



Department of Conservation and Recreation
Stewardship Council Meeting
November 8, 2011
Lynn Heritage State Park, Lynn, MA

Meeting Minutes

Stewardship Councilors in Attendance: *Chairman, Henry Lee, Julian Agyeman, Elisa Campbell, Michael Dutton, Laura Johnson, Whitney Hatch, Chad McGuire* **Excused:** Christina Crowley, Frank Frey, Lori Nelson, James Van Dyke

DCR Staff in Attendance: *Commissioner Ed Lambert, Andy Backman, Jim Baecker, Lisa Bishop, Peter Church, Stuart Conner, Conrad Crawford, Jean Doherty, Cathy Garnet, Paul Jahnige, Joe Orfant, Doug Rice, Joe Rotondo, Jessica Rowcroft, Jason Silva, Michelle Small*

Public Attendees: Bill Boles, NEMBA – Semil Dixit, NEMBA - Adam Glick, NEMBA - Sharl Heller, Friends Network – Tim Pogt, NEMBA - Heidi Ricci, Mass Audubon – Joe Scanlon, President of the Lynn Museum - Chris Thurrett, NEMBA

Attachments: Myles Standish RMP Presentation, RMP Guidelines, Draft Letter to SWM HWM on FY12 Supplemental Budget

Chairman Henry Lee called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m.

Joe Scanlon, President of the Lynn Museum, welcomed and briefed the Council about the history of Lynn and the Museum.

New Stewardship Councilor Chad McGuire was introduced and welcomed by Chairman Lee. Another new Councilor, Lori Nelson, was unable to attend this meeting.

Commissioner's Report –Commissioner Ed Lambert

Commissioner Lambert informed the Council on/of the following matters:

- Commissioner Lambert thanked Joe Scanlon for his hospitality and welcomed new Council members, Chad McGuire and Lori Nelson (absent). He also introduced DCR's new staff; Jean Doherty, Director of External Affairs, Doug Rice, General Counsel, and Michelle Small, CFO.
- Commissioner Lambert said he had attended the Boston Preservation Alliance's 2011 Preservation Achievement Award Ceremony. During the event, DCR was recognized for the significant investments made to the Georges Island Visitors Center.
- Secretary Sullivan will be honored from Community Boating's event "Raise the Sails" for the continued support of their docks.
- DCR celebrated a ribbon cutting on the Charles River Reservation Esplanade in Boston with local officials and community representatives to officially open the new playground, the Esplanade Playspace.
- DCR hosted an event at DCR's Cass Recreational Facility to announce the award of \$670k in grants to support the work of four Urban Youth Organizations at DCR properties across the Commonwealth.
- Commissioner Lambert said he was pleased to join the Partners in the Park Conference in Worcester and its focus was strengthening the ties between Friends groups, volunteers and DCR. Thank you to Sharl Heller for a great event.
- The new road to the top of Mt. Wachusett opened on the weekend of October 8 (Columbus Day Weekend).
- The DCR Mt. Holyoke Land Acquisition Event has been rescheduled to November 18; the purpose of the event is to commemorate DCR's collaborative land acquisition project and acknowledge our land trust partners: the Massachusetts Audubon Society, The Trust for Public Land, the Kestrel Land Trust and the Friends of the Mt. Holyoke Range.
- DCR's Charles River Reservation hosted the Head of the Charles River Regatta, sponsored by the Cambridge Boat Club. Councilor Whitney Hatch was part of the rowing crew for DCR.

