

## **West Boylston Parks Facilities Committee (PFC) Meeting Minutes – December 2, 2014**

**PFC attendees:** Patrick Crowley, Gary Flynn, John Hadley, Patrick Inderwish, John Owanisian, Christopher Rucho

**BETA Engineering attendees:** Randall Collins, Steven D'Ambrosia

**Other attendees:** Deb Mattison (Open Space), Mark Baldi (WB Arts Foundation), Christine and Tony Drappi (Goodale Park abutters), John Milewski (WBHS Baseball Coach), Kevin Bjorklund, James Morrissey

**Banner Reporter:** Michael Kane

- PFC Chairman Inderwish opened the meeting at 7:07PM.

**Motion:** A motion by Mr. Crowley and seconded by Mr. Rucho to approve PFC minutes of November 13, 2014 was approved.

**Motion:** A motion by Mr. Crowley and seconded by Mr. Inderwish to enter all electronic input received concerning the Goodale Park Master Plan into meeting minutes was approved.

- Mr. Collins presented "Invoice No. 1" totaling \$3234.00 for professional services from September 27, 2014 to October 31, 2014.

**Motion:** A motion by Mr. Rucho and seconded by Mr. Flynn to approve Invoice No. 1 was approved with invoice then signed by members of PFC.

- Mr. Inderwish welcomed the attendees and provided an overview of the Goodale Park master planning process, indicating the master plan will yield cost estimates and alternatives for the park's future layout – key points below:
  - Topography and drainage are among site challenges
  - Stressed the importance of obtaining a good survey for Goodale Park
  - Drainage, parking and access improvements are needed
  - Need to determine best use for pine grove area
  - Inclusion of passive recreation is key goal
  - Described previous meetings that included input from WB department heads and park user representatives
  - Described the environmental bond bill that includes a \$5M provision for Goodale Park and encouraged those in attendance to write supportive letters to state agencies
- Mr. Collins then provided a further explanation of the master planning process and described some of the challenges associated with the Goodale Park site:
  - An aerial view of Goodale Park was presented defining limits of project area
  - The slope of terrain was described as a major challenge
  - Limited parking and accessibility are key challenges
  - Mr. Collins provided a graphic view of the park's size constraints by modeling a multi-purpose field at various locations in the park
  - It will likely be difficult to accommodate all users' desired features within the park's footprint

- A field survey was completed on November 28.
- Mr. Collins then kicked off and facilitated a discussion to gain input from the audience members in attendance – inputs listed below:
  - Mr. Milewski (WBHS Baseball Coach): Described issue of slope of right field to home plate, need for bullpens, additional fencing, and desire for creation of a “mini Fenway Park”. The field gets “beat up” with constant game/practice use – both varsity and JV baseball play a 20 game schedule (home/away). A “synthetic turf field would be fine”, but preference for dirt pitcher’s mound was expressed.
  - Ms. Mattison(Open Space): Expressed interest in creating a “space of honor” naming people that have made a significant contribution to the parks, encouraged more use of Summer House, possibly creating an area for dogs, incorporating shade trees into design, improvements to concert venue facilities, and creation of buffer space from neighbors.
  - Mr. Drappi (described himself as an abutter): Indicated greater emphasis should be placed on passive recreation with reduced emphasis on athletic fields. Need for more walking trails.
  - Ms. Drappi (described herself as an abutter): Noted other abutters are not present, misses pine grove and commented that pool should be considered part of overall plan. Expressed need for quiet “community space” and need for buffer space from neighbors. The master plan should not be developed exclusively as an athletic complex. Mr. Collins responded indicating various park options will be developed, some of which will include a pool – dialogue then needs to occur to discuss various tradeoffs.
  - Mr. Baldi (WB Arts Foundation): Emphasized the importance of an improved stage area as a community asset. Glad to hear from Mr. Collins that “in between space (area of steep terrain)” won’t be ignored. Mr. Inderwish floated the idea of a multi-purpose building that could potentially incorporate a stage area. Mr. Baldi was open to idea, but would need to see additional details.
- Mr. Hadley indicated the question of Goodale Park athletic field ownership (town or schools) surfaced at another recent meeting – consensus response was fields are town owned.
- Ms. Mattison inquired if another sample letter will be circulated for use as a template in support of the campaign to acquire bond funding – consensus response indicated this was a possibility and WB residents are encouraged to continue writing letters of support to state agencies.
- There being no further business to discuss, a motion to close the meeting was approved at 8:29PM.

**Important note:** The comments that follow represent a collection of user responses received via Email prior to the start of December 2, 2014 PFC meeting...

