

**October 10, 2002
Conservation Commission
Special Open Space Meeting
Meeting Minutes**

Open Meeting 6:15 pm, City Hall Annex

In attendance were CC Co-chairs Delia Kaye and Elisabeth Miley, members John Reinhardt, Lisa Bruiklacio, Michael Fager, and Cassandra Koutalidis, and agent Anne Phelps. Also present were Jennifer Hill (GroundworkSomerville) and Ryoko Ujito. Michael agreed to be the “time-keeper” and Elisabeth agreed to facilitate the meeting.

Introductions were made.

Review of previous meeting’s minutes were postponed until the next regular meeting.

Open Space Defined

After discussion, the CC defined open space as:

Publicly owned, undeveloped land that is primarily vegetated, or paved areas that serve a recreational or cultural purpose. For example, this includes parks, playgrounds, community gardens, walking or biking trails, cemeteries, civic plazas, and playing fields. Also included as open space are certain water bodies with recreational use, namely Alewife Brook and Mystic River. Not part of this definition, but recognized for their potential are certain privately owned properties, such as lawns, memorial sites, or other landscaped areas.

Note: This definition will exclude the community gardens at Avon Street and the one at Tufts. Quincy Street, listed on the inventory as “community garden” is not a community garden.

Delia and Lisa left at approximately 7 pm.

Discussion of Draft Open Space Plan

Several CC members and Anne have given or will (Janet) give Ezra detailed comments regarding grammar, punctuation, and writing style, and Ezra can “pick and choose” which version he wants to use.

For more substantial comments the CC agreed to summarize and present those to Ezra, to include:

1. A “buy-in” from all city departments is needed for the OS Plan to be effectively implemented – Elisabeth had previously asked Ezra to add to **beginning of Section 9**, a third primary Action regarding agreement from other departments. For example, we do not know what the Recreation Department thinks of this, and other departments have had little input so far.

2. A (new) “Over-Time” section to highlight the accomplishments and changes, including current projects, related to Open Space since the 1997 OS plan, to include

- Playgrounds
- Community Gardens
- Growing Center
- IKEA
- Glen and Lincoln Park/School
- Tufts closed its playing field to dogs
- Draw 7 Soccer Field is seldom used

3. Cassandra has some old postcards (Foss Park in the 1800s, for example) that could be copied and inserted in the scrapbook section of the OS Plan.

4. The “Needs Analysis” seems incomplete. Somerville’s demographics have changed over the past 5 years – there are fewer kids, for example. How does that affect the need for playgrounds and open space?

Action Plan Review

Other General and Specific comments were added to the ones summarized by Elisabeth prior to the CC meeting, including

- Needs a footnote to explain asterisks (* low importance; **** high)
- Need for Education Campaign for negative effect of paving lots
- Need to investigate ordinance to reduce amount of impervious surface on privately owned land

John left at 8:05.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Cert. Of Compliance for Algonquin was postponed until the next CC meeting on October 23, to be held at City Hall Annex at 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Phelps, Agent