- DCR, the Department of Food and Agriculture and the Department of Public Health will be sponsoring "First Day Hikes" on January 1st. In 2012 the agencies will collaborate promoting healthier lifestyles.
- Storms have taken over New England, especially the Western and Central part of the State and have challenged the agency and the Commonwealth. DCR continues to clear debris from the destruction of the prior storms and continues to keep track of expenses so we may collect up to 75% of the costs as reimbursable monies from FEMA.
- DCR's Mohawk State Forest experienced the greatest level of destruction during Tropical Storm Irene. Eighteen campsites in the lower campground were completely washed away along with grills, picnic tables and bear lockers. Mohawk has an estimated \$2.4 million worth in damage, which includes bank stabilization on both sides of the river that was severely washed out. DCR is estimating that a cost for the reconstruction of the area is \$2m to \$2.5m.
- The comment period will end next week for the Middlesex Fells; the Landscape Designation RMP process is underway; staff is working to align the Landscape Designations with the Landscape Zoning Guidelines. The RMP process continues for Horseneck Beach, Myles Standish Forest and Walden Pond. The final phase of DCR's Unification process is underway with an approximate implementation date of March, 2012; DCR has had several meetings regarding an updated version of the Volunteer Policy.
- Thank you to the Council for their continued advocacy and support of DCR's budget. Under the Patrick Administration, Section 8, an amendment has been submitted to add new supplement language that would allow DCR to retain more of its revenue from DCR accounts. It would allow DCR to appropriate 80% of our retained revenue account with a cap of \$13m.
- Brian Pearly, Leases and Permits, has resigned from DCR leaving only one staff member in that division. In 2003, DCR had 13 staff attorneys overseeing the division and handling over 1,000 leases/permits; fortunately we will be able to backfill the position.
- After several months in dry dock at the Fairhaven Shipyard, the Schooner Ernestina was placed into the water for hull soaking and plank swelling as well as initial preliminary leak detection.
- DCR Central Region staff received reports that a group of approximately 20 individuals identifying themselves as "Occupy Worcester" had set up a camp at DCR's Lake Front Park in Worcester. After discussions with representatives of Occupy Worcester, DCR issued a special use permit to the group on October 21st.
- Melrose and Stoneham officials have requested that the DCR implement a one-way traffic pattern on Ravine Road from Fellsway East to Woodland Road. As a pre-cursor to a complete implementation of such a plan, city and town officials have suggested that the agency test such an arrangement for a 90-day period.
- In accordance with the findings of a traffic study that was completed in early 2009 as well as concerns from residents along Cambridge Parkway regarding high-speed traffic, DCR will be implementing a reversal of the direction of traffic on Cambridge Parkway. As a part of this project, DCR will also repair the road and its sidewalks.
- Each year around Veterans Day, DCR works with local stakeholders to collect donations and food/hygiene/first aid for troops serving overseas. This year, 5th annual, DCR's Island District is working with the National Park Service and the Harbor Island Alliance to gather these supplies and donations for Unit # 1173, which has been deployed to Kuwait and Afghanistan and which is also led by DCR's-own Major Susan Kane.
 - Chairman Lee questioned what ability DCR has to change items in the RMPs without the Stewardship Councils approval and what rationale was used combining the Pittsfield State Park and the Puree State Park RMPs. Joe Orfant, Director of Planning, responded that DCR understood Stewardship Council sign off was on the process and comprehensiveness of the plans and that we expected that technical aspects of the plan would be updated as new information became available. DCR also expects to do a review two to three years out of our top priority recommendations and re-adjust as necessary. The Pittsfield State Forest Management unit reflects on-the-ground management of the properties and geographical reality of valleys and the road network.

Committee Updates

Policy and Planning Committee, Councilor Laura Johnson

Councilor Laura Johnson informed the Council on/of the following matters:

- Policy Committee met before the meeting. A discussion and adoption was held concerning the Council's RMP approval and guidelines; 1) the policy committee will review the RMP at the same time of DCR public comments, 2) the final draft RMP will be reviewed by the Policy Committee and the Stewardship Council for discussion, review and questions, 3) at the following Stewardship Council meeting, the RMP will be submitted for a vote. The final RMP approval will take approximately 60-90 days. The general practice of public comments is 30 days; in some instances it may be open for 60 days.
- Other RMPs in the pipeline are Middlesex Fells (with a vote in January from the Stewardship Council), Horseneck Beach, Fort Phoenix, Walden Pond State Reservation, Pittsfield State Forest, and New Bedford.
- With regards to planning integration between Landscape Designations and Land Stewardship Zoning, DCR staff is currently working on creating consistency and better understanding between the two systems so they work together. Staff anticipates that the guidelines will be out for review to the Council by January/February.

