

TOWN OF WELLESLEY
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
December 4, 2014, 7:30 PM
NRC Office, Town Hall

Approved 12.18.2014

Attending: Heidi Gross, Chair; Stephen Murphy, Vice Chair; Joan Gaughan; Lise Olney; Raina McManus; Brandon Schmitt

Guests: Lucy Kapples, Advisory Committee Liaison to the NRC; Herb Nolan, Subcommittee for Art in the Park.

Public Voice

No one attending the meeting spoke at Public Voice.

Review/Discussion Re: Art in Fuller Brook Park Policy and Guidelines

Lise Olney and Joan Gaughan presented a summary report authored by the Subcommittee on Art in Fuller Brook Park, which also included Laura Fragasso and Herb Nolan. The document outlined the subcommittee's thoughts about the role and suitability of art installations in the park, and presented recommendations for evaluating and approval/denial of proposed art projects. While specific to the Fuller Brook Park, Ms. Olney agreed that these recommendations could be used as a model for art in all Town parks. Heidi Gross confirmed that a blanket policy for Art in the parks should be developed.

Ms. Olney explained that in the subcommittee's report, "permanent" was defined as more than 18 mos. Ms. Gross stated that 18 mos. or anything moveable was still temporary. Ms. Gross believed that the subcommittee's definition was too restrictive. Stephen Murphy inquired about whether the adoption of a policy such as one governing art in the park would require a public hearing, and Ms. Gross said that a public hearing would not be needed for a policy that directed an internal approval procedure. Mr. Murphy suggested that the Board accept the subcommittee's report and work to expand to other parks. In regard to the subcommittee's suggestion that a juried review process be used to evaluate the suitability of different proposals, Ms. Gross stated that the board should never allow non-elected officials to influence elected policy, that installation art in Fuller Brook was not appropriate and that Fuller Brook needs special consideration for art in the park and should be only naturalistic or educational. Ms. Gaughan stated that any form of permanent art should be functional. Ms. Olney noted examples of art that would be inappropriate. Mr. Nolan did not want a didactic or overly educational approach, but was looking for a flexible policy that allowed for some art that is integrated into the park, about the park and brings focus to the areas of the park. Ms. Gross thought it would be great to elicit art projects from the local art community including the high school, while Mr. Nolan said that the board may not want to limit applications to Wellesley artists, but welcome a wider community.

Ms. Gaughan suggested that members of the commission revisit the document and send comments to the subcommittee with suggestions and discuss at a future meeting. Ms. Olney concurred that the working document was a starting point and she and the subcommittee were open to other comments. Ms. McManus suggested the board debate the specifics of the subcommittee's report, (i.e. does the board need a jury review process?) Ms. Olney suggested that based on composition of NRC, and their relative expertise or lack thereof, an appointed review panel would be acceptable. Ms. Olney also thought that the possibility of having small amounts of money to promote art would justify a permanent panel. Mr. Murphy concluded that Fuller Brook Park will be a construction site for 2 years not requiring immediate action, but that the subcommittee's document will be a foundation and can be used in the future. Ms. Gaughan suggested tabling the document for a few weeks and revisit it in a month. Herb Nolan thought that allowing some art in Fuller Brook allows the NRC to offer an opportunity to engage the park in an artistic way. He thought a small group of "facilitators" or jury encouraging projects and looking at craftsmanship would ensure quality projects, and that certain short term temporary projects would have value. Ms. McManus suggested that the subcommittee had met its charge of making recommendations. Ms. Gross agreed, but recommended that their work should have consideration of the context of park.

Discussion Re: NRC and Morses Pond FY16 Operating Budget Requests

Ms. Gross began the discussion by introducing the following motion: That the position of Natural Resource Specialist be eliminated. After Ms. Gaughan inquired about how the motion was developed, Ms. Gross described the

history of personnel issues in the NRC leading to previous funding and personnel changes, as well as justification for the current revision in staffing models, which as proposed includes a full-time director, full-time Wetlands Administrator, Full-time secretary (currently split between 2 employees) and a part-time education coordinator. Mr. Murphy inquired about issues with retirement, and the applicability of a law that mandates the full pension of an incumbent whose position is being eliminated. Ms. Gross explained that the proposed change has been thoroughly discussed and properly vetted with Human Resources, Retirement and Financial Services. Mr. Murphy asked Mr. Schmitt what he thought of the proposed staffing model; Mr. Schmitt responded that he thought the new personnel structure made sense, but thought the staffing situation would be made clearer with greater direction from their board in terms of both short and long-term goals and priorities. **After a motion was made and seconded, the Commission voted 5-0 in favor of eliminating the Natural Resource position.**

The Board then reviewed the proposed FY16 Budget lines and made the following changes:

- Added \$10,000 to the other professional services expense, moving it from a historical expense to a current one. These additional funds could be used to pay consulting firms if needed.
- Added \$500 to office supplies for computer supplies to cover costs of replacements.
- Increased conference for board meetings item by \$250 to \$450 to cover registration fees.

Mr. Schmitt will make the edits to the draft budget and forward to Ms. Kappels.

