

CITY OF BEVERLY
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

BOARD: Open Space and Recreation Committee
SUBCOMMITTEE: None
LOCATION: Beverly City Hall Council Chambers
DATE: March 1, 2023
BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairperson David Alden-St. Pierre, Vice Chair David Brewster, Marilyn McCrory, Todd Callaghan, Elizabeth Dunne, Alison Dudley Charlie Mann, Gregory Sharp, James Passanisi, Amber Redmond
BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Wayne Miller
STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Victoria Healey (City of Beverly Planning Department)
OTHERS PRESENT: Rosemary Whiting, Eagle Scout candidate Ryan Whiting, member of the public Mario Tricome
RECORDER: Naomi Moca

1. Call to order

Chair Alden-St. Pierre calls the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

2. Eagle Scout update – Ryan Whiting

Eagle Scout candidate Ryan Whiting describes the proposed project, which will entail making and installing trail signs at the JC Phillips Reservation. Whiting states that there will be seven signposts and 14 signs in total. Whiting describes options for two styles of sign and three types of post. Whiting states that he plans to recruit around 20 volunteers from his Scout Troop and Cross Country/Track team, plus family and friends. Whiting states that he will coordinate volunteers to first design the signs with a CNC router, then paint and install them.

Whiting states that the proposed sign names are “Wenham Lake Lookout,” “Phillips Path,” “Olmsted Shortcut,” “Moraine Esker,” “Foley Trail,” and “Parking Lot.” The Commission discusses the origin of the site names, the geological naming of the sites, and the proposed names for the trails.

Whiting details the project supplies needed and states that the posts will be made of pressure treated wood, the signs will be made of high density polyethylene (HDPE) and wood, and the signs will be affixed to the posts using anti-theft style/star screws and adhesive or wood glue. The Commission discusses the need to cut rebar and drill the posts in advance, and the pros and cons of the different materials.

The Commission recommends Whiting contact the City Conservation Agent to check what the impact of the project may be. The Commission discusses the parking lot as a staging area for the second stage of the project, Whiting contacting the property owner of the private driveway, the time frame of the project, and the stages of the installation.

The Commission discusses with Whiting the trail maintenance, whether the signs will be numbered, updating the maps on the City website to add the names, and the target date for the installation.

Tricome asks when Whiting will turn 18 years old and recommends that Whiting get approval from the District for the project. The Commission discusses the origin of the site being classified as protected as initiated decades ago by Dominic Manzoli, and recommends that Whiting contact the Historic District for more information about the history of the property.

3. Updates from other boards and commissions

a. Community Preservation Committee (CPC):

McCrary states that there is a continuing discussion about the location of the pickleball courts; there was a meeting between residents of the proposed site's neighborhood and the City on February 28, 2023.

b. Conservation Commission:

Redmond states that there is a new vacancy on the Commission due to the resignation of Meghan Jones. Redmond states that the Commission reviewed the installation of kayak racks at three different sites, approved the Norwood Pond project, and is awaiting an application for the trail and stream crossing at Sally Milligan.

c. Harbor Management Authority:

Callaghan states that there is a list of 60-100 kayakers waiting to get kayak rack space, and comments that it is a feature that should pay for itself quickly. The Authority is looking for grants for construction projects to upgrade the Harbor, including improvements to the pier and stone bulkhead. The Authority is reviewing access to the former Rowand's site, which will become a parking lot, a pier float system, and a walking path. Callaghan reports that he and Danielle Spang, Vice Chair of the Beverly Harbor Management Authority, are sitting on a committee to support the City-led Resiliency Study of the Bass River area to develop flood resilience strategies, funded through the Municipal Vulnerability Program (MVP). Callaghan states Salem Sound Coast Watch is conducting the public engagement, including 3 public meetings.

4. Staff Updates

Healey states that she submitted the grant initiation form for the Sally Milligan project today, and that she is currently working through the Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) for the Conservation Commission. Healey states that she is currently working with the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) professional with the City to finalize the Sally Milligan site map to then forward to the Conservation Agent. Healey states that she received a quote from the City's Arborist for the Norwood Pond pine tree removal, which will be paid for with funds given to the City by the Cummings Properties for this purpose. Healey states that she had edited the Open Space and Recreation action plan.

5. Encroachment Policy Review

Members review the Encroachment Policy and offer edits.

6. Other related topics, if any

Dunne comments that e-bikes appear to be using paths, based on tire markings she has observed. The members discuss the pros and cons of e-bikes on paths. Chair Alden-St. Pierre states that there are three types of e-bikes: Class 1, which is pedal assist, Class 2, which is throttle assist, and Class 3, which is essentially an electric motorcycle. The members discuss the use of the paths by dirt bikes, and the potential obstacles to regulating e-bike use, should regulation become necessary.

The members discuss the new Conservation Restriction (CR), made by the private property owner and held by Essex County Greenbelt on the eastern side of Norwood Pond, adjacent to Beaver Pond Road, totaling 20 acres. The CR will permanently protect the land from development while remaining in private ownership.

The members discuss advertising the new trails once Whiting's work is finished, and possibly hosting a series of walk-and-talks in partnership with various organizations. The Commission discusses a slide show presentation.

Callaghan states that he has observed at Sally Milligan that the chain in the parking lot is still in place, and that he observed bikers going through the soccer field instead of around it. The Commission discusses guiding bikers through the trails adjacent to the field as a potential future project.

Healey states that the City finalized design guidelines for signs for recreational spaces, which include a regulatory signs for open space. These can be installed at the kiosks. The members discuss whether the Conservation Commission would consider funding some of the signs, what priority the City has placed on replacing and updating signs, and the quantity discount for the sign pricing.

7. Approval of meeting minutes, as available

a. January 5, 2023 meeting minutes

Members review and offer edits to the January 5, 2023 draft meeting minutes.

Callaghan: Motion to accept the January 5, 2023 meeting minutes as amended.
Dunne seconds the motion. Motion carries (9-0).

b. February 1, 2023 meeting minutes

Members review and offer edits to the February 1, 2023 draft meeting minutes.

Callaghan: Motion to accept the February 1, 2023 meeting minutes as amended.
Redmond seconds the motion. Motion carries (9-0).

The members discuss with Healey the tasks she will undertake as a result of this meeting, including learning the outcome of the February 28, 2023 City meeting regarding the building of pickleball courts, initiating a trail easement, forwarding the finalized Encroachment Policy internally, researching any Earth Day walks scheduled by other organizations, scheduling walk-and-talks, and inquiring about what the sign priorities for the future are.

8. Adjourn

McCrory: Motion to adjourn. Callaghan seconds. Motion carries (9-0).

Meeting adjourned 9:00 p.m.

Next meeting: April 5, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.