

**TOWN OF WELLESLEY
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
March 18, 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: Bob White, Laura Fragasso, Susan Adler, Abby Glassenberg, Neal Seaborn.

Public Voice

No one attending the meeting spoke at Public Voice.

New NRC Board Members

The NRC welcomed new members Raina McManus and Lise Olney.

Bandstand Proposal in Town Hall Bowl Parkland

Ms. Bowser stated that a Town resident, Mr. Thomas Purcell of Grove Street, submitted a letter regarding a possible bandstand in this area to the Board of Selectmen in November 2013 and that he had not received any response. He visited the NRC office on March 14, 2014 and submitted the same letter to Ms. Bowser and requested that it be presented to the NRC. Ms. Bowser stated that she reviewed the history of the bandstand with Mr. Purcell. The NRC briefly discussed this request and noted that they had previously discussed the Town Hall Bowl area as a possible location for a bandstand with the then-proponent the Wellesley House and Garden Club, but the club indicated that this location was not visible enough for their proposed gift of a bandstand. The NRC stated that they have no funds to pay for a bandstand and that this is not a priority project for them at this time, but that if the funds for a new bandstand were to be raised privately that they would consider siting it in the Town Hall bowl area where the Recreation Commission's summertime concerts are currently held on a temporary stage. Ms. Gaughan stated that she will follow-up with Mr. Purcell to further this potential project.

Request for Permit to Use Simons Park for Community "Arts in the Park" Project

Ms. Laura Fragasso and Ms. Abby Glassenberg attended the meeting on behalf of the event's organizers, the Wellesley Women Artisans (WWA) and the Wellesley Community Art Project (WCAP). The proposed community art experience will take place on the Saturday of Wellesley's Wonderful Weekend, May 17, 2014 from 9AM to 3PM ideally at Simons Park next to the Wellesley Free Library as the event was approved last year by the NRC. Wellesley's Local Cultural Council once again granted \$400.00 to cover costs of the event. The activity is free and available to all ages and abilities.

Statement of Project Proposal

Ms. Fragasso and Ms. Glassenberg indicated that the Art in the Park project will be a community wide art-making event where people will be engaged in making a temporary public art piece. The overarching framework will be created in advance with materials and simple instructions provided to participants on the day of the event, supervised and facilitated by Wellesley Women Artisans, Wellesley Community Art Project, and local art students. We've chosen to work on reclaimed LP vinyl records, many from Wellesley's RDF Reusable's Area. We are still working on the medium and can guarantee that no toxins will hit the ground. The finished work will reflect the collective creativity of our community and will be an ephemeral piece on display ideally for a few weeks as was done last year. Note that the parade theme is the 200th anniversary of the Star Spangled Banner and our event will tie to this theme in some way. The individual LPs will be connected together with zip ties by supervisors and facilitators to create a large-scale installation. Ideally we would like to begin the installation between two trees again this year. The proposed project provides public benefit and contributes to the cultural vitality of the community as a whole. Free community art experiences connect people and groups within the community who might otherwise not cross paths. Community art can inspire creativity,

stimulate questions, conversations and reflections, foster problem solving, and give people an overall sense of positive engagement in the community. Art events can also connect Wellesley to other communities and other communities to Wellesley. Through this experience residents and non-residents will recognize Wellesley as a place that welcomes creative self-expression through the visual arts, and encourages people to work together to create something bigger than oneself.

The 16 members of WWA, all experienced artists, are highly committed to making this project a success for the community. In addition, it is proposed to engage art students from Wellesley High School and Wellesley College to help set up, facilitate art making, and clean up. Ms. Fragasso stated that the organizers hope is for this to be a sustainable event that can continue year after year, building excitement for the visual arts in Wellesley. She requested that, if approved, the NRC help publicize this event. **After further discussion, a motion was made and seconded and the NRC voted 5-0 to approve the issuance of a park permit for the “Arts in the Park” project in Simons Park as presented.**

New Business/Continuing Business/Liaison Reports

Discussion and Vote Re: New Trails Committee Charter and Operational Guidelines

The NRC reviewed and discussed the proposed charter and operational guidelines outlined below that were approved in draft form by the Trails Committee and previously circulated to all NRC members.

THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION’S TRAILS COMMITTEE CHARTER

BACKGROUND

Promotion of a Biking and Pedestrian trails system in Wellesley was originally conceived and promoted in 1975 by the Wellesley Celebrations Committee as a Bicentennial Celebrations project. Financing for the project of \$15,000 was authorized under Article 22 of the 1975 Town Meeting and work progressed over a two-year period with much help from the Wellesley Public Works Department. In 1993, the Natural Resources Commission established a special committee of sixteen, known as the “Bikeways and Walkways Study Committee”, devoted to “planning trails for the 90’s and beyond” throughout the community. John G. Schuler was the Chairman of both the Celebrations Committee in 1975 and of the NRC Study Committee in 1993.

MISSION AND GENERAL GOALS

The Committee shall be responsible for developing, enhancing and maintaining a trails system in Wellesley and encouraging its use.

Additionally, the Committee shall explore ideas for interconnecting Wellesley’s open spaces by working with Town boards and departments on new trail development and negotiating trail usage and access with these and other organizations, such as the State government, adjoining towns and private land owners. When trail additions or changes are proposed, the Committee shall secure permission from the landowner or entity with jurisdiction.

