



Setti D. Warren  
Mayor

## Off-Leash Area Working Group

June 4, 2010, 9:00 am  
Room 222- City Hall  
Meeting Minutes



Robert J. DeRubeis  
Interim  
Commissioner

**Attending:** Bob DeRubeis, *Interim P & R Commissioner*, Carol Schein, *P & R Open Space Coordinator*, Walter Bernheimer, *P & R Commission*, Officer Ralph Torres, *Animal Control Officer*, Ann Dorfman, *Citizen Representative*, Lee McIntyre, *Citizen Representative*, Ted Kuklinski, *Citizen Representative*

**Absent:** Susan Albright, *Alderman*, Candace Havens, *Interim Planning Director*, Fran Rice, *P & R Commission*, Amy Koel, *DOLAC Chairman*, Carol Stapleton, *P & R Recreation Manager*

**Also Attending:** Harry Sanders, *Resident*, Patrice Joyce, *Resident*, Eve Cohen, *Resident*

### 1. June 14, 2010 Commission Presentation

- ☛ Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated he attended a meeting with Mayor Warren and Eve Cohen of Beverly Road regarding the off leash area at Old Cold Spring Park. Time restrictions were discussed. In Old Cold Spring Park Ms. Cohen recommended hours of 8am – 11am, seven days a week.
- ☛ Mr. McIntyre stated with time restrictions there will still be enforcement issues with trail walkers. The trail walkers will not go away because time restrictions are imposed for the park's OLA. Mr. Bernheimer agreed.
- ☛ Ms. Dorfman commented documentation of the issues on the trail is important. Ms. Dorfman has the documentation and will forward to the members. Ms. Dorfman does not believe hour restrictions will stop the issues on the trails.
- ☛ Mr. Bernheimer asked Officer Torres if there would be additional issues with enforcement due to hourly restrictions. Officer Torres stated enforcement is difficult with only one animal control officer.
- ☛ Mr. Bernheimer stated limited hours in the off leash areas is a reasonable request, possibly times when there is permitted activities on the field, but the requested hours of 8am – 11am seven days a week at Cold Spring park is unreasonable.
- ☛ Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated NNHS Athletic Director, Tom Giusti has contacted him for permission to use Claflin Park as a practice field during the next school year. NNHS is currently using the field for practice and will not be denied permission to use the park for practice. Time restrictions would need to be implemented in an off leash area at Claflin Park during practice hours.
- ☛ Mr. McIntyre stated the same restrictions on athletic events could be sanctioned at Old Cold Spring Park. Ms. Dorfman stated notices would have to be posted of time restrictions.
- ☛ Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated these issues will be brought up during the community meeting on June 14.
- ☛ Mr. McIntyre suggested because there will be people present at the meeting that are new to the issue, a brief education on the history may be helpful.

### 2. Norumbega Park Proposal

- ☛ Interim Commissioner DeRubeis introduced Patrice Joyce, co-author of the Norumbega Park Proposal. Ms. Joyce was invited to answer the group's questions regarding the proposal.
- ☛ Mr. McIntyre asked what the extent of support was by the park users. Ms. Joyce stated she has been using the park since 1970. In speaking with the park users they would

- like to keep the park as it is. Ms. Joyce was asked to put the proposal together because the users have been told off leash enforcement is coming to all areas.
- Mr. McIntyre inquired if the fence on the trail was proposed due to conservation issues. Ms. Joyce stated the fence was proposed to keep the trails and the wildlife safe. Mr. McIntyre asked what percentage of people use the trails. Ms. Joyce estimated about 20% of the people use the trails. Ms. Dorfman believes 20% is a low estimate.
- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis inquired if Ms. Joyce heard more objection or buy in. Ms. Dorfman commented if the entire park was made a legal off leash area there would be less dissent. Ms. Joyce stated there is strong support for the fence.
- Ms. Dorfman commented if trees were removed from the trail, where the trail forks, people would see a different trail option, behavior would change.
- Ms. Joyce stated the group should sit with the Conservation Commission to see what is acceptable and what is not acceptable. Ms. Joyce is hesitant to go to the Community before the Conservation Commission weighs in on the subject.
- Mr. Bernheimer stated the process works the opposite way. There is an established leash law and to make any changes input is required from the community in advance to make a decision.
- Mr. Kuklinski stated he has no "official" role in the city but believes the Conservation Commission would want a formal proposal. Interim Commissioner DeRubeis agreed and stated Norumbega came to the top of the list because it is a current off leash area. Mr. Kuklinski agreed and stated this is the time for the supporters to show up and support the proposal.
- Ms. Joyce stated she agreed and believes it is the fear of the unknown that determines behavior. Mr. Kuklinski stated an information session may be a good idea, including a person with the Conservation Commissions perspective.
- Mr. McIntyre stated at Cold Spring Park the core group of supporters had to educate satellite groups.
- Ms. Dorfman stated the goal is to stay as close to status quo as possible by providing solutions to the issues.
- Ms. Joyce inquired if professional dog walkers would be issued licenses. Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated as he told the P & R Commission OLAWG will continue to meet to discuss the different issues.
- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis asked the group what the next step will be. Ms. Dorfman and Mr. Kuklinski offered to be the liaisons with the Norumbega community. Ms. Joyce will contact the community and set up a meeting time and will be available to provide handouts.

### 3. Other Business

- Mr. Bernheimer requested Ms. Cohen speak on the time restriction request for Old Cold Spring Park.
- Ms. Cohen stated she met with Mayor Warren and Interim Commissioner DeRubeis on Tuesday. Ms. Cohen is making a simple request to add time restrictions to Old Cold Spring Park. On Sundays Ms. Cohen is woken up by dogs barking at 6:30 am. This is a simple/healing request and the Mayor thinks this is a reasonable request. At the meeting on June 14<sup>th</sup> people will be listening and this will let them know the City cares and has boundaries. People will be more open and less fearful.
- Mr. McIntyre asked if the noise has not diminished with the legal off leash area being opened and the added parking restrictions. Ms. Cohen stated no.
- Mr. McIntyre asked Ms. Cohen if time restrictions are imposed on the field how would this impact the trail usage. Mr. McIntyre believes time restrictions on the field will force people to the trails. Ms. Cohen stated you cannot separate the trails and field, and Ms. Cohen does not believe it will hurt and believes the City has to try something.
- Mr. Bernheimer stated the trails are different then the field and there are different users on the trails then on the field.

Respectfully submitted,

*Robin McLaughlin, Secretary*