After a motion to approve the FY16 NRC Operating budget pending the above changes was made and seconded, the board passed the motion 5-0.

The NRC next reviewed the FY16 Morses Pond Budget.

The board reviewed the Morses Operating budget, noting that the environmental education funding for Morses would now be paid through the departmental budget. The board is also hoping to make progress on its low impact design goals in the Morses Watershed (LID). After review, the board made the following changes:

- Added 61,384 as 2% increase from last year.

After a motion to approve the FY16 Morses Pond Operating budget pending the above changes was made and seconded, the board passed the motion 5-0.

In preparation for defense of CPC funding application, Ms. Gaughan told Mr. Schmitt to justify why each project fits the CPA criteria, and why it will be successful. The board further discussed meeting for Advisory, which is currently scheduled for 12.17.2014.

New Business/Continuing Business/Liaison Reports

Discussion of Hunnewell Light Abatement Options and Site Visit

Ms. Olney, Ms. McManus, Ms. Gross and Mr. Schmitt attended a meeting at the DPW to review options for abating light pollution at Hunnewell fields. Costs for bulb replacement are prohibitive, the existing lights are relatively new, and the technology is changing at a pace that makes total replacement ill-advised at this time. Consequently, the DPW and the lighting contractor will be looking at fine tuning of the field lighting, and installation of user controls at the tennis courts, which are much cheaper and will allow users to dictate when the lights are on. This will serve as a cost saving measure and help to reduce light trespass and unnecessary usage. Two user control options include a button timer that allows the user to turn the lights on for an hour before they strobe and need to be turned on again, or a button that allows the user to turn them on once during the allowed time, and stay on until the program turns them off.

Plastics Reduction Update

Ms. McManus and Ms. Olney met with Ellen Korpi (chair, Sustainable Energy Committee) and Ellen Gibbs (member, Board of Selectmen) to discuss coordination of efforts to explore possible waste disposal initiatives. Ms. Korpi, Ms. McManus, and Ms. Olney agreed to coordinate a recycling working group which will examine the current state of recycling and waste disposal in Wellesley with the DPW and RDF staff. Ms. Olney informed the board that the Sustainable Energy Committee has affirmed that recycling falls under its scope and mission. Ms. Gross stated that activism for recycling does not necessarily fall within the NRC mission. Ms. McManus and Ms. Olney thought that plastic waste in water and in parks is a big issue and does fall within the mission of the NRC. Ms. McManus stated that

non-recycled waste in our parks negatively impacts wildlife, while Ms. Olney observed that it was after her experience with a trail cleanup that led to her plastic reduction efforts. Ms. Olney concluded that the recycling working group will be considering how to better define the issues around waste and recycling, and making recommendations about how these issues might be addressed.

Reappointment of Wetlands Protection Committee Members

Three motions were made to reappoint liaisons to the CPC and Committee members of the Wetlands Protection Committee as follows:

After a motion was made and seconded to reappoint Joan E. Gaughan to the Community Preservation Committee, the board passed the motion 5-0.

After a motion was made and seconded to reappoint Bob Collins to the Wetlands Protection Committee, the board passed the motion 5-0.

After a motion was made and seconded to reappoint J. Stanley Waugh to the Wetlands Protection Committee, the board passed the motion 5-0.

Set NRC 2015 Meeting Schedule

The board agreed on future meeting dates through the end of February.

Director's Report

Fuller Brook Park Preservation Construction Project

Mr. Murphy appreciated the weekly updates provided by the project manager. Mr. Schmitt stated that the bio-retention areas were complete but will not go online until all of the vegetation is established. Furthermore, the boardwalk sections from Seward to Abbot and from Abbot to Caroline are now complete. The contractors will begin stream work on Monday from Caroline to Forest. The project manager is urging the contractor for submittals for dredging and will be reviewing access, materials handling and dewatering strategies soon. They hope to begin dredging in January or February

NRC FY15 Work Plan

Mr. Schmitt revisited the work plan that was reviewed in the prior meeting, requesting that the Board try to prioritize at least three projects to guide the office. Mr. Schmitt advised the board that the current submittal date for the Open Space plan is 2/13/2015. Changes to the plan were recommended and will be completed by Mr. Schmitt. A meeting to discuss the first steps towards Encroachment correction was scheduled for Friday 12/19 at 11AM.

Update on 135 Great Plain Ave. Development

The closing on the purchase of this 12 acre parcel to Northland Development Corp. has not yet occurred and no plans have been submitted to the Planning Board. Trees on the site have been tagged as part of the site inventory and the Wetland area is currently being delineated.

Route 9 Enhancement Study

Mr. Schmitt introduced a memo prepared by the Planning Board regarding the Route 9 Corridor Enhancement study. The project scope, although of limited interest to the NRC, may have potential impacts on NRC lands and open spaces in Wellesley, and will thus be worthy of future discussion.

Review/Approve NRC November 20, 2014 Meeting Minutes

After a motion was made and seconded, the NRC voted 5-0 to approve the November 20, 2014 Meeting Minutes as revised.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:45

Respectfully submitted,

Brandon Schmitt

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