



THE CITY OF WORCESTER
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PARKS
PARKS, RECREATION, & CEMETERY DIVISION
50 Skyline Drive, Worcester, MA 01605

Robert C. Antonelli, Jr. Assistant Commissioner Phone: (508) 799-1190 Fax: (508) 799-1293

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Meeting Minutes for
Thursday, January 12, 2017 – 6:30 PM

Commissioners Present:

Scott Cashman
John Lauring
Meg Mulhern
Lawrence Sullivan
Matthew Wally

Administration Present:

Robert C. Antonelli Jr, Assistant Commissioner
Jeff Tomaino, Park & Recreation Coordinator

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

Chairperson Ms. Mulhern called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM

- Ms. Mulhern went on to the acceptance of the minutes for December 15, 2016.
 - Ms. Mulhern asked if there were any questions or concerns about the minutes for December 15, 2016, there were none. A motion was made by Mr. Lauring to accept the minutes, Second by Mr. Sullivan. All were in favor. Motion was approved 5 – 0.
- Ms. Mulhern asked Mr. Antonelli to go on with the report:
- Mr. Antonelli asked the Parks Commission to allow Mr. Brian McCarthy from the Green Hill Park Coalition to speak and give the presentation on the following:
 - Green Hill Park WWI Memorial Grove Proposal & Plan Initiative

- Mr. McCarthy explained that he had been in front of the board in the past for the restoration of the Memorial Grove, he said that the project had started 1 ½ years prior to this meeting and that since they had planted 40 trees in the WWI Memorial/Memorial Grove location and that they are planning on planting an additional 100 trees in the Spring. He added that things are progressing but that also there are things missing therefore he asked Professor Steven VanDessell with WPI to get involved. Professor VanDessell and students did research and Professor VanDessell came up with a sketch of the WWI Memorial. Mr. McCarthy said he fell in love with this sketch because it covers everything and it goes beyond the restoration of the Memorial Grove. Mr. McCarthy said that he feels like this sketch really gives a true meaning to a war that ended almost 100 years ago and he is looking forward to the Parks Commission to approve it so they can start with fundraising efforts to help fund this project.
- Professor VanDessell said that Mr. McCarthy had approached him over a year ago and he has been working on this project for about a year. He went on with the following presentation:

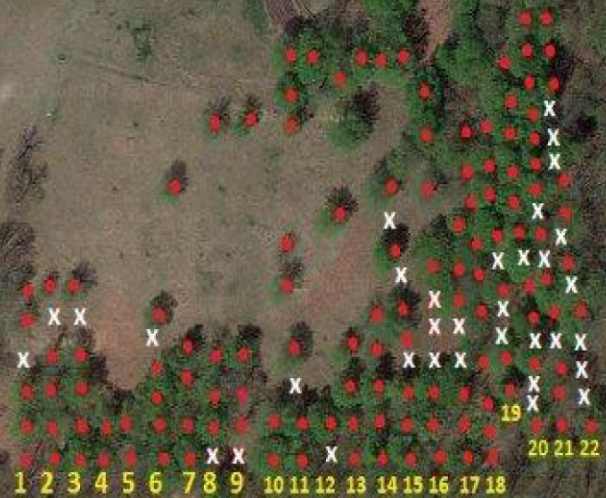
Green Hill Park - Memorial Grove

198 Green Hill Park Way, Worcester, MA 01605
Green Hill Park, 50 Skyline Dr (508) 799-1190
4.3 ★★★★★ 19 reviews

Last 2 rows are estimated (21, 22)

Row 19 on edge of woods

Rows 20, 21, and 22 are in woods



Google

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Green Hill Park - Channing Street Entrance



