



Department of Conservation and Recreation
Stewardship Council Meeting
October 4, 2007
Community Boating, Boston, Ma

Meeting Minutes

Stewardship Councilors in Attendance: Chairman Dick Cross, Councilors, Julian Agyeman, Christina Crowley, Henry Lee, John Natoli and Dan Wolf.

Public Attendees: Ray C. Ellis, Jr., New England Trail Riders Association; Paul A. Remington, New England Trail Riders Association; Jill A. Miller, Natick Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee; A. Richard Miller, Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee; Dennis DeWin, Brookline Community; Ray Weber, Friends of Robinson State Park; Sharl Heller, Friends of Myles Standish State Forest; Claudia Hurley, Friends of Robinson State Park; Steve Kaiser, Association of Cambridge Neighborhood; Joe Dorant, Massachusetts Organization of State Engineers and Scientist; Heidi Ricci, Mass Audubon; Carol Gilmour, Friends of Robinson State Park; Franco Campanello, Southwest Corridor Park Conservancy; Steve Olanoff, Friends of the Blue Hills.

DCR Staff in Attendance: Commissioner Rick Sullivan, Stephanie Cooper, Jeff Daley, Suzanne Wilson, Jack Murray, Gary Briere, Tom LaRosa, Jack Donohue, Marcelle Valentin, and Joe Rotondo.

I. Call To Order (1:15 p.m.), Councilor Cross

- a. Councilor Cross welcomed everyone, mentioned that there will be many changes coming that will assist in our mission to enhance DCR. He mentioned that the Stewardship Council had reviewed and had discussions on their insight to the Oversight Strategy Memorandum. Councilor Cross asked for Marcelle Valentin to post the memorandum for 30 days for public comments on the Stewardship Council page on the DCR website as soon as possible, to give enough time for comment before the next Stewardship Council meeting.

II. Commissioner's Report, Commissioner Rick Sullivan

- a. Commissioner Sullivan introduced the newly appointed Deputy Commissioner of Operations, Jack Murray and he also introduced Jeff Daley, Senior Policy Advisor. The Commissioner explained part of Jeff Daley's role as Policy Advisor will be to also work with the Stewardship Council.
- b. The Commissioner mentioned several items including some items from the last Stewardship Council meeting.
 - i. He mentioned that General Counsel, Tom LaRosa is the point person working with NStar and the Friends group regarding the issue of gas leaks and the harm to the trees on the Arborway.
 - ii. On the Storrow Drive project the Commissioner informed the council that it has been decided to move the October 1st deadline for public comments to a later date. There will be continued discussion on the projects, infrastructure, approaches, and total review. In regards to the bridge and parkway safety the main concern is to keep the citizens safe and due to the sequence of events happening. DCR is continuing to take steps to ensure that the bridges and roadways under our care and control are safe and secure. To highlight a few of these:
 - Over the last few weeks, DCR crews have completed the repairs to the jack beam and post, and have continued to remove steel and loose fascia coping, on the Longfellow Bridge.

- DCR crews have also continued clearing materials from work completed on the pedestrian overpass near Embankment Road near the Longfellow Bridge, poured concrete at the Bowker Overpass, and removed loose concrete from the Memorial Drive Underpass to Longfellow Bridge.
 - In all instances, measures were taken to reduce traffic impacts through the scheduling of construction during low-use hours and through advance notice and outreach to the public. It's important to note that DCR has also taken steps to accommodate Red Sox fans, working opposite the heaviest volume of traffic during games.
 - Repairs on the Neponset Bridge were also undertaken, and are expected to be completed in FY 09.
- iii. The Commissioner informed the council that a letter has been drafted in regards to the concerns about herbicides treatment not permitted through Dam Safety; a copy of the letter will go out to the Stewardship Council.
 - iv. Wachusett Watershed Acquisitions - DCR's Division of Water Supply Protection received approval on September 12 from the MWRA Board of Directors to acquire nine properties for \$2.025 million in the Wachusett Watershed. The nine properties cover 93.2 acres of sensitive watershed lands that were highly rated by DWSP's Wachusett Model, a GIS-based rating system for matching land acquisition and water quality protection. The MWRA has provided up to \$7 million from its FY08 capital budget to DWSP to spend on watershed acquisitions. \$4.1 million was spent in FY07 on 17 parcels covering 542 acres in the Quabbin, Ware River, and Wachusett watersheds.
 - v. Watershed department are involved in the how and when water damage occurs around the park systems and reviewing the protocols, the Commissioner will report back the findings to the council.
 - vi. Construction continues on the Connell Rink/Pool in Weymouth, with roof repairs underway, and DCR has issued contracts for construction of new outdoor swimming pools in Attleboro and Brockton. Construction on these two facilities is expected to begin soon, ground-breaking ceremonies are being planned, and we estimate that work will be completed in time to allow the pools to open in the summer of 2008.
 - vii. With rainfall last month in Massachusetts well below normal, stream flow below normal, and generally warm and dry conditions are expected to persist throughout this week, DCR has made staffing of fire towers a high priority and extended the employment of 20 seasonal fire personnel to October 13.
 - viii. The Commissioner informed the council that there has been progress in receiving applicants for council members and hope to receive the three members needed.
- c. Commissioner Sullivan mentioned two key events that the agency has held to both support and recognizes the efforts of the hard-working statewide staff of DCR.
 - i. On September 28, DCR honored 32 teams and 87 individuals nominated by their peers under the Commonwealth's Performance Recognition Program, awarding each a Certificate of Recognition. Nine of these also received Commonwealth Citation Awards for Outstanding Performance, and, as mentioned last month, the Park Serve Team received the prestigious Manual Carballo Award for Excellence in Public Service and will be honored at a ceremony at the Sheraton Plaza on October 5th.
 - ii. Another key event was providing the staff an opportunity for sharing information and brain-storming yesterday, Wednesday, October 3rd at the Great Ideas Exchange Event for DCR operations managers, supervisors, and field staff which was held at Elm Bank Reservation Staff attended working sessions and presentations on topics such as "Great Ideas from Other Park Systems," "Diversity and Inclusivity in Historic Interpretation at

DCR Facilities,” “Everyday Great Ideas where a staff member presented a diesel hybrid vehicle which runs on pure vegetable oil,” and, in preparation for our Great Park Pursuit event series for next year, “Great Park Pursuit ’08.” This was the 3rd year to have this event and we will continue the annual event.

