



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

May 9, 2018

REPORT OF THE OPEN SPACE, ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Wilfred N. Mbah	Chair	Present	
Jefferson Thomas ("J.T.") Scott	Vice Chair	Present	
Jesse Clingan	Ward Four Alderman	Absent	
Mark Niedergang	Ward Five Alderman	Present	
Katjana Ballantyne	Ward Seven Alderman	Absent	

Approval of the March 28, 2018 Minutes

RESULT: ACCEPTED

203881: That the Administration draft a Dark Sky ordinance addressing applicability, color temperature standards, prescriptive or performance standards, DPW oversight, and exemptions.

The Law Department and OSPCD are making edits to the ordinance and are trying to find a place to put the language. A draft will be available for the committee early July.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

202769: That the Administration present to this Board's Committee on Open Space, Environment and Energy the Fields Presentation dated November 15, 2016.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED

204872: That the Administration provide an update on the progress of plans outlined in the Somerville Fields Master Plan.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED

205392: Director of Parks and Recreation requesting to update this Board on the Fields Master Plan.

Ms. Oliveira from the City's Park and Open Space Department gave out the Athletic Fields Master Planning slides. This is the third update for the Master Plan. Work on the plan began in 2015 and there were updates in September and November of 2016. Members were informed that many of the fields in Somerville are controlled by the State. The city has two artificial turf fields, (at the Capuano and Winter Hill Schools). As the demand for field space is greater than the supply, the youth in Somerville are always given the priority for space.

Nearly 15,000 hours of athletic field use was requested in 2017, with the most requests being for fields at the Capuano School, Conway Park and Dilboy Stadium. There were over 9,000 hours of field use permitted in 2017, leaving nearly 6,000 hours of unmet demand for fields. Seventy one percent of field permits went to youth groups and 57% of field usage was for rectangle fields for soccer and football. Lincoln Park is under construction for natural grass and needs to rest for two growing seasons. Dilboy Stadium's turf field has reached its peak at 10-12 years. The city is working with a Licensed Site Professional (LSP) on Conway Park. The park and playground are shutdown per the DEP and EPA for testing. Questions were asked if kids were exposed and it was stated that there is no immanent hazard concern.

Members were informed about the Performance Quality Standard (PQS) which is a report card for each field and about the heavy usage of the fields and the need to create more space. The city's soil is comprised of silt, clay and sand and there is no aeration program scheduled for Nunziato field, which has 1,000 hours per year of usage. The committee was informed about best practices and the amount of time that some of the fields are utilized, including for school recess. There is also a need in Somerville for unstructured/unprogrammed play for children and adults.

Ms. Oliveira will continue to gather information about the fields and said that there will be a community process to determine the type of field for Conway Park. OSPCD has recommended a turf field given the number of hours of field use. It was suggested that a Licensed Site Professional be present at the community meetings to inform and educate the community. Other ideas mentioned were the possibility of using the space at the Star Market on Broadway, a space near Target, additional use at Trum Field and having fields on top of buildings.

The following data was provided to the committee:

- State owned land in Somerville = 81.28 acres (or 51%),
- City owned land in Somerville = 57.7 acres (or 37%),
- Privately owned land in Somerville = 19.35 acres (or 12%).

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED

200299: That the Director of SPCD, the Commissioner of Public Works and the Director of Sustainability and Environment consider the pros and cons of artificial turf and identify alternative designs for publicly accessible open space.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

203365: That the City Solicitor draft an ordinance requiring native tree and plantings for all open space, to meet the goals of sustainability and biodiversity.

Ms. Connor told the committee that there will be a presentation forthcoming on this matter.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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203387: That the Mayor update this Board on discussions with DCR about the fields at Draw 7 Park and Foss Park.

Members were informed that there are five Pop Warner football games played at Dilbooy field and that the city does not maintain Foss Park.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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204588: That the Administration prioritize restorative and preventative maintenance in Seven Hills Park, including the statues and pillars, the brick Community Path, and the soil and grass.

This park is heavily used near the community path and is owned, in part, by the city and the MBTA.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205427: That the Director of Sustainability and the Environment and other appropriate city staff report to this Board on the hazardous waste that was recently found in soil tests at Conway Park.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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205437: That the Director of Parks and Open Space update this Board on all current parks projects.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205463: That the Administration put the Conway Park renovation out to bid without delay.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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205369: That the Director of SPCD share with this Board the exact open space inventory, and clarify why there is a discrepancy between SomerVision's Open Space Plan and the State inventory of the city's open space.

The committee members would like Mr. Proakis to attend a committee meeting to discuss open space goals.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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Handout:

- Athletic Fields Master Plan (with 205392)