

1. Parks Commission Meeting

Documents:

[PARKS COMMISSION AGENDA 06072017.PDF](#)
[PARK COMMISSION AND LAND BANK REPORT 2018-06.PDF](#)

1.1. Parks Commission April Meeting Minutes

Documents:

[PARKS COMMISSION MINUTES 04052017.PDF](#)



Commission Members: Dory Waxman, Chair, Jaime Parker, Vice Chair, Councilor Brian Batson, Carol Hutchins, Craig Lapine, Cynthia Loebenstein, Meri Lowry, Michael Mertaugh, Nathan Robbins, Chelsea Malacara, Colette Bouchard, Zack Anchors and Amy Segal.

Parks Commission Agenda
June 7, 2018
5:00 PM
Portland City Hall
389 Congress Street, Room 24

The Mission of the Portland Parks Commission is to advocate for the enhancement and stewardship of our parks and open spaces. Review and propose projects that impact parks and open spaces and recommend action. Foster collaboration among park users and the City. Promotes public access and enjoyment. Advocate for public and private funding for parks and open spaces. Enjoy Portland for Life.

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| I. | General Citizen Comment Period | (5 min) |
| II. | Agenda Items (<i>public comment taken on action items only</i>) | |
| a. | Acceptance of April Meeting Minutes | (5 min) |
| b. | New Business | (0 min) |
| i. | Friends of Woodfords Corner – Teresa Valliere | |
| c. | Communications/Updates | (30 min) |
| i. | Green Space Gathering Overview | |
| ii. | Planning Next Year's Calendar | |
| iii. | Ordinance Ad Hoc Committee Update | |
| iv. | Parks Conservancy | |
| v. | Subcommittee Updates | |
| vi. | Parks Division Updates | |
| d. | Commissioner requests for Agenda Items | (5 min) |

City of Portland Commissions are not required to take public comment under FOIA and are Ordinance is silent regarding the duties of the Commission. The Commission has the discretion to not allow or allow public comment during its meetings, including the authority to limit the duration of comments. Since the Commission makes recommendations to the City Council, public comment is available at that level.



Sally L. DeLuca
Director

Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

Ethan Hipple
Deputy Director

Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

Memorandum

TO: Parks Commission and Land Bank Commission

FROM: Ethan Hipple, Deputy Director, Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department

SUBJECT: Parks Division Update

DATE: June 2018

Park Manager Hiring Process

Seeking a dynamic, experienced innovator to lead the Parks Division in the role as Parks Manager. The Division oversees a variety of parks, 20,000 street trees, a skatepark, public beach, cemeteries, horticultural beds and meadows, winter recreation facilities and many other recreational amenities throughout the city. <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/1107/Current-Job-Opportunities>

Deering Oaks Pond

High efficiency LED lighting installed in Deering Oaks fountain. Lights have color capabilities so we can celebrate holidays and special events. Fountain and duck house up and running for the season.

Preble St Fields

Stormwater project at Back Cove will take Preble Fields out of commission for a season while 3 million gallon stormwater storage tank is installed under the fields. After completion, the elevation of the field and surrounding area will be 3-5 feet higher, which will greatly reduce saltwater intrusion and winter flooding.

Sail Maine Partnership

Met with Sail Maine Executive Director concerning partnership and use of city property. Sail Maine is offering scholarships for 1 student at each of our before and after school programs.

Parks Conservancy Update

Moving forward with search for Executive Director and application for 501c3 status in coming months. Board is also seeking to add members with fundraising experience. Board President is Andrew Magoun, Vice President is Kate Malin.

Opportunity Crew

Opportunity Crew is up and running 2-3 days per week, with dozens of bags of trash removed from parks and trails on a daily basis. While new 2018 CDBG grant was not approved, funds remain from existing CDBG grant to start crew in May 2018. Staff have also applied for two grants that would continue to support this program. Currently seeking alternative funding sources to continue this program, including **donations from the public which can be made by texting the word "CREW" to phone number 91999.**



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Park Signs

- Updating Park signs in Tommy's Park, Post Office Park and Monument Square with new park sign design and regulatory language.
- Received quotes for installation of large welcome signs in 5 parks. Installation to occur in late June/July.

Pianos in the Squares

Pianos will be coming to Portland's Squares this July. Donated pianos will be refurbished, tuned and brought to public downtown squares. Local businesses will "adopt" the pianos and move them in and out each day so that the public can play them during business hours. Program will run for the month of July. Parks crews have been busy picking up pianos and building dollies.

Pedestrian Hiking Bridge

Secured donation of 70 foot pedestrian bridge for use on city trails. Arranged for crane lifting of bridge and moving to city property.

Tree Planting

In the midst of tree planting season. Plan to plant over 150 trees citywide as part of annual tree planting season. Trees planned for City Hall, Deering Oaks Playground, residential streets and many other locations.

