

Park & Recreation Commission Outdoor Swimming Pool Working Group Meeting Minutes  
8/13/20

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| Park and Recreation Commission | Meeting Minutes |
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**Date:** August 13, 2020, 12:30 PM

**Place:** Zoom Webinar

**Commissioners Attending:** John Bain, Nancy O’Connor, Antonia Bellalta, Dan Lyons and Clara Batchelor

**Commissioners Absent:**

**Working Group Members Attending:** Richard Robinson, Alisa Jonas and Lynda Roseman

**Working Group Members Absent:**

**Staff:** Erin Gallentine, Parks and Open Space Director, Leigh Jackson, Recreation Director, Jessica White, Parks and Open Space Assistant, Jon Lewitus, Assistant Recreation Director, Scott Landgren, Parks and Open Space Senior Landscape Architect

| TOPIC                                                                                                         | KEY POINTS/DISCUSSION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
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| Welcome – Review of Working Group Purpose & Goals – John Bain                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N. O’Connor opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. She stated that this is a great opportunity.</li> <li>• J. Bain has been doing research and stated that there are a lot of cities and towns surrounding Brookline without an outdoor pool and he thinks this is a great idea for petitioners to start the ball rolling on this. His hope is to make this happen at some point. He stated that it’s been on our radar for a long time.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Introductions                                                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The members of the working group introduced themselves.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Summary of Values/Community Need for a Pool and Round Table Discussion of Community Needs & Programming Ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alisa Jonas stated that Brookline is a population of sixty thousand and summers are getting warmer and warmer without an outdoor pool. Newton has both a pool and a lake. She thinks it is a benefit, community resource, it’s multi-generational and great exercise. She said it should not be limited to people who have money and access to private clubs and or summer homes. It should be made publicly available. She has spoken to a lot of towns that have recently redone their pools or built a new pool and the price tag much is more reasonable than she would of thought. She discussed some of these towns and the prices. She stated that in her research she discovered that operating costs are more than covered by revenue.</li> <li>• Lynda Roseman stated that an outdoor pool is a great resource for teenagers. There are opportunities for programs and summer jobs.</li> <li>• Richard Robinson agrees with A. Jonas’s summary. He thinks it would be a big asset. He</li> </ul> |

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|                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <p>stated that Brookline is in top places to live in this country, and he thinks this would just add to that.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• J. Bain and A. Jonas discussed the type of pools she has seen in her research. She has been thinking about what the appropriate type/size of pool that would meet Brookline’s needs. A. Jonas stated that the public works site at Larz Anderson, it is in violation of Article 97, it is an eye sore and thinks it could be a great place for an outdoor pool. She stated that the Brookline Reservoir is an option to think about. She thinks that Newbury College site could be a location depending on what happens there. Larz Anderson areas that are underutilized were the best options to her. The problem with that Larz Anderson is public access/transportation.</li> <li>• Lynda Roseman thinks that we could get a shuttle bus that runs on a regular schedule for Larz. She also thinks that maybe Recreation vans could be used.</li> <li>• C. Batchelor stated that an outdoor pool is a fantastic idea and it’s something the town could really use. She stated that A. Jonas kept talking about the population, but she thinks that a better way to approach an outdoor pool is to approach it from the needs the pool will serve first. She stated that when planning we shouldn’t forget we have an indoor pool. She thinks we have to think creatively so it can be defended to the public.</li> <li>• L. Jackson introduced herself. She is excited about this idea. She stated that we are at the end of the strategic planning process and the idea of an outdoor pool may fit in really well to some of the strategic action items that will be released soon. It includes a full recreation center.</li> <li>• E. Gallentine introduced bother herself and S. Landgren.</li> </ul> |  |
| <p>Review of Pool Fit Test<br/>PowerPoint Presentation –<br/>Erin Gallentine</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Define parameters for priority location</li> <li>2. Discuss sites</li> </ol> | <p>-Objective: 5 Park and Recreation Commissioners and three members of the public makeup the outdoor pool working group.</p> <p>-Study options for the siting of an outdoor swimming facility for Brookline Residents and present a recommendation to the full Park and Recreation Commission</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Location (s)- pros/cons, tradeoffs,</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |  |

