

Appendix B:
Public Meeting Notes

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CITY OF WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS
Open Space & Recreation Plan

Public Comments

Meeting Name:	Date:	Location
District 1, (Meeting #1)	11/29/2012	Quinsigamond College
District 2, (Meeting #1)	12/06/2012	Parks & Rec.at Green Hill Park
District 3, (Meeting #1)	11/26/2012	Worcester Academy
District 4, (Meeting #1)	12/17/2012	Clark University
District 5, (Meeting #1)	12/10/2012	Beaver Brook Park Community Building
District 1, (Meeting #2)	2/04/2013	Bancroft School
District 2, (Meeting #2)	1/31/2013	Parks & Rec.at Green Hill Park
District 3, (Meeting #2)	2/11/2013	Mass Audubon Broad Meadow Brook and Conservation Comm.
District 4, (Meeting #2)	1/24/2013	Clark University
District 5, (Meeting #2)	1/28/2013	Beaver Brook Park Community Building
Commission on Disability	1/15/2013	Worcester City Hall
Conservation Commission & Planning Board	02/12/2013	Worcester City Hall
Sports Leagues & Organizations	1/17/2013	Parks & Rec.at Green Hill Park
Elder Affairs	03/04/2013	
Walk Bike Worcester	03/04/2013	Beaver Brook Park Community Building
Greater Worcester Land Trust	Various	GWLT
School Department	6/05/2013	

Abbreviations:

- OSRP= Open Space and Recreation Plan
- OSMP= Open Space Management Plan
- MP= Master plan
- D#= District number
- ADA= American with Disabilities Act
- Con Comm= Conservation Commission
- GWLT= Greater Worcester Land Trust
- Audubon= Mass Audubon
- WRTA= Worcester Regional Transportation
- GHP= Green Hill Park



CITY OF WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

Open Space & Recreation Plan

Public Comments

Meeting

Name:**District 1, Meeting #1****Date:**

11/29/2012

- To fill in

Meeting

Name:**District 2, Meeting #1****Date:**

12/06/2012

- To fill in

Meeting

Name:**District 3, Meeting #1****Date:**

11/26/2012

- Status of Blackstone Gateway Park (BGP)
- Is the bikeway part of BGP?
- Former Riley property- potential acquisition
- Connectivity to properties (bike paths etc.)
- Connection
- South Middle near park boat ramp?
- M.O.U
- Trail system along Lake Quinsigamond
- Crow Hill Construction Area
- Dog park for each district
- Connect Middle River Park along cemetery
- Blackstone Heritage
- Old Cattle Farm by Oakland Heights
- Incorporate protect species and historic resources
- Signage/ADA
- Gerry Powers: Issue of connectivity is huge. City has accumulated a lot of parcels. Now in situation where if I want to go for walk, I need to get in car to drive somewhere to walk. I should be able to walk out my house to them.
- Colin Novak: Connection from Granite Street, south of Holy Name and connects to Little River Park Bridge that goes to nowhere. If we tie that open space in, that bridge becomes very meaningful again (red bridge)
- Further west on Grafton Street, a little shopping plaza, space to look at.
- People trying to connect Middle brook Park area to Crompton Park area as alternative to bikeway on other side of Rte. 146. Repeated theme of number of different studies and meetings over the years
- Passive Parks- Columbus Park, Perkins Farm and Lake Park, Crow Hill
- Every district should think about place for appropriate dog park, a facility. A dog park with regulations. Where people can bring their dogs where there are scooper bags. They have them in Colorado, makes it much better for everyone.
- Maybe we need a commitment to a dog park planning process
- Russell: Parks Dept. sometimes the limited resources they have to maintain the facilities they have put more of that on top of it means the City would have to be funded.
- Boynton park already being used as a doggy park. It is actually advertised on some websites as Doggy Park, but not official dog park.
- Powers: Why not Columbus Park?



