

Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee (OSRPC) Meeting Minutes

August 1, a public meeting in the Collins Room

* Action items and votes below in bold face

- 7:00 PM, Rosa opens meeting; after a quorum is present:

Present: John Bartlett, Justin Damon, Jack Bowen, Marlies Henderson, Mike Parker, Michael Rosa
Excused: Maria Martin, Katie Shubin
Ex Officio: Erika Jerram, Katherine Malgieri
Guest: Andrew Jennings

1. Open mic: Jennings reminds the committee members of a trail to the smallpox cemetery, which has not been mentioned in an OSRP to date. He suggests that the trail and adjacent land be considered when the OSRP is updated. He also stresses that a contingency plan is needed to memorialize the historical properties in the vicinity of Talbot Dam, if the dam is removed as proposed by the owner.
2. Bartlett moves to accept the 7/11 minutes, seconded by Bowen. Vote: 3-3-0¹
3. **Jerram** reported that the RFP generated only one proposal: from Dodson & Flinker. She meant to send out a digital copy, but hands out a copy to members in attendance, and will **email** the digital version. The proposal checks the boxes. Staff will **conduct** reference checks, **review** the break-down of the (separate) price proposal; **establish** the subcommittee with the Town Clerk, so the subcommittee can decide to qualify the consultant. The consultant project timeline lists a kick-off this month (!) and completion date by March 2024.
4. Malgieri remarks that the 2024 Massachusetts Open Space Conference website has links to recordings from this year's sessions. If the 2024 conference is not free, the department can pay for those who wish to attend.
5. Members submit implementation audit comments homework. Bartlett highlights the fact that *Parks & Trees* has no civil input; the Recreation Commission may have to be changed to a *Parks & Recreation Commission*. The discrepancy goes back to the maintenance of the fields having been removed from the Recreation Department², while they continue to manage permitting the fields.
6. Updates:
 - a. Clancy got in touch with CSX, but CSX needed 18 months delay. Curran contacted CSX suggesting eminent domain. CSX then needed 30 days. At the time of the meeting this delay was on day 11³.

¹ In favor - opposed - abstention

² 2017 Fall Town Meeting Warrant Art 10

³ So, day 30 is 8/20?

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- b. Jennings reported on the Vision 2050 draft: The public comment period closes August 17. He found the draft difficult to access as it is in a 16.5 in. by 11 in. format which is difficult to print out and difficult to read on a screen. The draft is 235 pages plus a slightly larger appendix. The Active Transportation chapter states that it encourages safe walking and biking and cites the benefits of active transportation, but it is difficult to find projects that would promote and expand active transportation. It has all the right words but lacks planning. The draft is not easily accessible, and the time to submit response is too short.
 - c. Clancy will contact the SRWA President this Thursday about solving the Shawsheen River access point obstruction on Buckingham Rd.
 - d. Jennings reported: The Billerica Branch is the logical extension of the Yankee Doodle Bike Trail to the Middlesex Canal and the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. [MassTrails Priority Network Vision includes a portion of it.] Correspondence he received early June from MBTA rail operations via the firm that handles MBTA real estate indicated that the Billerica Branch was not available because "Iron Horse Park is currently being developed by the MBTA for several important projects." There are 3 MBTA projects for Billerica Iron Horse Park listed in the MBTA's current Capital Investment Program. There are 3 MBTA projects for Billerica Iron Horse Park:
 - i. P0472 (Control Center) \$44.4M
 - ii. P0609 (Green Line Ext. support) \$5M
 - iii. P1171 (Commuter Rail Maintenance facility) \$30MLast June, Jennings emailed Rep. Marc Lombardo's legislative aide asking for information on these projects, but he received no reply to date. Rosa will reach out. Henderson asks why these projects matter. Jennings explains that MBTA owns Billerica Branch. Billerica Branch is in the long-term planning for the Yankee Doodle Rail Trail. We must keep an eye on the ROW.
7. Next meeting date is September 5 at 7 PM.
 8. 7:44 PM, meeting adjourned (motion by Bartlett, seconded by Bowen). Vote 5-0-0.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Marlies Henderson