Green Hill Park - Massachusetts Vietnam Veterans Memorial



Green Hill Park - Memorial Grove Entrance



Green Hill Park - WW I Memorial Grove Plaque



- The Memorial originally had 380 Maple Trees each individual tree with plaques planted in 22 neat rows; of those only 212 are left and all plaques are missing.
- The plans are to beautify/improve visibility to the entrance of the Memorial Grove and to improve access to the memorial, maybe linking the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to the World War I Memorial via a pathway between the two.
- The plans are also to add a wall with an honor roll listing of all the Worcester Veterans that died in the World War I
- 40 trees were planted last year, 100 trees to be planted in the Spring of 2017.
- At this time when people go through there they don't know what this area is.
- The plans also call for adding different flowering shrubs under the memorial trees and creating landscape clusters throughout the area.
- Ms. Mulhern had a question in reference to the Amphitheater that was there and the sitting that was in dyer shape.
- Mr. Antonelli explained that most of it had been removed that very little was left.
- Mr. McCarthy stated that the only wood left there were 4 x 6 and it is sound wood, so there was no safety concern.
- Ms. Mulhern also asked if this project was being funded privately or if the City of Worcester was going to fund some of it.
- Mr. McCarthy said he was sure that they could not work without help from the City. The project would be in collaboration between the Green Hill Park Coalition, the city, WPI and Worcester Technical High School. Also, the Green Hill Park Coalition has an account set up for private donations to have the work done.
- Mr. Antonelli said that the restoration work cannot impact or interfere in any way with the sledding hill at Green Hill Park, and all grading and walkways have to meet accessibility guidelines. He also said that any new plantings added to Memorial Grove will have to require a small amount of maintenance possible because his department does not have the resources to do that work. He added that he loved the idea, and that it looked great and he thinks it would work well, but he just doesn't have the resources to keep up with the flower beds and he didn't want to have a problem in the long term. Mr. Antonelli also said that this is achievable but it's a matter of putting all the right pieces into place so all of us our successful and are able to manage this site. These plans will be forwarded to City Manager Edward M. Augustus Jr., who will have to approve them before they can go any further.
- A motion was made by Mr. Luring to approve the plans. The motion was Second by Mr. Sullivan. All were in favor. Motion was approved 5 – 0.
- Mr. Antonelli went on to the second item on the Agenda
 - Shale Street Playground Master Plan Initiative
 - Mr. Antonelli presented a draft and design of the Shale Street Playground Master Plan, he mentioned that there had been a number of public meetings and meetings with Friendly House and it was time to bring it in front of the Parks Commission. Mr. Antonelli showed slides of the property the areas that are owned by the City of Worcester and the areas that are owned by Friendly House.
 - Mr. Gordon Hargrove from the Friendly House asked to speak he showed an area that is 50' x 7' that the city gave to Friendly House a few years ago as well as a private property that the owner is willing to sell to Friendly House for whatever would be comfortable for Friendly House, however the issue is that the private land owner has a question about going off code with relation to the square feet of the property. Mr. Hargrove turned the mic over to Mr. Antonelli again.
 - Mr. Antonelli showed a slide of what the results were of what was planned, he stated that the topography there is very difficult, very hard to manage, but they were able to stay within the property limits to be able to build the parcel out. There are 3 areas that are not within the property limit, so to be able to build this project the City would have to work with Friendly House on an

easement which would give the city the ability to pass and repass those areas so that there is access to do ramping system to gain access to higher areas.