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Public Comments

Meeting**Name:****District 4, Meeting #1****Date:**

12/17/2012

- When does the document become public when and how can they comment review?
- Survey- hardcopies and electronic, how to distribute?
- Community Garden & Rec + Farmer's Markets
- Chapter 61A- tax abatement program for community gardens and maybe orchards.
- Visiting parks- will there be a renew process by community.
- Turning empty lot into parks- need input to identify
- Tax title assessment
- Locate greenways on maps, and streets
- Sidewalk connection
- Make reference to forestry plan need input of OSMP
- Linkage in D4 Beaver Brook Parkway, Middle River, St. John Cemetery.
- D4- properties are costly- need to identify who determines what are the priorities
- Dark Sky Lighting
- D4 can take advantage of Coes- Park Ave is a longer barrier
- Issue with security, physical visibility
- Connections through parks- to schools and adjacent property barriers
- The disconnect of Park Ave as a barrier
- Need for a dog park
- D4 has the largest use of bikes, but lack in bike lanes and traffic
- Bike racks @ parks
- Boundary of RR tracks as barriers
- List of items each park should have standards
- Green Island flooding issue on a parcel
- Regulation for Open Space with zoning ordinance
- Kilby to Park connector to Hammond
- Comparison of Open Space by District
- Type of dollars spent and use of by district, dollars budget can't be unlimited
- May and Park Ave intersection
- Segment 7 of bikeway
- Is there a budget for each park? For maintenance
- Models for Public/Private partnership
- Provisions to close and secure parks after hrs.
- Can online survey be multilingual?



CITY OF WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

Open Space & Recreation Plan

Public Comments

Meeting**Name:****District 5, Meeting #1****Date:**

12/10/2012

- Worcester handball association (for 13 years)?
- Condition of court & no full perimeter fence around HB court looking for more HB courts & upgrade present existing Tacoma, Crompton, Castle MP process
- Crompton – subject to flooding
- GHP upgrade to the zoo, demo the old office, what goes in its place? Garden not a 100%, Cameras? More gates, 12+ acres added in 2011, linear park (North) Conservation area, browning brook, renovate an old well? Over all master plan for its parks.
- Swan Ave- 120 Acres (with state listed species) need better protection or restrictions, linkage to Logan Field CR.
- Tatnuck Bridge Trail- street crossing, Rte. 9, Airport Road.
- Access on Park Ave for programs
- Park Ave is a crossover access problem
- Access to New Hill to cross Pleasant Street
- Beaver Brook @ Chandler
- Elm @ Park Ave
- Foley Stadium should be opened
- Haden Arboretum Status? No protection status presently?
- Controlled access to parks- especially vehicles
- Stafford Street & Main Street property along west side of Rattle Brook-not protected
- Cemeteries- Several in D5 meeting with “Friends of Greenway along Middle River”
- Community Gardens- potential abandoned properties of District- protection for community gardens.
- Farmer’s Markets
- Beaver Brook Parkway- should be protected
- Study for Dog Park Task Force Cookson, self-policing.
- Open Parcels of Interest
- Cascades Triangle (cataract street & Orleans)
- Moreland Street (Clarkson Property) Brigham Road Dawson Road
- Skateboard Parks
- Historic Resources- WPA Stone Bridge Cataracts
- Gods Acer
- Greenway along Tatnuck Brook
- Perkins property (has state listed species)



CITY OF WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

Open Space & Recreation Plan

Public Comments

Meeting**Name:**

District 1, Meeting #2

Date:

02/04/2013

With Commissioner & ED & HI code

- Friendly park: at Park Ave & Coes Pond
- Is larger with limited streets & sidewalks to prioritize linkages to open space
- Call up other MP process to move forward
- Cultural tents, HEALTH code activities
- Park Programming – Arts in the park
- “Tee” up other city activities, cultural events
- Mark or Mike Maker for Pathways
- Inventory (water, electric, BR)
- Searchable format for park inventory
- Sidewalk & Streetscapes as open space & programming ok with Mayor Main streets & arks
- Walks that encourage use
- Map the Reservoir (future ?) Maybe watershed land
- Dog park (XX Turner, Old bldg. on Mill St.) – need parking
- “Tee-up” Park Conservancy

*Parcel of land off Montreal Road? MBL-20-007-00011

- Preservation along Nicks Woods & Linkage Bovenzi Property
- Explanation of Private partners (GWL & Audubon, etc.)
- Con Comm had first pick of tax title property?
- Cemeteries – incorporate historical value to have a public walkway tour?
- Westchester St. – Mary Center Property
- Burncoat St section of D1 (golf course buffer)
- Establish a right of first refusal to develop properties that can be used for OSR.
- Upgrade park properties around Indian Lake
- Concern with boat ramp at Morgan Park
- Move ramp to Shore Park and control public access
- Morgan Landing Park should be turned into a cartop boat access only
- Improve water quality at Indian Lake
- Mass highway triangle- add to acquisition list, by Indian Lake Board
- Identify where the public can access troll with maps.
- Lincoln Tower & Apts.

