



Setti D. Warren
Mayor

Newton Parks & Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes
City Hall - Room 209
7:00 p.m. –Monday, December 16, 2013



Robert J. DeRubeis
Commissioner

Attending: Arthur Magni, Chairman, Richard Tucker, Vice-Chairman, Commissioner Robert DeRubeis, Peter Johnson, Bethel Bilezikian Charkoudian, Byron Dunker, Don Fishman, Andrew Stern, Michael Clarke, Robin McLaughlin, Secretary

Meeting began at 7:02 pm

A presentation was made to retired Commission member Walter “Wally” Bernheimer. Wally also received a proclamation from Mayor Warren. Mr. Bernheimer served on the Commission for over 30 years. Thank-you Wally!



Wally Bernheimer & Arthur Magni, Chairman



Wally Bernheimer, Arthur Magni, Chairman, Robert DeRubeis, Commissioner

1. Meeting Minutes

- November 18, 2013- Approved 8-0

2. Commissioner’s Reports on Programs, Forestry and Maintenance

- The Department has been working on the snow. The snow from the storm froze quickly. The snow melter was not used during this storm. Mr. Clarke asked where the water from the snow melter drains to, Commissioner DeRubeis responded the water goes into the street drains.
- Mr. Stern complimented the Forestry Division for the great job they did in the wind storm last month.
- The Off-Leash Area Working Group is in preliminary discussion for off-leash areas in Thompsonville Playground and NSHS.
- The Crystal Lake Working Group continues to meet and is looking at a long range plan for Crystal Lake. Jennifer Steel, the Environmental Planner is researching rain garden and bio islands. Mr. Tucker asked how many houses are on Crystal Lake. Ms. Stapleton responded there are 14 houses. Commissioner DeRubeis stated the rain gardens would include the houses across the street from Crystal Lake.
- The Camp Fair this year is scheduled for Sunday January 26 at NNHS between 12pm-4pm. There is no registration at the Camp Fair this year, registration opens after the camp fair.
- Mr. Dunker commented the Maintenance Division did a great job with the leaves and clean-up of the fields this fall. Mr. Stern commented the crews did a great job in Newton Centre also.

3. Bullough's Pond Association Proposal –(Attached)

- Laura R. Studen, Kathleen Grieser and Marilyn K. Campbell presented a proposal from the Bullough's Pond Association (BPA) to repurpose the hut on Bullough's Pond and create a pavilion like space. The proposal is low maintenance, green and environmentally friendly for both passive and active recreation.
- Mr. Stern commented the proposal sounds fabulous and asked what the process is for a city owned building. Commissioner DeRubeis commented it would most likely be a partnership, and the Engineering department would also be involved.
- Mr. Bernheimer commented this project is not too small to be submitted to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC). The CPC looks for small projects not sponsored by the City. Ms. Studen commented she did meet with Alice Ingerson, CPC Chairperson and Ms. Ingerson was very helpful.
- Ms. Studen commented 2014 is the 350 year anniversary of Bullough's Pond and the BPA is hoping to raise money for the project.
- Mr. Tucker asked how much of the shoreline is privately owned. Ms. Studen stated there are 6-7 houses on the shoreline.
- Mr. Dunker asked if the building is abandoned, Commissioner DeRubeis responded yes. Mr. Dunker asked if Bullough's Pond went back to skating would the new building be acceptable. Commissioner DeRubeis stated the new pavilion would be acceptable but a planer would be required for the pond to prepare for skating. Mr. Dunker commented this is a great project.
- Ms. Charkoudian asked if the boat ramp would be staying. Ms. Studen stated yes the new pavilion would be a handicap accessible facility.
- Ms. Studen stated tonight the BPA is looking for support and to schedule a public meeting.
- Mr. Stern asked if an agreement of use would be processed. Commissioner DeRubeis stated yes a little bit later in the process.

*Mr. Fishman made the motion to move the proposal to a public hearing. Mr. Tucker seconded the motion.
Motion passed 8-0.*

4. New Business

- Commissioner DeRubeis commented last month the Commission gave support in raising camp fees; the Commissioner and staff met with Mayor Warren and proposed an increase in camp fees to help retain staff and help with the energy costs from the school department. Mr. Stern asked if an announcement to the public for donations would help. Commissioner DeRubeis stated yes, and stated the Newton Commonwealth Golf Course also donates every year.
- Ms. Stapleton commented there will be three outdoor rinks this year; Lower Falls Community Center, Hyde Community Center and Newtonville.

