



Setti D. Warren
Mayor

Off-Leash Area Working Group

May 28, 2010, 9:00 am
Room 222- City Hall
Meeting Minutes



Robert J. DeRubeis
Interim
Commissioner

Attending: Susan Albright, *Alderman*, Bob DeRubeis, *Interim P & R Commissioner*, Amy Koel, *DOLAC Chairman*, Carol Schein, *P & R Open Space Coordinator*, Carol Stapleton, *P & R Recreation Manager*, Officer Ralph Torres, *Animal Control Officer*, Ann Dorfman, *Citizen Representative*, Lee McIntyre, *Citizen Representative*, Ted Kuklinski, *Citizen Representative*

Absent: Candace Havens, *Interim Planning Director*, Walter Bernheimer, *P & R Commission*, Fran Rice, *P & R Commission*

Also Attending: Harry Sanders, *Resident*

1. June 14, 2010 Commission Presentation

- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated Claflin Park and McGrath Park will have the community meeting on June 14 at 7:00 pm in the War Memorial in City Hall. The Commission has not scheduled a community meeting for Old Cold Spring Park.

2. Norumbega Park Proposal

- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated the proposal for Norumbega Park will go before the Conservation Commission on July 21, 2010. The information must be sent to Anne Phelps, Environmental Planner/Conservation Commission at least a week before for review.
- Ms. Koel sent an e-mail to Norm Richardson regarding the proposal. Mr. Richardson should be in touch with the group.
- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis asked who should be presenting the proposal, the proposers, Norm Richardson, or a member of OLAWG.
- Mr. McIntyre inquired if Mr. Richardson could present the proposal where he is a member of the Conservation Commission?
- Alderman Albright stated the ordinance would require Interim Commissioner DeRubeis to present the proposal to the Conservation Commission.
- Ms. Dorfman stated her concern that a dog park is being created in an area where there is no support from the users.
- Ms. Koel stated the proposal was brought for the by users of Norumbega Park.
- Ms. Dorfman stated everyone needs to buy in on the idea. Ms Koel stated there are three groups; people who know about the proposal and want an off leash area, people who know about the proposal and do not want an off leash area, and people who do not know about the proposal at all.
- Mr. McIntyre inquired how this proposal from Norumbega came about, did it come from the original proposal. Ms. Koel stated yes, and the group also worked with Norm Richardson.
- Ms. Dorfman stated the proposal is creating a situation similar to Cold Spring Park; there are trails and a meadow in Norumbega.
- Ms. Koel stated she has walked the park and the proposal allows for a full loop of the trails. Water access is also included. Mr. Richardson assisted in writing a proposal that would have a chance of passing. The one area where there is erosion would be excluded from the off leash dogs. Off leash dogs have not been confirmed as the reason for the erosion, but keeping the off leash dogs out of the area would help in

- preventing any further erosion. Mr. Kuklinski stated the fencing will help prevent erosion.
- Ms. Dorfman suggested an informal meeting with the Norumbega Park community to have a dialogue and get some feedback from the community. OLAWG needs to get more information.
- Mr. Sanders commented there are two groups/cultures in Norumbega Park, the trail users and meadow users. If the trail users are restricted from using the trails off leash they will move to another location. A lot of the trail users at Norumbega Park came from Cold Spring Park when the off leash area was legalized. Another issue that is being ignored at Norumbega Park is the history of the park.
- Alderman Albright asked if OLAWG should be more interactive with the public. OLAWG completed the first phase in determining the initial group of parks to be proposed as OLA's. Should there be a second phase where OLAWG meets with the public before a park is presented to the P & R Commission.
- Ms. Schein stated the proposal for Norumbega Park may not be the final design. The proposal could be tweaked with public input, but we need to start somewhere.
- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis asked; if we forward with the Community meetings for Claflin Park & McGrath Park, does OLAWG have an information meeting before the P & R Commission community meeting.
- Mr. McIntyre stated Claflin Park & McGrath Park have already been presented to the P & R Commission. The Norumbega Park proposal has not been presented to the Conservation Commission.
- Alderman Albright stated the process for the Parks & Recreation Commission has been put in motion for Claflin Park & McGrath Park. Interim Commissioner DeRubeis agreed the group should continue moving forward as scheduled.
- Mr. Kuklinski stated change is always difficult and suspects the people and dog owners at Norumbega Park do not want change. It may be a good idea to have a meeting at Norumbega; he has observed the two types of users at Norumbega, the trail users and meadow users.
- Alderman Albright recommended the proposers for Norumbega Park come to the next OLAWG meeting to answer the groups' questions, and then the group can make a decision after the next meeting. Interim Commissioner DeRubeis asked the group consensus on Alderman Albright's recommendation. The group agreed to invite the proposers to the next meeting and then move forward from that point. Ms. McLaughlin will invite the proposers and Mr. Richardson to the June4, 2010 OLAWG meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin McLaughlin, Secretary