

## **Conservation Commission Apr. 24 Meeting Minutes**

### **Open meeting**

The meeting was opened at 7:10 pm by Cassandra. Present were Conservation Commission members: Cassandra Koutalidis, Delia Kaye, Rachel Evans, Leslie Brayton, John Reinhardt, Elisabeth Miley, and Associate Members Marta Anderson, Janet McGowan, and John Buccheit; also present were Ron Witte, Marian Berkowitz, David Turin, neighbors of Lincoln Park School, Ed Morris, invited to talk about Green Roofs, Peter Lukacic, an architect, and Tom Jones (DPW) to talk about Lincoln Park School, and Ezra Glenn (to talk about the Open Space Plan revision). Jennifer Hill (GroundworkSomerville) reported on Cedar Street signage cost. Tracey Goldberg (OHCD) and David Dow (DPW) also attended.

Introductions were made.

Minutes of the previous (March) meeting had been reviewed via internet. Rachel moved to accept the minutes, Elisabeth seconded. All approved.

### **Budget**

Anne provided budget update on both revolving funds and Conservation Commission operating budget. She said we need to make some decisions about spending, especially for gardens.

Examination of the agenda led to discussion about “bumping” some items to a later date. Leslie proposed special meeting on May 8<sup>th</sup>, to consider budget and other items. Seconded by Cassandra. All approved.

Rachel asked that Anne prepare a written budget with bulleted summary of revolving funds key information and allocation of CC funds.

The Commission charged Anne with getting prices and making spending recommendations at the special meeting.

Cassandra asked Anne to ask Steve Post, if Block Grant money could be awarded now to Durrell, and spent later.

### **Administration**

Cassandra said she wanted to chair the IKEA hearing, and asked if anyone wanted to chair the regular meetings. Rachel moved that Elisabeth Chair the meetings, with Delia serving as Vice Chair. Following discussion, Elisabeth proposed Delia and Elisabeth act as vice Chairs for now. After more discussion, Cassandra moved to table the motions; Rachel seconded. All approved.

## **Informational**

John Reinhardt introduced guest speaker Ed Morris from American Hydrotech. Ed talked about “Green Roof” technology and provided informational material for our files. The Conservation Commission has proposed that IKEA consider “Green Roof” technology for its roof space, to reduce thermal radiation from the roof and to reduce peak stormwater runoff.

Anne agreed to table her report on her meeting with the mayor and said she’d e-mail it around after the meeting.

## **New Business**

### Lincoln School

Tom Jones (DPW and project manager and liaison w/architects) and Peter Lukacic, an architect from the architectural firm of Symmes Maini & McKee Associates, brought design drawings and spoke about the proposed rebuilding of Lincoln Park Community School. The plan requires the “taking” of adjacent park and recreation land for the rebuilding of the school. The “old” building will be demolished, and the land on which it sat will be designated park and recreation land in exchange for the land taken for the new building. Tom said he’s trying to submit materials to meet a June 1 submittal date to get on list for 90% funding with School Building Assistance Board. The city needs 1) A letter from the Conservation Commission attesting that there are no wetlands jurisdictional issues associated with the school or park, and 2) A letter from the Conservation Commission approving Article 97 transfer of parklands to the school (actually a “land swap” involved).

### History

In 1973.... 7.1 acres of parkland under Article 97, 1.5 acres of that deeded to school. City made a “taking” of additional 14,000 sq. ft. (0.7 acre) that was deeded directly to school department. Cassandra asked what was done with parkland not deeded to school. Tom said it was kept in parks, and designated for specific uses, including a tot lot (some of street taken for this), little league and baseball fields, and basketball courts.

New school can only occupy 1.5 acres (additional, from 0.7 above is partly in parking). After “swap” there will be a net gain of parkland of 0.2 to 0.3 acre.

Tom said neighborhood meetings had led to the present design.

- Still trying to add paved surface, yet limit impervious surface

Discussion of Tom’s request for letter related to Wetlands followed.

Delia commented she’d seen standing water on the site. Peter L. said there was a sprinkler system and the water might be from watering on clay soils. Cassandra said there was anecdotal evidence that Miller’s Creek used to run through the park. Peter replied that the water table was high. CK asked if borings had been done. Tom said

borings had been done in the previous week and the results weren't back yet, so they don't know what the height of the water table is.

Cassandra said we would entertain a motion to approve a letter re: jurisdiction related to Wetlands, but as far as the Article 97, we needed additional materials and we needed to discuss it. Tom said he needed title to land for proposal (though exactly when is not clear). He also needs Bd. of Alderman's approval and commitment to funding to go forward.