Revision 1.3

**John Milewski...WBHS Baseball Coach**

**From:** coachmilewski <[coachmilewski@charter.net](mailto:coachmilewski@charter.net)>

**Date:** December 1, 2014 at 12:55:17 PM EST

**To:** Patrick Crowley <[patrickjcrowley@yahoo.com](mailto:patrickjcrowley@yahoo.com)>

**Subject: Re: Fw: Goodale Park Master Plan - Please send comments**

Hi Pat,

Sorry I didn't get this to you sooner.

for the baseball field it would be nice to have the following:

- bullpens on both sides
- outfield fencing from center to right field
- possibility of re-doing left field fence into a green monster type wall
- new dugouts
- storage shed for equipment
- outdoor batting tunnels, if field gets fenced in there should be enough room behind the right center field area for this
- area behind home plate for permanent bleacher seating

I will also be at tomorrow night's meeting

Thanks

John Milewski

**Jen Breen...West Boylston Recreation Dept.**

Hi Bob,

Thanks for the opportunity to allow me to voice my wishes for the Recreation Department with regard to the parks facilities in town.

As you know, the Recreation Department has seen good growth over the last several years. However, it has not grown as much as it could have, due to limitations on space and availability of facilities.

The Recreation Department has run soccer camps both at the MHS fields and at Woodland St. We have run a field hockey/lacrosse program at the high school field and we use space all over Goodale Park for the half day programs and the full day summer program. These programs consist of taking the kids to play organized games on

the baseball fields, setting up water games/activities for the hot summer days and also making use of the tennis and basketball courts.

**I believe that some type of water feature would be a huge draw for families in the town.** Many surrounding towns have splash pad/water play areas, which are less expensive than a pool and hold a lower liability. Some type of water feature that would be able to be used by the Recreation Department in the summer would be a fantastic addition not only to our program, but to the town as a whole.

**I also believe that more organized field space is a must for Goodale Park.** We are constantly finding that it is very difficult to organize and run programs due to the fact that the schools, and organizations like Little League and WBYSA are constantly given first right of refusal to the fields after the schools (which I completely understand and respect). That being said, it is incredibly difficult to try to grow and run programs that may allow for children who do not currently participate in organized town sports to find something that may like to do. I also have difficulty securing space for children ages 3-5 who have very limited activities offered to them in West Boylston.

I am hopeful that the space at Goodale Park will be developed with the entire town in mind. **I believe that more field space, a water feature, possibly the revitalization of the volleyball court and more ample parking,** could inject a renewed love of the town into our population, and allow for a place for neighbors to come together with their families, which will help build a stronger community.

I thank the committee for their hard work, and am grateful for the opportunity to offer my opinion on the development of the plan for the park.

Sincerely,

Jen Breen

### **S. Latorre...Girls Softball**

1. What town-wide parks facilities does your program or group currently use in the town of West Boylston? **Girls softball field**
2. Do these parks facilities currently meet your needs? If not, what are the top things you would like to see changed? **Additional field**

3. What specific improvements to Goodale Park ONLY would you envision that would better meet the needs of your program? **Additional field for the girls to have for both practices and games.**

**Mark Baldi...West Boylston Arts Foundation**

Bob,

The West Boylston Arts Foundation's responses are below:

1. The WBAF uses the stage at Goodale Park for summer concerts, and the town Common for the Fall Festival.
2. The stage at Goodale Park needs a roof and back wall to shelter equipment and performers, a back stage storage/dressing room would improve the functionality of the stage, as would a light bar; additional electricity and restrooms at Goodale Park are also needed. Additional electrical outlets at the Town Common would be helpful.
3. See above.

**Bob Dunne...West Boylston Youth Soccer**

Please consider my input at our meetings for W. Boylston Youth Soccer to accurately represent the feelings of the board as I am Past president and still a member of the board. This matches with feedback I have gotten from them during numerous conversations on the subject. Basically, the league would most benefit from a single, 200 x 400 field footprint in the upper pine grove running parallel to Newton St with face-in parking between the field and the stone wall along Newton St for approx. 60 cars. This would likely remove almost all other field use needs for soccer other than Woodland St and the Goodale Park game (AKA: "Football") field, thus freeing up space for year-round baseball or other sports use of both Goodale A/B and Mixter fields.

I have cc'd Lionel Bella, current President of WBYSA on this email so he is in the loop. I'm sure he will add some comments as sees fit.

**Lionel Bella...West Boylston Youth Soccer**

Hi Randy,

Please see my responses below.

Please let me know if you have any questions.  
Regards,

Lionel  
WBYSA, President

### **Youth Soccer**

What town-wide parks facilities does your program or group currently use in the town of West Boylston?

The WBYS program uses multiple fields to support programs for 7 different player groups:

- a. **Girls Softball Field:** U6, U8
- b. **Mixer Field:** U10 Boys, U10 Girls
- c. **Woodland Fields:** U12 Girls, U12 Boys, U14 Boys

Do these parks facilities currently meet your needs? If not, what are the top things you would like to see changed?

The locations of these fields, single field playing areas located a fair distance from one another, do not allow for interaction with other teams during the practice season. The U6 & U8 programs have engaged in a multi-team practice session on a larger field space that has proven very effective in skills building. Having a single, unified multi-field site would allow for more interaction between teams for collaboration opportunities such as skills knowledge sharing, and inter-team scrimmages

What specific improvements to Goodale Park ONLY would you envision that would better meet the needs of your program?