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|  | <p>transportation/access, site specific considerations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>2. Basic Programs</li><li>3. Estimate/Scope for Feasibility Study</li></ol> <p>The Larz Anderson park maintenance facility is not in violation of article 97. It is an important facility to the management and storage of large and small engine equipment, storage of material through the season and there is a Parks crew that operates out this location. Pictures and descriptions of the City of Belmont pool and Needham Rosemary Pool (minor Recreation Center attached) were shown.</p> <p>Feasibility Study Objectives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Complete site analysis and feasibility of a new pool and related facilities at the sites identified based on site constraints and opportunities. Location /neighborhood context, property size/zoning, natural physical features, existing infrastructure, land use restrictions, inclusion/equity/accessibility, circulation, utilities, synergy with other facilities, site constraints/issues, use impacts and public transportation.</li><li>2. Develop conceptual alternatives for those sites determined to be feasible and cost effective to accommodate a new pool and related facilities for review and comment by the Town</li><li>3. Design Development and cost estimate of the preferred alternative to a sufficient level such that it can serve as the basis for a project budget presented to the voters at Town meeting to include projected capital costs, operating costs and revenue</li></ol> <p>E. Gallentine presented the working group the Parks and Recreation Conceptual Pool Test Fit study presented at the last Park and Recreation Commission meeting. This was a very preliminary study that looked at parcels that could support a pool from a size perspective only with no additional analysis.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Soule Playground- a pool could fit on the lower field off of Hammond and there is also room for a larger pool on the upper field. There would be enhanced parking at the rear parking lot</li><li>2. Larz Anderson- a pool could fit within the current location of the outdoor rink. There is currently a task force looking at future of the Larz Anderson Ice Rink. A second option is to</li></ol> |  |
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|  | <p>restore the former Italianate Garden and then have a shared ice rink/pool complex. Another option is to repair the rink/ have open air skating and the pool is sited where the Larz Anderson Maintenance Facility currently is.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. Amory Playground- A pool could go where the clay tennis courts are currently located.</li><li>4. Putterham Wood- An area that is under-developed in terms of structure or access and is in terrible condition. It has suffered from high wind events and needs significant tree removal. This plan expands on the existing parking lot and incorporates a large pool. This site is large enough to potentially accommodate other recreation facilities as well.</li><li>5. Eliot- This location is on the basketball court, behind Eliot Rec and has expanded parking.</li><li>6. Brookline Avenue: This test fit involved taking field space, adding additional parking and putting in a large pool. She stated that whatever the town designed would not be just box, it be something very different that would accommodate all needs.</li><li>7. Boylston Street Playground- This options suggest that you could put parking under pool and have the pool sit on top of that that with support amenities and infrastructures.</li><li>8. Newbury College Campus- This has possibility for a full recreational complex that could include an indoor and outdoor pool. It is a site that has possibility and should be considered for all of the town's needs.</li><li>9. Brookline Reservoir- This park was recently renovated. In the mid 1900's, there was a plan to include a beach, which was never constructed. She stated that based on this plan, they took a look where it was proposed and what it would like. There would be a beach Dudley Way/Lee Street intersection. This would include a lot of work for a beach entry, the water level is 6-7 feet below grade. This would have to be constructed so that it would be a safe easy entrance. There could be a second beach or a beach on the far side and it could be converted into an entry point for swimming.</li></ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• She stated one comment that has come up at past meetings was if one of these sites is an</li></ul> |  |
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|  | <p>existing facility or resource getting a lot of use, to please try and minimize anything new, taking away for the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• J. Bain and E. Gallentine discussed drainage work that has been done in Soule and an area of land susceptible to flooding next to lower Soule that is regulated under the Wetlands Protection Act. The town sites that stick out to him are Putterham Woods and Larz Anderson.</li><li>• N. O'Connor stated that one thing mentioned earlier is that we try not to replace an existing program. She stated at Amory the tennis courts are highly well used and at Warren the basketball courts are very well used. She stated that Boylston Street is a dense neighborhood, there is a lot of new units back there and she thinks taking away the playground would be a hardship. A. Bellalta stated that there is a 16-18 foot culvert at Boylston and because of that, there could be issues with getting underground parking. E. Gallentine stated that because the park is sunken you don't need to get parking underneath you might be building up. N. O'Connor stated that she is really intrigued with some of the sites like the Larz configuration, she would not take away the rink and not have an alternative rink site. However, given with what is going on with the rink she thinks it is a great opportunity to talk about both of these amenities and maybe do a shared use of the facilities that is used for bathroom/changing. The current changing space was discussed. She does not see the current facilities staying because they are so undesirable. She loves using that area and thinks there is an opportunity for on/off season of each for recreation use. She stated that Putterham and Newbury are both good options.</li><li>• R. Robinson stated that at the last meeting he mentioned using Fisher Hill for a pool site. He stated that there wouldn't be a lot of expense and feels that it is not used. It is a big open beautiful area with parking.</li><li>• Lynda Roseman stated that Fisher Hill gets used and it's a beautiful space. She would take that right off the list. Her favorite spots are Larz, Putteraham and Newbury. She would take</li></ul> |  |
