



Canton Airport Site Remediation and Reuse Project
Meeting Notes from the Second Public Meeting July 27, 2009

Meeting Notes

The following summarizes the public comment after a presentation by Anne Fiesinger (AF), and Jim Baecker (JB) of the Department of Conservation and Recreation, and the planning/design team: Anne Leifer (AL), Bob Ingram (BI) and Deneen Crosby (DC).

Questions and Comments on the Presentation

1. Is it safe to assume none of the site will be sold off for commercial uses along Neponset Street?
 - Yes

2. What about the septic building on the south east corner of the site?
 - It is owned by Canton, it will stay.

3. In the park area it would be nice to have a play structure for small children. Has this program element been ruled out? Also, it would be wonderful to be able to access the site from the Chapman Street neighborhood rather than having to drive. Is this possible at all?
 - DC: A play structure has not been ruled out. There was no interest in a play structure in the first public meeting so we did not include the program element in the concept plans. A play structure could be included in any one of the proposed concept plans.
 - Access from the neighborhood would require installing a boardwalk over the wetlands from the entrance areas.

4. Were there industrial uses on both wetlands and uplands?
 - AL: Yes. The airport was built by filling in the wetlands. Over time the upland runways have sunk and reverted to wetlands. Now we have contamination in both the upland and wetland areas due to prior industrial uses.

5. What is the team's vision of the area between the upland entrance area off of Neponset Street and the contamination boundary? Will there be lawn there?
 - DC: The wetland area that is contaminated will be either capped or excavated and the wetland will be replanted or replicated. The types of plantings have not yet been determined but this area will not be lawn. The only lawn proposed on the site will be within the 3.2 acres of upland in the entrance area.

6. If there was an entrance from the neighborhood we should get assessors maps.
 - DC: We did review the ownership of properties abutting the park land.

7. The site is a swamp. The safety element of children getting out there is a problem. Boardwalks are necessary along with supervision. Presently there is hunting on the site.

8. There is no gun hunting in Canton.

9. The entrance area is not going to be the destination. Some people will come to the entrance to park so that they can use the site.

10. The park entrance area could be a beautiful welcome to the town of Canton.

-DC: The park here could be similar to Cutler Park in Needham, which is in a neighborhood, adjacent to a highway, has wetlands and is subject to flooding.

11. Would camping be possible?

-JB: No there are other places the DCR owns that are better for camping.

12. Would any of the trails be bikable?

-DC: Yes the stabilized pathways would be bikable.

13. It would be nice to have sidewalks on Neponset Avenue to access the site.

14. What are the hours of the park?

-Dawn to dusk

15. How many miles of trails are there?

- Over 2.5 miles. The main loop shown on the plan is 2.5 miles.

16. How would the project be phased?

-JB: The entrance area will be built at once. Phasing of the project pertains to the other elements of the design (trails, underpass, etc.)

17. What is the budget?

- \$8 million in funding has been identified for the project within DCR's Five Year Capital Plan; that amount is subject to annual appropriation. The funding priorities are: environmental remediation (likely to use 80% of the currently available funding), site access, and park development, as funding allows.

What areas are most important to you?

1. Underpass to Signal Hill.
2. Developing the entrance as a front door to Canton. It would be good to have access and trails to the wetlands, but if we enhance the entrance this may make people more interested in the park itself. I do not see the trails as a destination.
3. Ponkapoag Bog is a destination for the boardwalks there. The board walk system would be important for Canton Airport.

Which trail connections are most important to you?

1. Underpass and connection to Signal Hill
2. Boardwalk connections to the neighborhood.

3. Future connection to the Warner Trail

What types of trails are most important to you?

1. Connection to Signal Hill.
2. Boardwalk
3. Canopy Walk

What entrance area concept do you prefer?

- Option 2 appears to be less formal and will be easier to maintain
- The idea of the arboretum duplicates what is on the site. Do interpretation along the trail system.
- The ease of maintenance is important. We do not want the park entrance to look scruffy.
- A sidewalk is needed along Neponset Street for safe pedestrian and bike access to the park.

What uses do you prefer?

- Tot lot similar to the playground at Pope John Paul Park in Dorchester where the trails and the play structures are integrated
- The canopy walk is exciting and would be unique to the site. The maintenance will be difficult for the canopy walk
- The Parking lot is important. The community will need the ability to safely access the site
- The shelter area is important
- The central green is important
- Plant communities is a little redundant to the site
- The community already has many areas where informal games can be played.
- The canoe launch/tie up would be a positive addition to the site.