The establishment of a large, multi-field playing area to support the U10, U12, and U14 programs, both practice sessions and games. If linked to the Goodale Park area, would recommend the establishment of some common facilities (i.e. restrooms, snacks, equipment storage) that could be leveraged by the surrounding field areas (i.e. softball, baseball, football) as well.

### **Jim Pedone...WB Little League**

Hi Randy,

I am Jim Pedone, the President of West Boylston Little League.

Sorry for the late response, but here are my answers to the three questions you have asked:

1. What town-wide parks facilities does your program or group currently use in the town of West Boylston?

Currently WBLL uses both baseball fields at Goodale Park, the baseball field at Mixer, and Woodland Park.

2. Do these parks facilities currently meet your needs? If not, what are the top things you would like to see changed?

Currently, these facilities do not meet our needs. First, we could use another baseball field. Currently, during the season, all of the fields are used for games and there is not any room for teams not playing to be able to practice. In addition, the two fields that are at Goodale do not have enough room for a 200' fence at each field. In addition, I would like one of the fields to be able to be use as a 50' x 70' field. This is 70' base paths and a 50' pitchers mount compared to 60' base paths and a 46' pitchers mound that is currently used.

3. What specific improvements to Goodale Park ONLY would you envision that would better meet the needs of your program?

Specifically I would like to see 3 baseball fields. One of them would be 50' x 70' with at 225' fence, and the other 2 could be 46' x 60' with a 200' fence.

### **Letter to Town Administrator from abutter Ms. Drapi...**

**From:** [pacemadre@aol.com](mailto:pacemadre@aol.com) [<mailto:pacemadre@aol.com>]

**Sent:** Monday, December 01, 2014 1:19 PM

**To:** [lgaumond@westboylston-ma.gov](mailto:lgaumond@westboylston-ma.gov)

**Subject:** questions/input PFC meeting Dec 2, 2014

Dear Leon,

As I was unable to attend the meeting on November 13 with BETA, I wasn't able to ask the questions I had intended to ask. ( I have not seen the minutes of that meeting so some of these questions might have been answered at that meeting).

Were the Garden Club, Council on Aging (Chris Rucho informed me, after the formal invites had been made, that the CoA would be invited), Open Space Committee, School Committee, Planning Board, Earth Removal Board, ZBA, Light Department, Historical Association,

Water Department and other interested parties invited to attend the November meeting?

The abutters were not invited to the November 13 meeting nor were they informed of The Master Plan, the application for state funding, and the inclusion of the funding in the approved bond bill.

( I discovered the information by reading minutes of past PFC meetings and I happened to catch the BoS meeting where Sen. Chandler and Rep. O'Day spoke about the bond bill).

Were the abutters ( Drappi's, Eberts, residents of Lynwood Lane, etc.) and the other groups formally invited to the December 2nd meeting?

There has been no communication to abutters at all regarding the Goodale "Park"- now "Athletic Fields" renovation as stated in the Master Plan - even in regard to the possible need to enter onto the Drappi property by BETA for purposes of conducting the survey! Why

Are there other areas outside the perimeter of Goodale Park which will be affected by the changes planned for the park i.e. roads, sidewalks, parking, street-lights?

Will an effort be made to save trees in and around Goodale Park?

The land in question was donated to the town for use as a "park". Therefore, shouldn't a good portion of the land be used as a park rather than as restricted-use athletic fields? ( check out "Goodale Park in Ohio where there are flowering trees, paths, and lots of community involvement)

Will the results of the Recreation Survey expressing the need for passive recreation space, dog park and ice rink be considered?

Doesn't the School Department own some of the property? Is it involved in the planning?.... are the athletic coaches the representatives of the schools?

The "stakeholders" who were formally invited to the last meeting are the folks who run the recreation/ athletic programs. The folks on the Parks Facilities Committee are some of the same folks.

Correct me if I am wrong - wouldn't this be conflict of interest? especially when all the additional fields would encourage the running



of tournaments and exchanging of funds as fees for outside groups to participate?

As far as I can recall, "commercial" activities cannot be conducted on the park grounds - maybe I'm wrong....

Where would the funds collected go? Are the groups who pay to use the park "accountable" to the town? Will those who use the facilities pay to maintain the fields or will the taxpayers foot the bill?

Along the same lines, will a portion of the \$5,000,000 from the state, if it is received by the town, be invested so that there will be an ongoing source for maintenance of the facilities?

How would the Parks Facilities Committee prioritize the items it has listed in the Master Plan, knowing that BETA has told them that they cannot have everything on their wish-list?

Where would the pool, paths, places for passive recreation fall on that list in relation to the athletic fields, lights, parking, restrooms, concession and other sports-related items? For instance, is the pool, a "pie-in-the-sky" item at the bottom of the list?

I hope to attend the PFC meeting tomorrow night.

Thanks for your attention,

Sincerely,

Chris Drappi