Horticulture Update

Work continues on improving the round circle beds on the Eastern Promenade at the end of Congress, Moody and Wilson Streets. After a few years of decline we are replacing with new perennial flowers and should have this completed in the near future. Tulip displays are removed, installing annual and perennial beds in coming weeks. Crews planted the two historic urns at City Hall plaza with flowers, this is only the second time in a decade we have managed to complete this.

Capital Improvement Planning

Preparing 2020 CIP to send out to Friends and Neighborhood groups for input. Will go out early June.

Park Encroachments

One of the less visible threats to Parks is encroachment from abutters in the form of fences, walls, patios, decks, buildings, waste, and other items on city property. A working group of staff within Parks, Public Works and Corporation Counsel are inventorying known encroachments and moving forward on communications and actions ranging from educational mailings, to warning letters, to legal action.

Cemetery Monument Restorations

Spirits Alive will be leading several days of monument restoration work both at Eastern cemetery and



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Stroudwater cemetery, work to be done by professional monument restoration company. The Tate House and Parks Department contributing to the expense, primary funding is through Spirits Alive.

Cemetery GIS Project

GIS mapping on-going, should launch web based "find a grave" program by July 1.

Memorial Day Update

In the two weeks leading up to Memorial Day crews will have planted approximately 5,000 annual flowers on graves per trust directions, and over 1,800 flags on Veterans graves.

Unauthorized Tree Cutting on City Land

Reviewed shoreland zone tree cutting issues on Peaks Island and Great Diamond Island with Zoning and Public Works Island Services. We are seeing a greater frequency of unauthorized clearing in the Shoreland Zone areas, especially on the islands.

Community Foresters Conference

Portland was the host city for the 20 State Community Foresters meeting which includes every state between Minnesota, Michigan, Missouri and Maryland to Maine. Tours included visiting Evergreen Cemetery and the recent forest management project along with parks and visit to Peaks Island for a lobster dinner. We also will participate in several of the sessions including our Urban Forest Inventory Analysis (UFIA) which Portland joined last year.

Veranda St Bridge Project

Met with Public Works staff and Portland Trails about incorporating green space into the design of Veranda St MDOT bridge project. All parties are in favor of the concept, Public Works is taking the lead on design modifications with MDOT to allow for green space.

GIS Mapping

Met with GIS staff about incorporating google maps [Parks Finder feature](#) into city GIS mapping system. Working with city GIS staff to harness power of GIS maps for asset management, park maintenance, and improved public information.

Park Projects Update

Staff are working on the following funded CIP/Park Improvement projects:

- Deering Oaks Playground Improvements: Zip line and net climber coming July 2018.
- Futsal Court, Fox Field: Funded by CDBG, planning for Summer construction
- Hall School Playground: Design complete, staff will be managing construction. October/November install planned.
- Island Playground Improvements: funding secured, bid awarded. Construction Summer 2018.
- Lincoln Park Fence Restoration: funding secure, design and specs 90%, approved by Historic



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Preservation Board. Project will be combined with Congress St sidewalk project to be completed under one contractor. Completing survey and will go out to bid June 2018.

- Lyman Moore Athletic Facility Drainage and Reconstruction: funding and design complete, bid awarded, summer install.
- Park Signs: funding secured, summer install.
- Payson Playground improvements, fall install.
- Payson Softball Title IX restroom and locker room improvements: funding secured, spring installation
- Cousins Memorial Reconstruction: Seabreeze Landscaping selected as contractor. Preconstruction meeting scheduled, construction to start July 2018.

“A Walk In the Park” Series

Sold-out bus tour of Portland Monuments and Statues in May. Planned spring and summer series of walks and talks in Portland Parks. Highlights include Tree Bus Tour, Park History Bike Slow Ride, Peaks Island Bike Slow Ride, Edible Plants Walk, and more.

- More info at: <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/1990/A-Walk-In-The-Park-Tours-and-Talks>

Skate Park Skate-A-Thon

Working with the Skate Park Fundraising Committee to plan a multi-hour skate a thon on August 18. Event will include food trucks, live music, and skating under temporary lighting. Funds raised will go towards the expansion of the skatepark from the current 8,000 feet to 14,000 feet. Total cost will be \$350,000 with \$100,000 of the \$350,000 coming from private donations and fundraising activities.



In attendance: Commission Members: Dory Waxman, Chair, Jaime Parker, Vice Chair, Councilor Brian Batson, Carol Hutchins, Meri Lowry, Michael Mertaugh, Chelsea Malacara, Colette Bouchard, Zack Anchors and Amy Segal. City Staff: Ethan Hipple, Alli Carroll, and Caitlin Cameron. Members of the public: David LaCasse and Dela Murphy of Friends of Congress Square Park, Paul Drinan of Friends of Fort Gorges, Liz Trice of Friends of Bramhall Square, and Nick Davala of PAYSА.