- There would be access paths that lead to a half a basketball court with the ability to have a one sided field hockey or a multi court purpose
 - There will be a fully accessible walkway that leads to a big flat area that will give the ability for kids to ride big wheels/tricycles with the middle been an open grass area.
 - There would be a 2 – 5 playground and a 5 – 12 playground
 - A playground area that would not be easily accessible
 - There would be a wall that could serve as a handball court.
 - An area that will be an amphitheater location that can be used as a picnic areas or Friendly House can use it for events.
 - There's a parcel that could have non-accessible walkways, meaning grass walkways like you're walking through a meadow
- Mr. Antonelli explained that there is a new housing development going up a lot away from the suggested playground area, the complex will house 85 units of 1 & 2 bedrooms market rate housing. Mr. Antonelli suggested trying to make a connection to the parcel. The challenge would be making an easement through a property that does not belong to the city or Friendly House. However it has been said that the property owner is willing to grant an easement for that, the easement would be fully accessible from the new complex through to the playground area. Mr. Antonelli added that it took a lot of leg work to come up with this when it came to the accessibility component to try to make all the pieces come together.
 - There is a proposal for a vehicular entrance for maintenance purposes
 - There would be fencing around the court and gates for access
 - Fully accessible walkways
 - Mr. Antonelli also said that after speaking to Friendly House and the board of directors they feel they have been able to implement the best case scenarios for the parcels that are there and it will be a very challenging design and implementation once the funding becomes available. The overall budget is being estimated at \$3 million, he stated that it will not be able to all happen at once but one thing at a time as it is done in other places it can get done. Mr. Antonelli asked the chairperson to allow Mr. Gordon Hargrove to speak.
 - Mr. Hargrove went on to say that this has always been in his thoughts since he first came to Friendly House in the 50's. He said that in the 60's they cleared out a portion of the park and way up on the North end there was a swing standard that it is still there from maybe the 20's. He added that swings were borrowed from the Parks Division and between some volunteers they cleared everything out an area, however once they got their gymnasium that area was overgrown and over the years it was very difficult to maintain. He mentioned that there was a basketball court at one time in the late 60's, that was used for many years but after a while it deteriorated and there is overgrowth. Mr. Hargrove said that with all the overgrowth in that area there is concern from them and the neighborhood as unwanted activities are held there, such as people living in tents. He added that this park would be used by Grafton St. School, Friendly House Programs, and neighbors which the neighborhood is quite dense. Mr. Hargrove went on to thank Mr. Antonelli for his tremendous help towards this project as well as everyone on his staff.
 - Ms. Mulhern asked if there were any other questions.
 - Mr. Lauring asked if there was a paper street coming off Wall Street, he asked because he was suggesting that maybe it would be advantageous if the land owner there would be willing to give the city the easement, to have better access.

- Mr. Hargrove volunteered some information about this; he explained that maybe about 25 years ago the neighbors went to him and asked him what he was doing as they thought Friendly House was starting to build a Park. He said that there was person with a bulldozer digging out part of Shale Street and part of the paper Street so Mr. Hargrove approached him and the gentleman told him that he had been paid to make a street.
 - Ms. Mulhern asked about how the easement works and if each property owner has to approve it in the event a property gets sold.
 - Mr. Antonelli explained that once the easement is signed then it's part of the deed so when the property is sold it is sold with the easement.
 - Ms. Mulhern also asked if Friendly House would have full use of this location in conjunction with the neighbors at the same time.
 - Mr. Antonelli answered yes, and he explained that there have been discussions with Mr. Hargrove in reference to the maintenance of the facility so Friendly House would bring volunteers to keep up with this location.
 - Mr. Antonelli asked for approval of the Master Plan unless there are any changes they wanted to add.
 - Mr. Luring made a motion to approve the Shales Street Master Plan, Seconded by Mr. Sullivan. All were in favor. Motion was approved 5 – 0.
- Grant Applications –
 - TD Green Streets Grant - Awarded
 - National Fish & Wild Life – Five Star & Urban Waters Restoration Program Grant
 - Land & Water Conservation Fund Grant – Betty Price Awarded
 - PARC & LAND Grant Program – Playgrounds Awarded - \$400,000.00
 - Mass Housing & Economic Development Massworks Infrastructure Grant Program \$100,000.00
 - Economic Development Initiatives – NA
 - Cultural Events-
 - NA
 - Park Vandalism & Graffiti – NA
 - Donations –
 - NA
 - Capital Improvement Programs
 - Apricot Street Playground - NA
 - Ball Property - NA
 - Banis Street Playground - NA
 - Beaver Brook Park - NA
 - Bell Pond – NA
 - Bennett Field – NA
 - Betty Price Playground – Grant Awarded
 - Blackstone Gateway Park – NA
 - Blithwood Park – NA
 - Boynton Park – NA