*Salisbury St., across Mass Ave – 212 Salisbury St., 1.86AC – WPI Property

- Property by St. Peter Marian
- Any plans for the Eagle
- Master Plan process for Indian Lake Properties
- Vacant Land cannot be exempt from taxes owned by non-profits
- Maintenance of school grounds by another entity
- Public school may submit into OSMP maybe meet with the schools
- Parcel of interest by 190 & Shore Drive (MA DOT)
- Highland Towers & Wetherell Estates (Duffy Field)
- Parcel of Interest – Nelson Place – Assumption College, Armenian Church – W Chester St.



CITY OF WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

Open Space & Recreation Plan

Public Comments

Meeting

Name:
District 2, Meeting #2

Date:
1/31/2013

- Dodge Park area subdivision plan (targeted acquisition)
** MBL # 22-016-00001 ± 15 Acres Passive Rec.
- Can local park “supporters” coordinate with consultant’s site visit?
- Can water & sewer easement be used for connections of open space properties?
- Cooke Park needs to be addressed
- Industrial Park on Southgate St. -possible acquisition
- Farmers Market and more community gardens needed
- Over development of open passive space into a “carnival” atmosphere, too developed
- Green Hill is not very accessible for people without cars
- More edible plantings in park
- Taxes do not commensurate with level of services
- Verify acreage
- Possible targeted acquisition
- Verify Cookson’s accuracy on plans

** Burncoat Development 31 Randolph Road
±20.64 Acres (not contiguous with Dodge Park)
Need to also target: 11 Bayberry Road 22-012-00003 ± 4.2472 Acres

Meeting

Name:
District 3, Meeting #2

Date:
2/11/2013

- Bikeway (Blackstone Valley)
- Blackstone Canal @ Southern Border of the City
 - Historical
 - Confirm Ownership (DCR?)
 - Recreational
- Review periodically progress

Don

- What happened at Vernon Hill Park- for a season and a half Babe Ruth was not able to use it [response: the issue there has been addressed]. When landfill was moved to back part of Green Hill Park, there were promises about a walking trail, but it was turned into the Tech School ball field. [Response: they have first right of refusal]. It took 30+ years to do that.
- Changing the field for Vernon- does not like it. Greenwood Street landfill [response: capping material is being shipped currently]. Feels like these things take a long time to happen. It will take a long time to accomplish these goals.
- Will Vernon Hill baseball fields be open?
 - Will it be ugly netting with long wooden poles?
- What about Logan field?
 - Logan is different- softball versus Babe Ruth’s hard ball; also fast pitch softball more a fast pitch field for those purposes it did not necessitate same amount of netting



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Open Space & Recreation Plan

Public Comments

George Russell

- The people on Ames Street who were “being battered with baseballs” are probably appreciative of the nets, but say the design is horrible.

City Councilor

- March 20th scheduled for Grafton Hill Neighborhood Group for discussion of Blithewood situation

Cookson Field

- “Friends of Cookson Park” is a group that wants to follow master plan. The master plan for Cookson is to keep it a passive park. They oppose any change in meaning or incompatible uses, including a dog park. Interested in adjacent smaller parcels that would preserve the view and would be difficult for a developer to put something on.
- I.D. parcels:
 - Some owned by the City
 - Some need to be acquired
 - * Potential to link St. Johns & Mt. Hope
 - 26-012-00037 Kendrick & Clay St.*
 - 26-012-3336 *
 - 26-16A-28-42 *
 - 26-16A-00114 *
- Textile Properties
 - Offered to Parks & Conservation before going to Auction
- Deer, turkeys, bird houses & Lady Slippers
- OSRP- clear line of communication for important help & resolution of Park/Open Matters