Meeting Adjourned 8:07 pm
Respectfully Submitted,
Robin McLaughlin

THE FOLLOWING NARRATIVE IS PRESENTED FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY. THIS DOCUMENT PRESENTS A CONCEPT PLAN THAT HAS NOT YET BEEN APPROVED BY THE FULL BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BULLOUGH'S POND ASSOCIATION.

The Bullough's Pond Association (BPA) has a wonderful new website at www.bulloughspond.org that provides information on the history of the Pond, on activities supported by the BPA, photos (both old and new), a calendar of events, and the site allows for residents to become members by paying their dues electronically.

The current Board of Directors of PBA are: Marilyn K. Campbell, President; Alex Beam, Vice President; Richard Lockwood, Secretary; Joe Tischler, Treasurer; Kathleen Grieser, Media and Communications Director; Laura R. Studen, Regulatory and Compliance Director; and John Davidow, Board member.

Repurposing of the "Warming Hut".

Background

The BPA was incorporated in 1984 and qualified as a 501(c)(3) entity in 1987. The BPA has been the steward of the Pond and its environs for 29 years. Bullough's Pond was created as a mill pond in 1664, and has been part of Newton's landscape for 350 years; 2014 will be its 350th celebratory year! The Pond itself has historical significance in Newton, having served over time as a source for the cutting of ice, for recreational use as a skating pond, fishing and bird watching, to evolving into a natural habitat for plants and wildlife. The Pond has also played a vital role as open space, and as part of the city's storm water drainage system. On Bullough Park, a street running adjacent to the Pond, sits a small green shack, referred to locally as "the warming hut" (the Hut), having last comforted the fingers and toes of recreational ice skaters (and Newton's school hockey teams). The current Hut has no particular significance, as over the decades the shack has been modified to adapt to the changing needs of the surrounding community. The Hut appears in many photographs of Bullough's Pond, in different incarnations, but it ultimately became abandoned, is neglected, and became vandalized when skating on the Pond ceased. So little attention has been paid to the structure that it is not even listed on the Newton Capital Improvement Plan 2014-2018; or for that matter, in the 20 year project projection.

The repurposing of the Hut—retention and repair of that which is deteriorated, adapted respectfully for new use—is the main goal of this project. The Pond presently supports both active (e.g. fishing and kayaking) and passive (e.g. bird watching, photography, painting, sitting in quiet contemplation) recreational use. It is also a unique space that serves as a vest pocket park accessible to the handicapped and elderly. The BPA wishes to repurpose the existing structure, to the extent feasible, for modern day use.

The goal of the project would be to retain as much of the Hut's existing structure as possible so that it continues to resemble the current green "warming hut" identity on the same footprint, resulting in a covered multi-purpose open space pavilion. The surrounding landscape would not be materially impacted or changed, especially at the water's edge. There would be modest disruption to the existing site with the intention of retaining the existing footprint, including replacement of existing decking.

Community Needs

This project is consonant with at least two of the community-wide Plans: 1) the Recreation and Open Space Plan; and 2) the Comprehensive Plan.

With reference to the Comprehensive Plan, see Chapter 9. Cultural Element, November 19, 2007, Page 9-7 and following. The Hut qualifies as a "special place" deserving of preservation. There is strong community support with neighborhood residents that the Hut is at the very least "a place of the heart". Although unspectacular as a structure, the Hut has played an important role in the identity of Bullough's Pond. Not only abutters, but residents who drive, walk, run, or sit by the water identify with warm remembrances of the ice skating on the Pond. This is an effort of repurposing based on common sense. "If you recycle existing buildings, and reuse a community's existing infrastructure of water and sewer and services, you will protect the natural environment and open spaces; you will improve property values; and you return life to neighborhoods, making them safe and stable places to live and work." (Page 9-8). The current condition of the Hut promotes none of these values. As a dilapidated and vandalized building it encourages the dumping of unwanted trash, graffiti, and

poses a safety risk when it becomes an unsupervised site for mischief and misdemeanor conduct. This project resonates with the Comprehensive Plan: "...preservationists have begun to move beyond identifying a single "period of significant", or preserving on the "original" features of historic buildings and landscapes, to reveal and interpret the history of change, and to allow for sustainable future change." The repurposing of the Bullough's Pond "warming hut" is consistent with those goals.

