook Park Logo Design

The NRC reviewed the park logo design recommended by the FBPCC including the original design and the "enhanced" version by BETA. **After discussion, a motion was made and seconded and the NRC voted 5-0 to approve the “enhanced” park logo design as presented.**

Discussion Re: Smoke-Free Regulation in Town Parks and Conservation Land

Ms. Bowser stated that concerns have been reported regarding tobacco smoking at the Morses Pond beach area and the NRC briefly discussed the possibility of issuing regulations prohibiting smoking on NRC land. It was the general sense of the board that additional regulations are not warranted at this time and that any smoking-related issue should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis including options to discourage smoking at Morses Pond.

Wetlands Protection Enforcement Actions Update

Ms. Bowser provided an update on current Wetlands Protection enforcement actions that she is working on with the Wetlands Protection Committee and Town Counsel.

Beaver Damage to Trees Reported by Longfellow Pond and Station Pond

Ms. Bowser stated that beaver damage to trees has been reported along the shorelines of Longfellow Pond and Station Pond. The situation is being monitored by residents and Ms. Bowser, but no action can be taken under State Law unless the Board of Health first determines that there is a public health or safety issue. Ms. McManus reported that there is an active dam on Rosemary Brook, but water is still flowing.

NRC's 15th Annual Earth Day Clean-Up Along the Charles River, April 26, 10 am-12 pm

Ms. Bowser stated that she is organizing and publicizing this annual NRC event in coordination with the Charles River Watershed Association and encouraged all members to attend.

NRC's 10th Annual Vernal Pool Workshop, May 10th, 10 am -12 pm

Ms. Bowser stated that she is organizing this annual NRC educational event and has publicized it through the school newsletters and NRC social media outlets.

Review and Approval of NRC Job Descriptions

After a motion was made and seconded, the NRC voted 5-0 to approve the job description for the Director of Special Projects position as revised.

After a motion was made and seconded, the NRC voted 5-0 to approve the job description for the NRC Director position as distributed.

Review and Approval of February 24, 2014 NRC Meeting Minutes

After a motion was made and seconded, the NRC voted 5-0 to approve the February 24, 2014 Meeting Minutes as revised.

Next Scheduled NRC Meeting

The next NRC Meeting was scheduled for May 20th at 7:30 PM in the NRC Office.

Adjournment

After a motion was made and seconded, the NRC voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Janet Hartke Bowser

Janet Hartke Bowser
NRC Director