The Conservation Commission requested the following

- 1) Existing deeds
- 2) Historical Article 97 transactions to 1973
- 3) Existing site plans (with actual dimensions)
- 4) Alternatives analysis/Feasibility study
- 5) Environmental Notification Form submitted to MEPA
- 6) Soil borings

Some comments were accepted from neighbors of Lincoln School. These neighbors thought the proposal was still in an early stage and felt they weren't notified of last neighborhood meeting. They said they felt there wasn't public participation for the present configuration of the plans.

Rachel asked for plans with dimensions (Peter said that would come with title search and deeds).

Cassandra said she is confident there are no jurisdictional wetlands at Lincoln Park, and that a 1977 letter for Edgerly will serve as a model to follow for Anne to write the letter. **Cassandra moves that the Conservation Commission issue the city a letter stating the proposed project does not come under Consv.Comm. jurisdiction under the Wetlands Protection Act. Leslie seconded. All approved.**

Article 97—will meet again to review.

T-shirts –Tabled

More comment was offered by neighbors of Lincoln School. Rachel suggested they could offer comments at a later meeting...Elisabeth said they should follow Rachel's suggestion and send Anne an e-mail with concerns in writing, and we would notify them of when next meeting is, whether special meeting or next regular meeting and they should come to that. More discussion followed about how the neighbors could be "heard" in the process.

## EMPACT GRANT

Anne reported that monitoring equipment would be installed at Blessing of the Bay Boathouse, and that after review of drawings, no Determination of Applicability is required.

## Mystic draw-down

Discussion was tabled.

## Dan Nygaard

Anne received letter from Dan with last year's dues for Tufts garden. Dan said he was thinking of resigning. **Rachel moved we accept Dan's resignation. Leslie seconded. All approved.** Delia said she would write a letter to Dan accepting his resignation and supply an effective date.

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## T-shirts

Anne said she would get info via e-mail to order t-shirts.

## **Old Business**

### Open Space Plan-Ezra Glenn

Ezra, employed by McGregor & Associates, introduced himself, provided some background on the Open Space Plan, and said he had been hired by OHCD to complete the Open Space Plan revision. Ezra said he'd met with Jennifer Hill of GroundworkSomerville to discuss the survey to be handed out for public input/feedback. Ezra said he wasn't sure who would tabulate the results of this survey, but he didn't have time. Cassandra asked Tracy and Ezra to be sure that the Conservation Commission was a reviewer of the revision before it is submitted to state.

Ezra brought 2 handouts, included in minutes:

- 1) Somerville Open Space & Recreation Plan 1997-2002 Five year Action Plan (distilled and grouped, by McGregor & Associates
- 2) The Importance of Open Space Planning

Ezra asked for the Consv. Comm.'s response to the first handout, for evaluation of goals and objectives of the old Open Space Plan.

Tracey Goldberg noted that OHCD had a June 1 deadline for first draft, and a September 1 deadline for the final version of the revision.

A lengthy discussion followed, in which it was observed that the Consv. Comm. had written the last plan, but no one wanted to see that it was implemented. Cassandra said we need leadership from the top to get all departments to feel invested in the Open Space Plan, and asked whether it would be appropriate for the Commission to write a letter to the mayor about appointing a group to review and .....

### Jennifer Hill

Jennifer reported on signs to label the plants at the Cedar Street end of the Bikeway. She provided information so the Conserv. Comm. could pay for these signs, as previously promised, while giving credit to both the Somerville Garden Club and the Conservation Commission for their support of GroundworkSomerville to do the plantings. Cost will be about \$300.00.

Algonquin Gas (Anne)-- Tabled

### IKEA

The notice of the public hearing was published in the Boston Herald, instead of the Somerville Journal. The Conservation Commission expressed concern that abutters had been properly notified. Delia agreed to check the Wetlands Protection Act to try to answer this question as it bears on the legality of the scheduled hearing.

Update 319 grant-- Tabled

### **Committees**

Community Gardens-- Tabled

### Durrell plans

Cassandra will write a letter to the mayor to set out the reasons why we think Durrell is not a good choice for a staging area for the construction work planned on Beacon Street.

Hansen update -- Tabled

### **Upcoming events**

After a brief discussion of who is doing what for the Mystic/Alewife Clean-up, all other upcoming events were tabled to be dealt with via e-mail or at the next meeting.

Cassandra moved to close. Delia seconded. All approved.  
Meeting was adjourned at 10:17 pm.