- Burncoat Park – NA
- Burncoat Playground – NA
- Cascades Park – NA
- Castle Park – Update
- Common Master Plan Implementation – NA
- Coes Knife Park –
 - Stearns Tavern - Continue to move along
 - Playground – Late Spring early Summer
- Coes Pond – NA
- Columbus Park – NA
- Cookson Park – NA
- Cristoforo Columbo (East Park) – NA
- Crompton Park – NA
- Dodge Park – NA
- Elm Park – Update
 - Newton Hill – Scheduled to go out to bid at the end of January
- Fairmont Park – NA
- Farber Field – NA
- Grant Square – NA
- Great Brook Valley Playground – NA
- Green Hill Park Renovation – NA
 - Green Hill Farm – Continue to design the new community gardens
 - Refectory – Completed
- Greenwood Park – NA
- Hadwen Park – NA
- Harrington Field – NA
- Harry Sherry Field (S. Worcester) - NA
- Holland Rink - NA
- Holmes Field – In final design will bid out in February
- Indian Hill Park – NA
- Indian Lake Beach – NA
- Institute Park –
 - Walkway Design - Completed
 - Salisbury Pond – Doing a study
- Kendrick Field – NA
- Knights of Columbus – NA
- Korean War Memorial – NA
- Lake Park – NA
- Lake Park State (possible Synthetic Field) - NA

- Lake View Playground – NA
- Logan Field – NA
- Morgan Landing – NA
- Mulcahy Field – Going out to bid by the end of January
- Oakland Heights Playground – NA
- Providence Street Playground – Finalizing design
- Ramshorn Island – NA
- Rockwood Field – NA
- Salisbury Park (Bancroft Tower) – NA
- Shale Street Playground – Master Plan Update
- Shore Park – Update
- Spillane Field – NA
- Tacoma Street Playground – NA
- TY Cobb – NA
- University Park – NA
- Vernon Hill – NA
- Wetherall Estates (Duffy Field) – NA
- 149 West Boylston Drive - NA
- Winslow & Pleasant - NA
- Aquatic Master Plan – NA
- Open Space and Recreation Plan – Update
- North Lake Ave Linear Park – NA
- Community Development Block Grant – NA
- Art-in-the-Park – NA
- Dog Park, Licensing & Control of Dogs – NA
- Rectangular Field Development – NA
- Park Monument Review - NA
- Misc. items:
 - Keep Worcester Clean
 - NA
 - City Council Orders
 - NA
 - Petitions - NA
 - Forestry Operations – Update
 - ALB (Asian Longhorned Beetle)
 - EAB (Emerald Ash Borer)
 - Budget Update – Operational & Capital – Started discussions
 - Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Division – NA
 - Capital Improvement program – NA

- City Five Point Financial Plan - NA
 - Summer Youth Employment Program – NA
 - Recreation Worcester - NA
 - Holiday Tree – Was a great success
 - Worcester Common Ice Skating Rink – Some snow but overall it’s going well
 - Waterfowl in Park – Article
 - Out-to-Lunch – NA
 - Trash – NA
 - ESCo – NA
 - Park Permits –
 - NA
 - Access/ ADA – Update
 - Mobile Concession/ Food Truck - NA
 - ATV – Recreational Vehicle - Article
 - Misc. Information –
 - City Maintenance Partnership Article
 - Handball Article
 - City Council Youth Parks & Recreation Sub Committee
 - Ms. Mulhern asked regarding the Parks Division getting it’s own social media.
 - NA
- Golf Course:
 - NA
- Golf Course Donations: NA

- Mr. Lauring made a motion to adjourn, Second by Mr. Sullivan. All were in favor. Motion was approved 5 - 0. Meeting was adjourned at 7:52 PM
- Next Parks & Recreation Commission meeting: February 2, 2017 – 6:30 PM