



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

May 24, 2017

REPORT OF THE OPEN SPACE, ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY SPECIAL COMMITTEE

| Attendee Name | Title | Status | Arrived |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------|---------|
| Katjana Ballantyne | Chair | Present | |
| Robert J. McWatters | Vice Chair | Present | |
| Mark Niedergang | Ward Five Alderman | Present | |
| Lance L. Davis | Ward Six Alderman | Absent | |
| Dennis M. Sullivan | Alderman At Large | Present | |

Others present: Arn Franzen - OSPCD, Jill Lathan - Recreation, Jeff Winsor - Parks, Annie Connor - Legislative Liaison, Peter Forcellese - Legislative Clerk.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:00 PM by Alderman Ballantyne and adjourned at 7:25 PM.

Approval of the May 1, 2017 Minutes

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| RESULT: | ACCEPTED |
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200428: Submitted by Envirotrac for Speedway LLC, to advance 3 soil borings in the sidewalk at 24 and 26-28 Kensington Avenue, and install monitoring wells in 2 of those borings.

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| RESULT: | WORK COMPLETED |
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202974: That the Director of Parks and Recreation provide this Board with a fields maintenance plan, and comment on the current condition of the East Somerville Community School artificial turf field.

Chairman Ballantyne inquired about some problems with the grass at Argenziano field and Mr. Franzen said that a statement is being worked on for release. The problem causing the improper draining was attributed to the soil mix having some particles that were too fine, causing them to stick together, impeding drainage. The contractor will re-do the field at no cost to the city. The schedule is to replant this field in the fall and have it ready for softball in the spring of 2018. The field was actually completed a year ahead of schedule and originally wasn't expected to be seeded until June 2017.

Mr. Winsor reported that the turf field at the ESCS had deep grooming and repairs during the first week of May. The turf field at the Capuano School had some spots repaired at same time, but since that field is an older turf, it may take some time for the patch to settle in. More info will be provided to the Parks Department on May 25th. Mr. Winsor stated that deep groomings should be done on a regular basis.

As to the natural grass fields, Mr. Winsor told the committee that the DPW is maintaining the fields until the transfer is made to the Park Department. Mr. Winsor distributed a packet of information on the fields and reviewed the maintenance in progress, fertilizers and herbicides.

Alderman Niedergang noted that the administrative change placing the fields under the control of the Park Department was approved nearly a year ago and he asked why the transfer was taking so long. Ms. Lathan replied that it's an ongoing negotiation with the union and is taking time.

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| RESULT: | WORK COMPLETED |
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203362: That the Director of Capital Projects discuss with this Board's Committee on Open Space, Environment and Energy, using water from the storm water tanks at Nunziato Field to water the field and the Growing Center gardens.

Ms. Connor explained that capturing the runoff and using it to irrigate the field and gardens is possible, however, steps need to be taken to filter any contaminates from the runoff. The resistance of the grass would also have to be researched to make sure that the end product water won't be harmful to the grass and/or growing center. The testing of water would be done after the tank is installed. Chairman Ballantyne said that storm water runoff should be thought of as a resource that could be used to lower the city's water bill.

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| RESULT: | WORK COMPLETED |
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203451: That the City Engineer discuss with this Board's Special Committee on Open Space, Environment and Energy, requiring new building projects to have storm water tanks on site or underground.

Ms. Connor said there is no overall storm water plan at the present time and it is something that would have to be done on a case by case basis. A plan needs to be developed and the Engineering Department would like to hire a consultant to determine what options are being used in other communities. Chairman Ballantyne said that the city needs to be more aggressive in finding ways to reduce fresh water consumption, e.g., using greywater in toilets.

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| RESULT: | WORK COMPLETED |
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203364: That the Director of SPCD and the Director of Parks and Open Space consider planting the following list of shrubbery and ground cover at Lincoln Park to meet the goals of sustainability and biodiversity.

Mr. Franzen said that the list was examined and approximately 7 of the species listed are already being used. Landscape architecture has increased the shrubs and ground cover. Lincoln Park is 100 % native and will be populated with hundreds of species of plantings. The purchase of the trees, etc., for Lincoln Park is close to being made. Mr. Franzen said the city has an obligation to

plant native where possible, however, using native plantings is not a one size fits all fix as there may be some situations where native species might not be appropriate for a variety of reasons. When a space is designed, e.g., Lincoln Park, it is designed to be maintainable and attractive to users. Alderman McWatters suggested that, moving forward, the city should seek input from the community on these matters. Chairman Ballantyne requested a copy of the list of plantings at Lincoln Park.

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| RESULT: | WORK COMPLETED |
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203382: That the City Arborist advise the Ward 3 Alderman of the condition of the tree on Belmont Street adjacent to Bailey Park.

Alderman McWatters reported that the tree was determined to be dead and that it will be replaced.

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| RESULT: | WORK COMPLETED |
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203413: DPW Commissioner responding to various Board Orders submitted 4/27/17.

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| RESULT: | WORK COMPLETED |
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202018: That the Commissioner of Public Works and the Director of Sustainability and Environment report to this Board, and to the School Committee, on the use and necessity of pesticides in city-owned or city-maintained properties, and report on how organic maintenance would compare to current practices.

Mr. Winsor told the committee that the fertilizer that was selected is organic. A glyphosate alternative will be provided for weed control and will be used at the discretion of the DPW. The herbicide chosen, Finale, is characterized as slightly toxic and Mr. Winsor expects that it will not be used on the fields or in open spaces on a broad basis. Questions on the product's use should be directed to the DPW.

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| RESULT: | WORK COMPLETED |
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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.

Ms. Connor reported that Mr. Snyder and the city's state delegation are working with DCR on Foss Park and Draw 7 Park. The mayor has required that any design for Draw 7 include a playing field. Alderman Niedergang stated that he thinks that using Draw 7 as a concert venue is a bad idea and he asked for the administration's thoughts on the matter. Ms. Connor replied that more information is needed before the administration is able to take a stance.

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| RESULT: | KEPT IN COMMITTEE |
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203388: Expressing to Governor Baker, our State Delegation, and DCR this Board's concern about the possible renovation of Draw 7 Park as a concert venue, due to the resulting traffic and air pollution, and its preference for a high-quality soccer and athletic

field there instead.

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED

203389: That the Director of SPCD update this Board on plans for a soccer field at the Healey School playground and the redevelopment of the fields at Conway Park, with timelines for both projects.

Ms. Connor stated that the soil issues at these two fields are different and that the city is waiting for an evaluation of the sub surfaces. A request for an appropriation to perform testing will be submitted to the BOA. Alderman Niedergang mentioned other issues at both fields and Ms. Connor replied that she doesn't know if the tests would address those other issues. Alderman Niedergang said that he is frustrated with this matter, as he keeps getting bits of information, rather than the whole picture. He asked if the timeline was on track and Ms. Connor didn't know.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

Handouts:

- Field Data - (with 202974, 202018)
- Lincoln Park Plantings (with 203364)