



Setti D. Warren
Mayor



Robert J. DeRubeis
Commissioner

Off-Leash Area Working Group

June 11, 2010, 9:00 am
Room 222- City Hall
Meeting Minutes

Attending: Bob DeRubeis, *Interim P & R Commissioner*, Candace Havens, *Interim Planning Director*, Carol Schein, *P & R Open Space Coordinator*, Ann Dorfman, *Citizen Representative*, Lee McIntyre, *Citizen Representative*, Ted Kuklinski, *Citizen Representative*, Carol Stapleton, *P & R Recreation Manager*

Absent: Susan Albright, *Alderman*, Fran Rice, *P & R Commission*, Amy Koel, *DOLAC Chairman*, Ralph Torres, *Animal Control Officer*

Also Attending: Harry Sanders, *Resident*, Eve Cohen, *Resident*, Claudia Morris, *Resident*

1. Norumbega Park Proposal

- ☛ Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated the Norumbega proposal could be presented at the July 22 Conservation Commission (Con Com).
- ☛ Mr. Kuklinski stated an informational meeting could be scheduled as soon as next Saturday. The fliers announcing the meeting will be posted.
- ☛ Interim Commissioner DeRubeis asked who should present the proposal to Con Com. The person presenting should have the best knowledge of the proposal.
- ☛ Ms. Dorfman stated the Parks and Recreation Department should not present to the Conservation Commission.
- ☛ Mr. McIntyre stated Ms. Joyce; the author of the proposal did not want to present the proposal. Mr. McIntyre stated with the new ordinance, citizens should not present new proposals.
- ☛ Interim Commissioner DeRubeis commented under the existing ordinance a municipal agency may bring forward a proposal with the assistance of DOLAC.
- ☛ Mr. McIntyre stated DOLAC could present with Ms. Joyce as support. Mr. Norm Richardson consulted on the Norumbega proposal and it is important for Con Com to be aware of that.
- ☛ Mr. Kuklinski volunteered to be part of the presentation.
- ☛ Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated the new ordinance includes the Planning Department as an agency that may bring forward proposals. Interim Planning Director Havens stated she would be attending the July Con Com meeting.
- ☛ Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated the ordinance revisions will be going before the Programs & Services Committee on June 16, 2010 at 7:45pm in the Aldermanic Chambers.

2. June 14 Presentation to the P & R Commission

- ☛ Interim Commissioner DeRubeis asked if the proposal should be made with the parks as they are or with limitations. An example: Restricted hours during NNHS usage of Claflin Park for athletic events and practice.
- ☛ Ms. Dorfman commented that Brookline allows off leash usage except when there are scheduled athletic events.
- ☛ Mr. McIntyre stated this would set a precedent of limits during permitted events. Interim Commissioner DeRubeis agrees and stated if the park is voted in as an off leash area the group would have to discuss the verbiage.
- ☛ Interim Commissioner DeRubeis asked about the issue of the Cabot School bus stop at Claflin Park. Ms. Schein stated she saw the bus yesterday stop at Claflin Park at 8:10am.

- Ms. Dorfman stated she does not believe the bus stop is a conflict. Ms. Schein stated the only conflict may be at the moment the bus stops at the park.
- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis asked about the parking issue on Lowell Ave.
- Ms. Dorfman stated most dog owners would be walking to the off leash area, the concern should be that the area is not fenced off, and dogs may run out of the area to see the kids at the bus stop.
- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis asked if the off leash area should be opened at a later time.
- Mr. McIntyre asked if Claflin Park is $\frac{3}{4}$ fenced in. Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated yes along Lowell Ave, and is open on either end.
- Mr. McIntyre stated at Old Cold Spring Park students walk down Plymouth Rd and through the trails to get to Zervas School and there have been no issues between the kids and the dogs. Kids and dogs in the parks together sounds like a bigger issue then it really is.
- Mr. Kuklinski asked if there is funding available for fencing. Ms. Schein stated she is estimating the cost to be around \$2,500.00.
- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated fencing is one of many issues this group will have to address after a few more sites are opened.
- Ms. Dorfman stated additional fencing along Lowell Ave would be sufficient. Ms. Schein stated the abutters may object. Ms. Dorfman stated the Norumbega proposal recommended low cost, seasonal fencing.
- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated the initial proposed areas were not to have any expenses to be opened. Dog owners need to have responsibility for their dogs.
- Mr. McIntyre stated, as Brookline told Ms. Schein, fencing areas caused overuse of the area. And also agrees dog owners should control their dogs.
- Ms. Dorfman stated the group should be careful with the language providing access to public space for activity. The City would be responsible for dog owners of out of control dogs. To get dogs out of ball fields fenced areas must be provided. Mr. McIntyre stated there should not be additional fencing at Claflin Park. Interim Commissioner DeRubeis is opposed to completely fencing Claflin Park.
- Mr. Kuklinski stated this group needs to get the word out, Claflin Park is not a destination place, and Claflin Park is going to be one of many off leash areas.
- Ms. Dorfman stated the parks chosen will work in different way; the group should "tag" them prior to opening. Interim Commissioner DeRubeis disagreed, the areas will "tag" themselves, and the group does not want to exclude anyone from using an area.
- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated some of the issues that will be discussed regarding McGrath Park are parking and athletic events. It needs to be made clear during the presentation the P & R department has 80 parking spaces at McGrath Park. Parking may be an issue during athletic events. Limited hours during permitted athletic events are a possibility.

3. Other Business

- Mr. McIntyre stated Ms. Eve Cohen of Beverly Rd has proposed the group think about restricted hours at the Old Cold Spring Park off leash area. The hours proposed of 8am-11am would fail. There are different users of the park at different times of the day. The hours would be unenforceable. The current off leash area is working well the problem is on the trails and access to the field. Time restrictions for dog owners at Beverly and Dunklee Road entrance are an option and may work.
- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated the Beverly Rd and Dunklee Rd entrance is a public entrance and we cannot disallow entrance.
- Mr. McIntyre asked how time restrictions in the off leash area will be enforced if they cannot be enforced at the entrance. Interim Commissioner DeRubeis agreed this is an issue.
- Ms. Dorfman stated ticketing on the trail did not reduce illegal trail usage enough to please the abutters. Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated if a dog owner is off leash on the trail they will receive a ticket, but the animal control officer cannot catch everyone. If there are limited hours at Cold Spring Park the change would take time and some people just will not abide by the rules.
- Ms. Cohen commented her neighbors who own dogs would be upset if the entrance is closed.

- ✎ Ms. Dorfman stated the group needs to hear from other neighbors in the Beverly Rd neighborhood. Mr. McIntyre stated there are 120 abutters to CSP, 30 of those abutters are on the Friends of Old Cold Spring Park e-mail distribution list and are always notified of what is going on in the park.
- ✎ Ms. Morris commented on fencing of off leash areas. Ms. Morris believes dog owners should be responsible for training their dogs and fenced areas should not be provided as a place for untrained dogs to go.
- ✎ Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated he had a meeting with Ms. Dorfman in the Recreation Office and a point discussed was the education of the public regarding the off leash issue in Newton. Ms. Dorfman suggested an educational brochure.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin McLaughlin, Secretary