III. **Committee Updates and Meeting Schedules**

a. **Finance Committee, *John Natoli***

i. No updates to report this month.

b. **Resource Management Plan Committee, *Christina Crowley***

i. Councilor Lee informed the council that there will be a full progress report on the Resource Management Plan guidelines by October 18th.

c. **Policy Committee, *Julian Agyeman***

i. Councilor Agyeman stated that the committee completed an initiative report and they will be meeting again before the next Stewardship Council meeting to discuss new policy guidelines.

IV. **Off-Highway Vehicle Enforcement Group Update, *Bureau Chief Recreation, Gary Briere***

a. Gary Briere passed out the minutes from the Off-Highway Vehicle Enforcement and Education Working Group meeting which were held on September 14, 2007 to the council and public attendees, which is also available on the DCR website

<http://www.mass.gov/dcr/recreate/ohv/ohvworkgroup.htm>. Gary Briere gave an overview of the discussion and what came out of the meeting and informed the council the next scheduled meeting will be held on October 12, 2007. Chairman Cross did reiterate the importance to put into effect the rules of enforcement of OHV on the trails. There was also discussion on technology use as tools to know when OHVs are off the path they are designated to or are in areas they should not be in. The council would like more discussion on enforcement guidelines and on who would be the enforcer. The council would like an encompassing policy where enforcement is added to the policy the committee is working on. Mr. Briere informed that legislation must put a piece in the law that would reason enforcement to be effective. Chairman Cross requested an enforcement plan to be sent to the Stewardship Council before the next council meeting or given at the meeting. Follow up at the next Stewardship Council meeting.

V. **DCR Parkways, *Commissioner Rick Sullivan***

a. Commissioner Sullivan gave a brief update. He mentioned that there will be an open public process for comments and comments will discuss with the Legislature. The thought process is to have one agency maintenance the pavement and one agency maintenance in regards to curb to curb or pavement to curb. Currently there has not been any decision about a new agency or coordinating agencies. If any decision comes forward it will be brought to the Stewardship Council and to the public; it will go to the public comment process. Chairman Cross inquired if DCR can set standards for the look and feel for the functions of the parkways and would like to know how the council can catapult their thoughts to address to the legislation in regards to transferring responsibilities from one agency to another. Councilor Lee suggested mechanisms to place process to maintain from one agency to another agency. Commissioner Sullivan informed the council that he will follow up on their inquiries and keep them posted on the updates at the next Stewardship Council meeting

VI. Approval of Minutes from September 7, 2007 meeting

Minutes were not available at the time for review.

VII. Public Comment

- a. **Ray Weber** of the Friends of Robinson State Park discussed some of the issues regarding some odd invasive species plants at Robinson State park and inquiring on resolutions.
- b. **Ray C. Ellis Jr.**, New England Trail Riders Association commented on his appreciation to work with DCR in regards to the support on OHV conflicts, regulations and continued operations.
- c. **Joe Dorant**, Massachusetts Organization of State Engineers and Scientist presented a PowerPoint presentation advocating to not transferring the DCR parkways to Mass Highway Department. The presentation showed the historical factors, the connection between people and the environment and the dependency on the accessibility and quality of the natural resources.
- d. **Steve Kaiser** of the Association of Cambridge Neighborhood continued the discussion of not transferring the parkways to highways with a poster demonstration regarding the curb to curb aesthetics and gave points of possible failings of a parkway transfer.
- e. **Sharl Heller**, Friends of Myles Standish State Forest thanked the Commissioner and the agency for being able to be part of the committee for the OHV Enforcement group. There was discussion on how to mitigate inappropriate use on the beaches and inquired finding appropriate locations for recreational usage in the instance of Myles Standish she feels is an issue that needs to be looked into now. She also commended the staff at Myles Standish, they had an annual event there September 29 that was very successful and there were only 3 staff members there to handle the traffic.
- f. **A. Richard Miller** of the Cochituate State Park Advisory Council gave brief comments from the prior public remarks and prior discussions during the meeting. He discussed he concerns for continued usage of bicycles in the parkways and discussed the need for the roof at Cochituate needs to be fixed.
- g. **Dennis J. DeWin**, Brookline Community talked about research that was done at the gatehouses at the aquatic reservoir and found that there is an iron rod roof that was placed before 1845 the second oldest rod in the state. He feels this is an important structure and inquired if research can be done and possible repairs.
- h. **Heidi Ricci** of Mass Audubon discussed briefly about OHV and said that key friends and partners should be talked to about putting together a task force or land coalition to help in the enforcement. There were continued discussions on OHV violations. She had also mentioned the persistent need to maintain the trees and utility lines, in cases of bad weather high winds tree extras, shrubs, and other items get caught on the lines and can harm the habitat of the birds.

VIII. Meeting Schedule – Next meeting will be Friday, December 7. Location will be reported at a later date.

Meeting adjourned 3:45 pm