



Setti D. Warren  
Mayor

## Off-Leash Area Working Group

February 26, 2010

9:00 am

Room 222-City Hall

Meeting Minutes



Robert J. DeRubeis  
Interim  
Commissioner

**Attending:** Bob DeRubeis, *Interim P & R Commissioner*, Lee McIntyre, *Friends of Cold Spring Park*, Officer Ralph Torres, *Animal Control Officer*, Walter Bernheimer, *P & R Commission Member*, Amy Koel, *DOLAC Chairman*, Carol Schein, *P & R Open Space Coordinator*, Ted Kuklinski, *Newton Conservators*, Ann Dorfman, *Citizen Representative*, Candace Havens, *Interim Planning Director*

### 1. Development of criteria for feasible green areas-Phase 1 - Review green space evaluations

- Mr. Bernheimer stated he has received the lists of all green space available around the city. There are a lot of areas. At last week's meeting using the list of City parks only the group came up with 42 unofficial OLA's (when combined) and 22 areas not used as an OLA. Mr. Bernheimer recommends the group go through the 42 unofficial OLA's and eliminate areas used only by 1-2 dogs to streamline the process.
- Mr. McIntyre agreed and inquired if another filter should be used, such as the size of an area.
- Ms. Dorfman did not agree with ignoring all 42 sites. Mr. Bernheimer stated that is not what he suggested; he recommended splitting the 42 areas into two groups; areas used by 1-2 off leash dogs and areas used by many off leash dogs.
- Ms. Dorfman stated she is not sure all of the OLAWG members have the same goals and inquired what exactly the group wants to happen.
- Mr. Bernheimer stated he would like to see good enforcement. There are no issues in official sites it is the unofficial OLA's that are the problem. He would recommend sending the Animal Control Officer to the unofficial OLA sites and to deputize other citizens to assist.
- Ms. Dorfman stated her goal is not to create dog parks but to create a good quality of life for Newton residents.
- Mr. Bernheimer disagreed with Ms. Dorfman and stated the Off-Leash Area Working Group has been assigned the task of creating off leash areas based on the existing law. If Ms. Dorfman would like to change the leash law she would need to go before the Board of Alderman.
- Mr. McIntyre agreed with Mr. Bernheimer and stated the charge from the Mayor to the OLAWG is to try and find other OLA's. If we go beyond that task the group will get stuck. The group is still in the sorting phase.
- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis disagrees with Ms. Dorfman and agreed the group needs to continue to refine the list. OLAWG is charged to develop OLA's.
- Mr. Bernheimer stated creating OLA's can improve the quality of life. If not the group would re-examine.
- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis recommended setting aside time for discussion on this philosophical difference. The group needs to look at the list of unofficial OLA's and decide if an area should be evaluated.
- Mr. McIntyre recommended the group also look at areas that may not have dogs but may be worth evaluating.

- Mr. Kuklinski presented the major conservation area green space:
  - Norumbega - 13 acres
  - Flowed Meadow – 28 acres
  - Dolan Pond – 9 acres
  - Webster Conservation Area – 114 Acres
  - Houghton Garden – 10 Acres
  - Kennard Conservation Area – 32.2 Acres
  - Saw Mill Brook Conservation Area – 20 Acres
  - Charles River Path/Wells Avenue – 15 Acres
  - Ordway Park (Newton Conservators owned) – 0.5 Acres
- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated the group will review the list and decide if the area will be evaluated. (See Attachment A)
- Ms. Koel inquired what criteria the group will use to determine if an area should be evaluated.
- Ms. Dorfman inquired if the group is looking for areas with year round usage.
- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated yes.
- Mr. McIntyre recommended looking at the list and if the group could reasonably see the green space as an OLA, then the area would be evaluated.
- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis asked how the park evaluations will be assigned. The group members volunteered for the different locations.
- Ms. Koel commented the group should be careful about eliminating an area due to the size; some smaller locations would work for small dogs and puppies.
- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis requested each evaluation include a final bottom number for each area. Mr. McIntyre commented the narrative portion of the evaluation is very important.
- Ms. Koel commented the total score could assist in creating a priority list.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Robin McLaughlin

**Action Items from 02-26-10 Meeting:**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Person</i>	<i>Date to be completed</i>
Each member will go to assigned green space and evaluate the area using the criteria	All	03-05-10
Remove OLA site application from website	Robin	03-05-10

## ATTACHMENT A

Ward	Park	Unofficial OLA	E=Evaluate
1	Forte Park	Y	E
1	Boyd Park/Lincoln-Eliot Playground	Y	E
1	Carleton Park	Y	N-size
1	Charlesbank Park	N	N
1	Hunnell Playground	Y	E
1	Pelligrini Playground	Y	N-usage
1	Stearns Park	Y	E
1	Coletti-Magni Park	N	N
1	Veterans Memorial Park	N	N
1	Walnut Park	N	E
2	Halloran Sports Complex	Y	E
2	Gath Pool	N	N
2	Bullough's Pond	N	N
2	Cultural Center	Y	N-usage
2	Clafin Playground	Y	E
2	Cabot Park	Y	E
2	NNHS	N	N
2	Edmands Park	Y	E
2	Ed Center	N	N
2	Elmwood Park	Y	E
2	Lowell Park	Y	N-size
2	Washington Park	Y	N-Historic
3	Tom Torchia Playground/NCSC Playground	Y	E
3	Franklin School Playground	Y	N-usage
3	McGrath Park	Y	E
3	West Newton Commons	Y	E
3	Capt. Ryan Park	N	N
3	Wellington Playground	Y	E
3	River St Playground	Y	N-size
4	Burr School Playground	Y	E
4	Hamilton Playground	Y	N-usage
4	The Cove	Y	E
4	Lyons Park	N	N
4	Islington Oval	Y	N-location
4	Pierce School Playground	N	N
4	Williams School Playground	N	N
4	Ford Playground	N	N

Ward	Park	Unofficial OLA	E=Evaluate
5	Angier School Playground	N	N
5	New Cold Spring Park	Y	E
5	Old Cold Spring Park	Y	E
5	Emerson Playground	Y	N-usage
5	Hyde Playground	N	N-usage
5	Warren Lincoln Playground	Y	E
5	Braceland Playground	Y	E
5	Richardson Playground	N	E
5	Zervas School Playground	N	N
6	Newton Centre	Y	E
6	Mason Rice Playground	Y	N
6	Crystal Lake	Y	N
6	Levingston Cove	Y	N
6	Cronin's Cove	Y	N
6	Newton Highlands Playground	Y	E
6	Thompsonville Playground	Y	E
6	Newton Centre Green	N	N
6	Weeks Park	Y	E
7	Burr Park	Y	E
7	Chaffin Park	Y	N-usage
7	Farlow Park	Y	N-historic
7	Eliot Memorial Park	N	N
7	Ward Park	Y	E
7	Ward School Playground	Y	E
7	Webster Park	N	N
8	Countryside School Playground	Y	N-usage
8	Brown & Oak Middle School Playground	Y	E
8	Solomon Schecter Playground	N	N
8	NSHS - area near tennis court	Y	E
8	Memorial Spaulding Playground	N	N
8	Nahanton Park	Y	E
8	Kennard Park	Y	E
Consv	Norumbega	Y	E
Consv	Flowed Meadow	N	E
Consv	Webster Conservation Area	N	E