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|  | <p>Amory, Boylston and Warren Field off the table.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Alisa Jonas discussed Putterham Woods. She stated that it is run down, it would be nice to get the woods back and make use of that totally lost space. She wondered about potential impacts of the fire safety training facility at Putterham. She thinks this would need some research. She loves the idea of putting the Italian Garden back in. She thinks the transportation for Larz is tough. E. Gallentine and A. Jonas discussed Boylston Street underground parking. A. Jonas asked E. Gallentine what she thinks about parking at the Reservoir. E. Gallentine stated that there is not much parking and she thinks parking is a real hurdle. She thinks that in general with the Reservoir, there are not a lot of bodies of water to not just swim in, but have access to as well. People love the tranquility of walking that route along the Reservoir. She is guessing there would be a lot of push back to do that change of use. A. Jonas asked E. Gallentine what size a large pool translates to. A. Jonas did see a spot below the Italian garden that she thought of as something to consider. She stated that Fisher Hill is beautiful and thinks building a pool at Newbury near the park could increase utilization.</li><li>• R. Robinson stated that whatever location we choose he thinks it would be nice to use the landscaping/ trees to surround the pool and have some shade.</li><li>• E. Gallentine stated that she receives a lot of feedback from people go on morning walks and she sees people using the Fisher Hill park. It a passive/active recreation space. A. Bellalta stated that it would be fun to have the pool on the Newbury side to integrate with the Fisher Hill site.</li><li>• A. Bellalta likes the Putterham Woods site also. She sees Larz Anderson as a signature park and she feels like we can't keep taking away from the park trying to fit pools/ ice rink. She likes the idea of using the DPW site and bringing back what that historic site should be with the Italian Garden. Her goal would try to bring back the signature park and having activities to</li></ul> |  |
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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <p>support it rather than take away from original character of that historic park. Putterham seems like a great option to her, as well as Newbury College.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |  |
| <p>Proposed Meeting Schedule &amp; Future topics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development of Possible Locations</li> <li>2. Outdoor Pool Program &amp; Goals</li> <li>3. Operational Needs &amp; Order of Magnitude Capital Costs</li> <li>4. Feasibility Study</li> </ol> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E. Gallentine’s take away from this is, Larz Putterham Woods and Newbury College are the three sites that rose to the top that the working group with continue to talk about. She thinks the working group needs to decide what the different amenities/elements that would be important and then see how they would fit into each location.</li> <li>• E. Gallentine will work on flushing out parameters of the feasibility study</li> <li>• A. Jonas had done some work on comparisons with other communities and she thinks that ultimately it is something that town meeting would want to understand. A. Jonas and E. Gallentine discussed the combined report. N. O’Connor thinks that we should send out the link and allow everyone in the working group to see the combined report.</li> <li>• D. Lyons agrees with the three sites. He stated that with Larz, he loved the idea of restoring the Italian garden and putting it down below where the current service area is and combining with a covered rink and other recreational opportunities there. He would take Brookline Reservoir right off the table. He thinks Putterham is a good site for a pool, adding ball fields and combining in walking trails. He thinks Amory is off the table. He thinks Fisher Hill is a wonderful area and should be taken off the table.</li> <li>• J. Bain stated that Larz Anderson is an interesting site to him. He stated that we are in desperate needs of fields, he thinks any site that would impact a field should be taken off the table. He plans on taking a tour of the pools that A. Jonas has mentioned. He thinks the three sites chosen should be pursued.</li> <li>• A. Bellalta was wondering what the size of a recreation pool and the size of a lap pool would be? E. Gallentine stated that the template used for the test fits is a competitive swimming pool 25 yard and 25 meter. The Putterham Woods</li> </ul> |  |

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|                | <p>site could be 50 meters. E. Gallentine stated that there are several questions we should be asking ourselves. Is a recreational pool large enough? How many people can it accommodate? Should there be two pools? A. Bellalta discussed salt water pools. She was looking at the ice rink hours and what is left for recreation for the community vs sports and she would like to see that with the pool. N. O'Connor stated that the timing for the pool is spring/summer. She doesn't see this as a big competitive swim team pool. R. Robinson stated that if you put in a diving area that significant reduces the swim area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• S. Landgren stated that the conceptual test fits reviewed were designed using real pool dimensions, more based on competition pools because it's a size you could design around. It is 20/25 meter pool in the test fits and Putterham is 50 meter. They are real lap pools.</li> <li>• The Working group will reconvene meet in two weeks.</li> </ul> |  |
| <b>Adjourn</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• J. Bain moved to adjourn. Seconded by N. O'Connor. All in favor.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |

**Next Meeting: 8/28/20 Location: Zoom Webinar**

**A true record**

**Attest**     Jessica White    

**Date: 8/13/20**