

Your vision is needed for Fuller Brook Park



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Collapsed liners, sediment and plant intrusion

Stream overflow in heavy rain

Fuller Brook Park, which includes “The Brook Path,” is Wellesley’s most popular and well-used public park. This linear park, which follows portions of the Fuller Brook and its tributary Caroline Brook, was established by the town of Wellesley in 1899, based on advice from the prominent landscape architectural firm of Olmsted, Olmsted and Elliott (of Boston Emerald Necklace fame) and significant design planning by Warren H. Manning. Then, in 1915, the park was extended and a “boulevard” was established along Fuller Brook based on recommendations by Ernest W. Bowditch. Their concepts addressed the dual mandates of improving the drainage of flood-prone areas and providing parkland near the center of town. Currently, the park watershed collects stormwater runoff from more than half of Wellesley before emptying into the Charles River via Waban Brook.

For a more detailed physical description of the park and its history, please visit the Fuller Brook Park Improvement Project website at www.wellesleyma.gov/Fullerbrook and read the Park Master Plan listed there. Because of its historical significance to the town of Wellesley, the park has been determined to be a site of historical significance by the Massachusetts Historical Commission

and is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as a historic landscape. This nomination process is currently under way.

The dual mandates on the park have, however, presented a management challenge and involved multiple town agencies for more than a century. In recent years, increased recreational use and a new

emphasis on protecting natural resources and historical values have raised additional issues. For the next century, concerns regarding the maintenance of the park vegetation, paths and streamcourse have intensified as the park’s infrastructure has deteriorated.

Currently, the town, acting through its Natural Resources Commission, the Fuller Brook Park Coordinating Committee and a design team led by Pressley Associates of Cambridge, will help visualize alternatives and reach consensus on what the nature of the park could be, will develop cost estimates and will define phasing plans for implementation. The goal will be to preserve and restore the aesthetics and historic integrity of the park while visualizing how to improve its infrastructure, ecological environment and universal access throughout the park. This effort will include considerable public input and, in the spirit of its original creators, will consider cohesive native plantings, pathway

design and streamcourse improvements.

To accomplish this effort, we need your personal address information, so that we can easily communicate with you as we work together to develop a plan responsive to your concerns and desires. To be placed on the town’s e-mail distribution list for receipt of notices about the project’s progress and meetings, for making suggestions or for offering comments about the effort, visit the Fuller Brook Park Improvement Project website at www.wellesleyma.gov/Fullerbrook. To be contacted through Postal Service mail, call the NRC Office at 781-431-1019, ext. 2294, and request that you be added to the Fuller Brook Park mailing list.

Also, you can get directly involved in the Fuller Brook Park Improvement Project by attending several of the public meetings currently planned to be held during 2010. These are as follows:

Wednesday, Sept. 15, 7:30 p.m., Great Hall, Wellesley Town Hall

• First public meeting: Presentation and Public Feedback on Issues, Opportunities and Goals

Thursday, Sept. 16, 9:30 a.m., Juliani Room, Wellesley Town Hall

• Encore of first public meeting: same topic as listed above

Wednesday, Oct. 27, 7:30 p.m., Great Hall, Wellesley Town Hall

• Second public meeting: Presentation and Public Feedback on Preliminary Design Alternatives

Thursday, Oct. 28, 9:30 a.m., Juliani Room, Wellesley Town Hall

• Encore of second public meeting: same topic as listed above

Wednesday Dec. 15, 7:30 p.m., Great Hall, Wellesley Town Hall

• Third public meeting: Presentation and Public Feedback on Preferred Design Alternative

Thursday, Dec. 16, 9:30 a.m., Juliani Room, Wellesley Town Hall

• Encore of third public meeting: same topic as listed above

Please join us in this design effort to help decide the nature of the Fuller Brook Park and its contributions to the citizens of Wellesley for the next century.

• Neal Seaborn is chairman of the Wellesley Natural Resources Commission and the Fuller Brook Park Coordinating Committee.

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GUEST COLUMNIST