With reference to the Recreation and Open Space Plan Update, 2013-2019, the repurposing of the Hut is certainly consistent with ongoing active recreational use, but it also adds to the community consistent with the Passive Use Recreation Action Program (see Section 9—page 15 and following). This project will meet the City's need for small scale passive use locations, such as sitting areas with aesthetic qualities, sensitive to the specific needs of the City's elderly, and made accessible to persons with disabilities or mobility challenges. The Pond has already become a notable site for bird watching, and with the existing benches, a place for quiet contemplation. The repurposing of the Hut and its surrounding landscape would present no environmental impact issues, would have no ownership or legal concerns, no abutter concerns, no bicycling or pedestrian traffic conflicts, and no adverse impact on sensitive habitats.

Finally, of considerable value to the City, the ongoing maintenance of the Hut and its surrounding landscape would be undertaken by the existing Bullough's Pond Association (BPA). The BPA has a proven track record of responsible stewardship of the land surrounding the Pond Through its fund-raising efforts PBA has a modest budget from which to continue its role in maintenance and preservation. This frees the City from an ongoing financial commitment once this primary goal has been met.

Concept Plan

Attached hereto is a DRAFT CONCEPT PLAN. A drawing of the conceptualized structure will be produced under separate cover. The drawing envisions the following:

- The resulting structure will sit on the current footprint;
- The structure will retain the existing roofline, roof reshingled;
- The structure will retain the existing concrete floor, cleaned and repaired as necessary and stained to complimentary color;
- The interior plaster ceiling will be removed, the ceiling reinforced, and the ceiling will remain as open beams, stained to complimentary color;
- The exterior walls will be removed with the exception of modest "wing walls" at the four corners mirroring the existing exterior corners;
- The existing "shed" attached to the side will be removed, so all four sides will be open;
- The four corners of the existing structure will be reinforced with columns at the four corners, and decorative support columns will be centered on each side of the length of the pavilion;
- There will be no bathrooms, electricity or plumbing. However, the existing electrical and plumbing connections will be "tied off" to be available for potential future use. The pole with the exterior lights will be removed.
- The existing exterior deck will be demolished and rebuilt "as is" with built around bench and railing;
- The grade will be finished with sensitive to handicap accessibility;
- There will be minimal additional landscaping, especially at water's edge;
- The existing blacktop "ramp" will be removed and replaced with "green blocks" or grass pavers, permitting grass to grow but being sufficiently reinforced beneath to support a potential vehicle;
- There will be little or no change to the existing curb or sidewalk;
- Materials will be attractive, sensitive to the natural environment and low maintenance;
- All ongoing maintenance to be the responsibility of the BPA.

PRELIMINARY PROJECTED COST ESTIMATE

Resulting Pavilion is 25 x 30, or approximately 450 square feet.

Preliminary Estimate at \$125.00/square foot = \$56,250.

Estimate for Deck Allowance	= \$10,000.
Estimate for Landscape Allowance.....	= \$10,000.
(includes the rebuilding of the ramp access)	= \$86,250.
Contingency of \$20,000.....	= \$106,250

The main variable in cost will be the selection of materials. The BPA will work in cooperation with Parks and Recreation regarding all aspects of the project, including demolition. The goal is to make the structure aesthetically pleasing, sensitive to the surrounding environment, multiple purpose, and requiring little or no annual maintenance. The anticipated annual maintenance is not expected to exceed \$100.00, and funds will be accumulated in a reserve over time in the event any future structural reinforcement or repairs are required. Nonetheless, The BPA is currently capable of maintaining this anticipated project.

The BPA will be celebrating its 350th Anniversary of Bullough’s Pond in 2014. We intend to engage in a fund raising campaign with the goal of raising \$250,000. Depending on the success of the campaign, “upgrade” adjustments in materials and landscaping may be made possible. In the event of any singularly large contributions, the BPA anticipates placing a tasteful ground plaque in thanks to those donors.

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END BULLOUGH’S POND PROPOSAL