Colin

- Land north of the visitor’s center. Good dog park location near 146/ Wal-Mart, Barney only building.
- City counselor says that type of setting might make center.
- Walking club (informal and low key)
- Make it more formal
 - Hikes w/family
 - Hikes w/ dogs
 - Hikes that are easy to rigorous

Kate Twomey

- Potential acquisition of Flint Pond (off of Westborough Street & Harah Street)
- Crossing Route 20 is a problem

Colin

- The Worcester Conservation Commission does not have full time agent.
- Katie Donovan was the past agent, now they are get by.
- Two things to highlight on D3 map: state’s Blackstone Bikeway should be included; also, where Blackstone River exits the City- may be under ownership of the state.



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Public Comments

Gerry

- After plan is submitted to the state, what is public process during that period of time?
- Would not regularly have meetings like this; particular concern or issue should be referred to the Parks Commission. Also, City Councilors or Parks Department
- Recommends a yearly status meeting to discuss look back at previous year/look ahead at coming year.

Meeting	Name:	Date:
	District 4, Meeting #2	1/24/2013

Grace & ? - Regional Environmental Council (REC)
 Gardening in summer
 Passive activities & year-round activities

Casey Burns - Reg. Dept.'s Program
 Farmers Market
 Gardening
 Youth Programs

Lucas – How space is used to build relationship with nature & social

Steve Fisher –Reg.
 Interest in issues with communication & project
 Mixed ownership – how to use them instead of abandoned

Peggy Mena –Resident
 Invest in Environmental Justice neighborhood areas– do the best we can in low income neighborhood
 Worcester Tree Initiative (WTI)
 Dog Parks

Casey Star – Main St. Community Corp
 Castle University Park
 Task force
 Redesign Univ. Park

Jerry Powers –WalkBike Worcester
 Connection to parks

Judy Curt - Boys & Girls Club
 Youth & other group interest
 Crompton Park
 Univ. Park

Sophia Oliveira – City Council D.4
 Support Dog Parks
 Recreation fields – Soccer, Rugby



CITY OF WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

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Public Comments

Tom – College Hill Resident

Activities

Holy Cross

Cookson 1936

Nothing done in 10 years

McKeon River - Kayak / Canoeing

Private Land – Building in bad condition could be acquired?

House was let go – Now students from Holy Cross

Greg Dorchester? – Student of WPI

Work at Clark University

Involved in getting students to hike – Cascade, Clarks... work with GWLT

Need for more park benches

Junior explorers with police dept.

Invest on Community Gardens & Orchards –e.g. at Grant Sq. Park

Very successful

1. Where gardens & passive uses are appropriate
2. At tax id properties & private properties- how to assure properties to be used for community gardens?
3. Partnership REC & Worcester Common Ground to identify tax title properties
4. Work with refugees that have agricultural skills
5. Unused parcel – potential Community gardens
6. Private property: provide sites but if they may want to sell property, land could be developed.
7. Youth growth farm- Community gardens makes sites safer, e.g. Youth Growth Farm Place.
8. Garden site could be swap 1 ac site is hard to come by
9. Block parties

Chris will provide community garden MBL & ownership

Casey – Sidewalk & safety

Environmental Justice Map – show in next meeting

Vietnamese, Arabic, Armenian

Ron – “Park School” Concept

Rob – Parks and Rec has helped school maintain their parks, can they maybe recommend the schools to improve?

Casey Burns – Community Gardens

Farmers Market

Concern about skating rink – Deposit \$25.00

Arts in parks, more interactive: Concerts, performances – Theatre / Poetry

Signage should be upgraded “Renovation” signs have been up for a year

Casey – Need for skateboarding / skating / bikes to be included at parks. It happens in the middle of street in District 4. 1 skateboard park at GHP because nobody wants it near their residence

Rep from GWLT – bike advocate: “bike parks / bike friendly areas in parks”. Bike lanes & safety at streets.