TRAILS COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

The Committee shall consist of Wellesley residents, and all appointments shall be confirmed by the NRC Board. One member shall be a Commissioner of the NRC serving as liaison. The Committee shall elect from its body a Chair and a Secretary (who may be the same person) and other positions as the Committee may deem necessary, all serving a one-year term, starting on July 1st and ending on June 30th. Election results shall be reported to the NRC promptly. Terms of office for all Committee members will be renewed annually. Resignations will be submitted in writing unless they coincide with the end of a term. With the approval of the NRC, the Committee may appoint individuals who are not residents of Wellesley as non-voting members.

DUTIES

- The Committee shall conduct its meetings and its business in accordance with applicable laws, bylaws and regulations, including these Guidelines and Procedures.
- The Committee shall meet regularly to plan and review proposed projects and budgets. In accomplishing planned projects, the Committee is strongly encouraged to enlist the help of volunteers

including scout troops, Eagle Scout candidates, Key Club members, individuals and other service groups, as well as the Department of Public Works (DPW).

- The Committee shall advise and assist the NRC towards fulfilling its responsibilities as stewards of the land within the jurisdiction of the NRC's designated trails. The same role will be exercised on other public lands within Wellesley where consent from other entities with jurisdiction has been received. Trail Signage may be placed on any new trail only with permission of the landowner or entity with jurisdiction.
- The Committee shall:
 1. Regularly monitor the trails, report conditions, maintenance needs and needed improvements;
 2. Maintain the trails using best practices;
 3. Identify appropriate locations for additional trails and linkages; coordinating with Town and State officials and private owners for this purpose.
 4. Provide public education and outreach regarding the trails, develop and revise trail maps and descriptions for public distribution; and
- The Chair of the Committee shall provide the NRC Commissioners with electronic copies of all meeting agendas, adopted minutes and project status reports.
- The Chair shall submit to the NRC Commissioners a written Fiscal Year Report for NRC review no later than August 15th, which shall include all major activities of the past year.
- The Chair will submit to the NRC Commissioners a written detailed Budget request for the NRC Board's review not later than September 15th, which shall include desired longer term plans.

After a motion was made and seconded, the NRC voted 5-0 to approve the new Trails Committee Charter as presented.

Morses Pond Management Services Contract Extension

After a motion was made and seconded, the NRC voted 5-0 to approve the extension of the Morses Pond Comprehensive Management Plan contract for pond management services with Dr. Ken Wagner of Water Resources Inc. for a one year period.

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

Ms. Bowser stated that the Planning Board will be creating an Outdoor Lighting and Noise Study Committee and have requested that the NRC appoint a member to serve on the Committee and that an official request should be received shortly and will be distributed to all members. Ms. McManus expressed her interest in representing the NRC on the Committee and stated that she has worked on noise and lighting issues for the Friends of Brookside.

Director's Report

Fuller Brook Park Preservation Construction Project – Phase 4 Update

Ms. Bowser provided an update on the status of the Phase 4 construction bid estimate, which is \$5.4 million including project management costs and a contingency of 12%.

NRC Environmental Education Film Series – “Simple Steps to a Greener Home” on Feb. 25th

Ms. Bowser stated that over 30 people attended the NRC's first environmental education film shown on Feb. 25th. This new film series initiative is 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 film “Simple Steps to a Greener Home” was well received and led viewers through some easy steps to a greener home. The program was followed by a brief discussion by former NRC board member Dr. Sarah Little, who offered simple step-by-step green cleaning recipes and a Q & A session. Ms. Bowser stated that the film series will be held quarterly and the three

additional films to be shown are “Six Degrees that Could Change the World,” “A Tour of Selected National Parks” and “Bag It.”

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.

Upcoming NRC Environmental Education/Outreach Events/Programs

Ms. Bowser stated that she will once again be organizing the NRC’s 15th Annual Earth Day Clean-Up Along the Charles River on April 26th from 10 AM - 12 PM and the NRC’s 10th Annual Vernal Pool Workshop on May 10th from 10 AM- 12 PM. All NRC members are encouraged to attend.

Discussion and Vote Re: NRC Departmental Reorganization

The NRC reviewed a document outlining the following proposed staffing model:

- Director of Natural Resources – full-time (position description under review)
- Director of Special Projects – full-time (position description prepared)
- Secretary – job share totaling 30 hours per week (position had been advertised as full-time. The preferred candidate, Colleen King, has indicated that she is willing to work 18 hours per week (no offer has been made as yet. A second candidate to work 12 hours per week will be recruited.)
- The part-time (19 hours) position Environmental Education Coordinator will be eliminated effective June 30, 2014.

Wetlands Protection Committee:

- Wetlands Administrator – 21 hours per week; additional funds from expense budget for technical consultant services (delineations, etc.) (Position has been established by HR Board in Job Group 53; recruitment is under way.)

After a motion was made and seconded, the NRC voted 5-0 that the Human Resources Board be requested to establish the position of Director of Special Projects; if approved, this position will be assumed by Janet Hartke Bowser at her current annualized salary.

After a motion was made and seconded, the NRC voted 5-0 that the Human Resources Director be requested to approve the hourly wage rate of Job Group 45 step 3 (\$20.26) for Colleen King, for the position of NRC Secretary, 18 hours per week.

Next steps:

- Complete recruitment and selection of Wetlands Administrator
- Complete review of Director of Natural Resources position description
- Recruitment and selection of new Director
- Recruitment and selection of secretary for 12 hours (assuming Ms. King accepts the offer)

There will be adjustments to the NRC and Morses Pond budget requests for FY 15, and some further transfers after July 1, 2014, to allow this model to be implemented.

Next Scheduled NRC Meeting

The next NRC Meeting was scheduled for April 17, 2014 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 10:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Janet Hartke Bowser

Janet Hartke Bowser

NRC Director