Parks Commission Minutes

April 5, 2017

5:00 PM

Portland City Hall

389 Congress Street, Room 24

I. General Citizen Comment Period

No comment period at this time.

II. Agenda Items (*public comment taken on action items only*)

a. Acceptance of March Meeting Minutes

Michael moved to accept the Parks Commission's March Meeting Minutes. Carol seconded. Seven in favor. Meri and Councilor Batson abstained.

b. New Business

i. Congress Square Park ReDesign Update – Caitlin Cameron

Caitlin Cameron is the Urban Designer and Project Manager for the Congress Square Redesign. She gave the Commission an overview of the project about a year ago. She came back because they are in design development. She referred to the site plan that was handed out to each Commissioner. They are now looking at lighting concepts, plantings, etc. As well as improving the intersections and accessibility to the park. They will be adding a three-piece sculpture by Sarah Sze Studio. They will also be removing the slip lane to increase the park/plaza areas for pedestrians. In order for the design to continue to move forward, the Land Bank Commission and City Council would need to give positive recommendations to remove the current trees in the space. She came to the Parks Commission for their recommendation to bring this to the Land Bank Commission.

Parks Commission's concerns were the timing of lights at intersections, the reflectivity of the sculpture at night, as well as the capacity of the park. Caitlin made note of all concerns and assured the Commission that they want to keep the current capacity level, if not increase it.

The Parks Commission recommended that this design be taken to the Land Bank Commission with their concerns taken into consideration.

ii. Funding for the Redesign – David LaCasse

David explained the public private partnership between the City of Portland, Portland Public Art Committee and the Friends of Congress Square Park. \$2.7 million is the total goal. The Friends of Congress Square Park plans on a 100% pledge by February 2020 for CIP reasons. They also need to work with the City on an MOU.

Dela brought a rough draft of what will be happening at the park this upcoming season. They have a new partnership with the Silent Book Club and Space Gallery. The Maine College of Art students will have a 30-day period to paint a mural on the side of the Westin. She also highlighted the Therapeutic Horticulture program where Reiche students who will be matched with seniors to plant in the park. Dela graciously invited the Commission members to come join the events.

iii. PAYSА Update – Nick Davala

PAYSА has been around for about thirty years and offer Spring and Summer opportunities. They are working towards being able to offer Fall and Winter programs as well. They had close to nine hundred participants last year. Six thousand community service hours are put towards these

programs. They also offer a scholarship program. Their biggest challenges are looking for field space and reaching the immigrant population. Meri suggested Portland housing authority to help with immigrant families.

iv. Ft. Gorges Update – Paul Drinan

Paul shared the history of the Friends of Fort Gorges and the current efforts to improve the safety and structure of Fort Gorges. In 2017, the Army Corp made a great effort to block off hazardous areas. They are very close to signing and MOU with the City and are planning to have two tours per week this summer for the public. Paul continued by sharing details of the Economic Impact Study. The Commission was curious of the long term plan so that the Fort isn't loved to death. Ethan added that there is a preservation plan for the area and a public private partnership set with the Friends Group. Once it's preserved, a future plan will be decided.

v. Bramhall Square Competition – Liz Trice

Bramhall Square is about the same size as Longfellow Square. They held a competition to begin working towards its improvements. Thirteen firms made presentations. One hundred eighty-five people voted on their favorites. Liz shared the winning and other top designs. She also explained how the grade is the biggest challenge. They are in need guidance to take this design to the next step. Ethan would be happy to get together to discuss it further but their focus should be to get on the City's CIP list.

c. Communications/Updates

i. Ordinance Ad Hoc Committee Update

Dory explained that the ordinances for the Land Bank and Parks Commission sunset soon, so they have created a committee to discuss what worked, what didn't and what overlapped. Those in the Committee are the chairs of each commission, Meri the representative of both Commissions, Ethan Hipple and Sally DeLuca.

ii. Parks Conservancy – Ethan

The Parks Conservancy approved position descriptions for the Executive Director and will hopefully have one by June. There are six vacancies for board members. The vice chair, secretary and treasurer were approved. Meri would like to see the MOU before it is fully approved.

iii. Subcommittee Updates

Finance Subcommittee is in its early stages of recreating the Gift Catalogue but are thinking of naming it "Giving Back to Portland's Parks".

Community Outreach Subcommittee is planning the Green Space Gathering. They are still looking for a speaker.

Park Initiatives Subcommittee has collected the data for the Baxter Trail project.

Annual Report Subcommittee has done a first draft. They will be revamping and sending out another draft soon.

iv. Parks Division Updates – Ethan

Everyone looked over the memo of updates that Ethan provided and thanked him for the Parks Division's hard work.

Michael moved to adjourn the meeting, Meri seconded. All in favor.