Parks for running & walking with mile markers, parks safety associated with skate boarding at parks



CITY OF WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS Open Space & Recreation Plan

Public Comments

Stephen Dole:

- Maintenance is critical issue and challenge for City.
- In terms of University/Academic involvement how will it be reflected in this OSRP?
- A lot of multifamily buildings in Worcester and maybe more in time. Consistent need for Dog parks & Community Gardens.
- Glad to see streetscape & bike trails incorporated in plans

A Truman

- Is there a funding source for purchasing? Depends on conditions- tax title, landing grant, out-right purchases by City.
- From corridors to stirring parcels
- How is streetscape a part of OSRP? Making the corridor/link open space comfortable

Luba:

- Quite a lot of communities include streetscape in OS because they provide linkage.
- Sidewalks are part of an Open Space & Recreation Plan: part of “walkable city” initiative and “Safe routes to school” initiative

Stephen Dole:

- What type of streetscape elements should be incorporated to fall back?
- (r) Con Com- vulnerability of misuse because less visible then say a field. Interaction between league and other non-profit makes it easier to maintain.

Joseph Wanat:

- Do you have statistic of how Worcester compares to other Cities? We fall short on the funding and resource side
- NRPA & Land Trust have bench marks to look at where we are.
- I would suggest to put in website or email blast, here is what is going on in Worcester OSRP to attract & retain residents with comparison to other communities.
- 2nd largest City in NE
- From Planning /Con Com how can we support the OSRP?
- Tax title should be given to P&R and Con Com - first to get say.

Other comments on water resources:

- How are lake, ponds, canal district, Lake Quinsigamond regulated? Self regulated
- We are flexible to req's at lake

Stephen Dole

- Seattle as an example of good off leach parks
- Site of facility is important
- Less aggressive behavior if size naval base dog park (What about Worcester Airport) probably not near multifamily?

Truman

- Anything to get non-profits involved? Like Boys & Girls Club
- Mentioned Community Garden
- Where are they? Scattered 1 @ Grant Square, GHP. We will use the information from the Regional Community Council to add to the OSRP map.

Jack Donahue

- What about individual parcels, e.g. adjacent to Dodge park parcel of land, what is the update?
- Concern making all open space available for public: 14,000 total City OSR and about 600-700 acre active, rest- passive

Joseph Wanat

- Second Comment on Shortage of soccer fields



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- Golf at Newton Hill great, e.g. of continuing OSRP with cultural events.
- Newton Hill good example of little input to balance wildlife & human use
- *Analysis Environmental Justice & OS Areas*

Other comments from the public:

- Availability to go to parks, e.g. GHP no bus stops closer to destination
- Need more trees, benches
- Dog park- charge fees?
- Elm Park, as far from natural, unnatural, more parking - develop it under the hill so not to destroy building.
- (Rob) we are working w/ WRTA to incorporate in mapping
- ELM- parking has to be ADA & cost of siting considered
- Worcester Common has 40 tables & chairs with umbrellas.

Conclusions:

- Conservation Commission properties need to manage & keep (maintain). Show location of reservoirs in Open Space Plan.
- 25% Quinsigamond to McGrath (narrows from 3 lanes to 2 lanes) bike accommodations would look great there.
- Better signage needed & informational mapping (Cascade signage is good)
- Informal use of permitted facilities is needed. Unclear when access by the public is available not available. Leagues have too many rights.
- Angle is to promote the neighborhood pick-up game
- Connecting trails passages: coordinate with planning, DPW, Con Comm and Parks & Rec.
- Also coordinate with WRTA, QR code on bus status. QR associated with parks at more frequent intervals.
- Bicycle racks needed at all major park destinations in order to have bike-walk-hike options.
- Need number of bike slots at other locations

Meeting Name:
Walk Bike Worcester

Date:
3/4/2013

- Kristin Boudreau- wonders if the recreation plan might be able to address the problem of commuter cyclists trying to cross the City E-W at I-290. "I used to live on the east side (work on west) and after a few attempts, I gave up. It's really hard to get past I-290 without going the wrong way down a one-way street, riding on a sidewalk, or riding in a dark tunnel without much clearance".

Meeting Name:
Elder Affairs

Date:
3/4/2013

- Public Health, aging well
- Front of Senior Center
- Community Garden not adequate
- Courtyard not available
- Promote healthy programs
- "Keep Moving" program twice a year

