

TOWN OF WELLESLEY
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
December 18, 2014, 7:30 PM
NRC Office, Town Hall

Approved 1.08.2014

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, Elizabeth Shaw, Laura Fragasso.

Public Voice

Ms. Elizabeth Shaw came to hear the outcome of the stumps in Fuller Brook Park, but did not speak during public voice.

Capital and Operating Budget Review

Mr. Schmitt reviewed slight changes to the Operating Budget that were made after review with the Town Finance Department. **After a motion was made and seconded, the Commission voted 5-0 in favor of approving the FY15 Operating Budget as amended.** Ms. Kapples advised the board that the NRC capital and operating budget defense would be on 1/14/2014 at 8PM in the Juliani room, and that the NRC would be following the MLP.

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

Ms. Gross stated that she had not finished her review of the proposed policy recommendations and would not take any action on the policy at this time, but wanted to entertain the public comment regarding the 2 tree stumps left onsite at Fuller Brook. Ms. Gross also announced that she had received a proposal to include poetry in the park, which would fall under the subcommittee policy. Due to the fact that nothing will be in the park for years while it is under construction, the board agreed to leave the specific discussion to the New Year after the board has had a chance to review the details in full. In terms of the stumps at Fuller Brook, Ms. Fragasso said she would like to see the stumps put to good use if possible and that they could be posted on a recycling site, but would not want to complicate the donation process. **After a motion was made and seconded, the Commission voted 4-1 in favor of removing the 2 maple stumps in Fuller Brook Park on or after January 31st, 2015 at the DPW's convenience providing that the wood be made available to the public.** Ms. Gross stated that the DPW must be responsible for cutting the stumps down and that anyone wanting them must coordinate with the DPW to collect it. Ms. Shaw stated that she did not think it would be too complicated as long as it is made explicit that the wood is available to anyone who wants it.

The discussion of dredging at State Street Pond ensued. See Fuller Brook Park Preservation section under Directors report.

North 40

After learning that the Town had made an initial purchase and sale agreement with Wellesley college to purchase the North 40, Mr. Murphy stated that celebration is warranted, but that the end result will be determined years from now. The board further discussed shared concerns about who will have jurisdiction over the new parcel and how it will ultimately be used. Ms. Gross said that the NRC will advocate for parkland, not athletic field use, although previous Steering committee meetings did center on multi-use fields at the site. The board also discussed the potential dissolution of the NRC and formation of an alternative land use organization or parks and recreation department.

New Business/Continuing Business/Liaison Reports

- CPC funding request: Ms. Gaughan stated that she was pleased with the initial response to the NRC CPC funding requests. She also reported that the CPC might argue that the Kelly field study should wait, but that the other 2 projects have an excellent chance of being approved. Ms. Gaughan explained that although unlikely, due to the North 40 developments, funding for the NRC CPC requests may be denied this year. Ms. Gross said that a Fuller Brook type coordinating committee should be in charge of the North 40 planning process. Ms Gaughan will text Mr. Murphy after a decision is made at the CPC regarding the NRC requests.
- NRC FY15 work plan: Priorities will be set after meeting with the strategic planning consultant. Ms. Gross stated that she has been in contact with J. Woodward about meeting in January. **The board agreed on Saturday, January 24th from 9AM-2PM as a proposed date to meet regarding strategic planning.** Additional

staffing issues affecting overall productivity were discussed in detail. Mr. Schmitt stated that he will make the Open Space and Recreation plan the office's top priority moving forward.

- Subcommittee on Plastics and Polystyrene report: Ms. Olney and Ms McManus met with a representative at Whole Foods to discuss single use plastics and plastic bag elimination in 2008, their process to implement waste reduction and the impact to their business. After a 6 month consumer education and awareness program, there was little impact on their business and they noticed no down-turn in sales. Ms. Olney had requested a meeting with Roche Bros. and had not yet heard a response, and will wait until they move forward with their subcommittee's efforts before reaching out again. Ellen Korpi, head of the Sustainability committee, invited the subcommittee to work on broad recycling issues and waste reduction and "Garbology 101" and invite the public to the RDF for a tour in February. A goal following the tour is to develop initiatives to increase recycling and reduce waste. Ms. Gross told the board that there is a discussion at the RDF to implement single-stream waste. Ms. Gross then said that Ms. McManus and Ms. Olney should be officially appointed to the Recycling Working Group along with the Sustainable Energy Committee and the Board of Selectmen.

After a motion was made and seconded, the Commission voted in 5-0 in favor that the NRC join the Selectmen/DPW and Sustainable Energy Committee in the Recycling working group.

Director's Report

- Fuller Brook Park Preservation construction project
-State Street pond: Ms. Gross explained that the Playing fields task force met and was surprised to learn that dredged materials would be de-watered on the practice field, which would severely impact youth sports, including the spring and fall seasons. The issue will be discussed at the next Fuller Brook Park committee meeting on Friday, 12/19/2014. Mr. Schmitt explained that the proposed dredging had been fully vetted and permitted, but there was clearly a breakdown in communication.
- Route 9 Enhancement Study: Mr. Schmitt pointed out the specific parts of the Route 9 study plan he thought were of particular importance to the Board (storm water management and intersections of Route 9 and NRC land). The board agreed to wait until the project had been developed more clearly in Planning before dedicating further resources to it, realizing that the approval of any recommendations would ultimately be up to Mass DOT.
- DPW collaborative projects: Mr. Schmitt described topics discussed at a meeting held with the DPW on 11.30. Ms. Gross asked that he provide a summary of the topics discussed, which follows:

NRC/DPW Capital Projects

Spending existing pathway funds.

Although there are currently no firm quotes in, we have a few projects in mind where DPW thinks that pathway improvements are warranted, specifically at Brown Park, which would involve paving the small path along the baseball field leading to the playground.

Centennial Reservation Parking Lot improvements

Similar to the pathways there is no firm quote, but we will plan to develop a work plan with Mike about repaving (or resurfacing) at Centennial, both on the road and parking areas.

Town wide Pond Mgt. Program

The NRC has added a line item in our capital budget and will await funding approval from the CPC before requesting it from the General Fund.

Tree Law Violations

The NRC agreed that the letter to respective violators will come from the NRC director after being approved by the NRC chair.

Encroachments / Wetlands Violations:

The NRC committed to sending Mike Quinn the list of the encroachments we have on file. This list has been sent. An initial meeting to review our Encroachment policy and initial steps will be held on Friday 12.19.2014 at the NRC office.

Improved meadow mowing / seeding policy at Centennial Reservation

In an effort to control invasive species, the DPW would like to amend the current mowing schedule (one cutting in the fall) to an experimental area and mow it more frequently. They would still wait until after bird nesting

season, but mow in late July to control invasives, and then cut again very short in fall and seed. This issue may require a change in the management plan for centennial and consequently a vote by the board.

- Morses Pond weed harvesting report: Mr. Schmitt reported that more than 465,000 lbs of invasive aquatic weeds were removed by the DPW from 5/2014-11/2014. Mr. Schmitt agreed to post this on the NRC facebook page.
- Conflict of interest replies: Mr. Schmitt requested that the board complete the receipt forms for the Conflict of interest law requirements and to complete the certificate when able.
- Tree Hearing Dates: **An initial date of March 5, 2015 was approved for the next tree hearing date.**

Review/Approve NRC December 04, 2014 Meeting Minutes

After a motion was made and seconded, the NRC voted 5-0 to approve the December 4, 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 10:35

Note: A recording of this meeting is available from the NRC office.

Respectfully submitted,
Brandon Schmitt
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