Finance Committee, Councilor Whitney Hatch

Councilor Whitney Hatch informed the Council on/of the following matters:

- The committee drafted a letter to the House Ways and Means Committee supporting Fiscal Year 2012 Supplemental Appropriations. It would allow DCR to appropriate 80% back to DCR's retained revenue account with a cap of \$13m.
- Chairman Lee reviewed the letter in detail and had a discussion with the Council regarding the letter (*see attachment letter*) and the future of DCR's budget.
- A motion to accept the FY12 Support Letter was made by Laura Johnson, seconded by Elisa Campbell. All in favor; motion carried.
- At this time, DCR needs to submit a maintenance budget for Fiscal Year 2013.

Discussion of the Stewardship Council Draft RMP Review Guidelines

- Chairman Lee reviewed the "Guidelines for Massachusetts Stewardship Review of RMPs" to the Council. These guidelines were posted on the DCR website and offered the public an opportunity for comment. The following questions were edited; in its discussion the Council considered the public input.
 1. Did DCR provide an opportunity for public input; was this input considered; and was there an effort to reach out to stakeholders and to involve them in the process?
 - **No Amendment**
 2. Did DCR make a reasonable attempt to identify relevant data, information, previous plans, and existing reports at the beginning of the RMP process? Additionally, did it try to obtain these materials and to use them in the development of the RMP?
 - **Change the word "existing" to "available"**
 3. Are the proposed uses recommended in the RMP consistent with DCR's responsibility to protect important natural, scenic, cultural, and historic resources?
 - **There was a discussion that the language in this item should be amended to reflect the agency's statutory responsibilities.**
 4. Does the RMP assess key safety issues, including the availability of sufficient enforcement capability?
 - **No Amendment**
 5. Is the RMP consistent with DCR's decisions regarding uses of its resources in previous RMPs or other departmental planning processes?
 - **Change to "If there are inconsistencies from prior plans, does DCR provide adequate justification".**
 6. Are the assessments of existing management, infrastructure, maintenance, and enforcement capabilities realistic—both in the short and long terms?
 - **No Amendment**

7. Is the RMP's assessment of future management requirements reasonable? Specifically, are they proportionate with the responsibilities recommended in the RMPs, and if not, does the RMP explicitly discuss this gap and what will be required to close it?
 - **Add to the second sentence – Specifically, are the management requirements....**
- Chairman Lee will incorporate these comments and update the Guidelines for RMP approval.

Special Business

Update on the Myles Standish Resource Management Plan (Jim Baecker, Resource Management Planner)

- Jim Baecker provided a final update on the preparation of a Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Myles Standish Planning Unit, which includes Myles Standish State Forest (12,404 acres) and two Conservation Restrictions (1,533 acres). The RMP will be presented at the December Stewardship Council meeting for an approval vote. (*Attached MSSF Presentation*)

Approval of Minutes

- *Amendment to the September, 2011 minutes: Replace "Laura Campbell" to "Laura Johnson" under section "Approval of Minutes". Motion by Councilor Elisa Campbell, seconded by Councilor Michael Dutton to accept the September, 2011 minutes. All in favor, motion carried.*

New Business

- No new business

Public Comment

The following constituents expressed their opinions/issues/matters to the Council:

Heidi Ricci, Mass Audubon

- Ms. Ricci welcomed our new Council members
- She is pleased with the clarification of landscape designation and zoning and hopes it will address the 2006 large forest designations.
- She is also concerned about the Old Growth Forest at Wachusett Mountain.

Sharl Heller, Friends Network

- Ms. Heller thanked Commissioner Lambert and Conrad Crawford for attending the Friends Network Conference. The Friends also appreciate the Commissioner's engagement in open dialogue, including joining the Friends to honor DCR volunteers and staff.
- She thanked DCR for an excellent job on the Myles Standish Forest RMP and believes that the work-groups bring communities together.
- Ms Heller requested that fixing the bridge at Fearing Pond be made a top priority; the bridge collapsed in 1996.
- She requested the installation of signs stating that OHV is illegal at MSSF.
- RMPs guidelines need to be consistent with all RMPs.

Bill Boles, NEMBA

- Mr. Boles welcomed our new Council members.
- Mr. Boles is encouraged to learn of our possible new retained revenue language and has requested that DCR keep him informed of the outcome to allow NENBA to help support the language.
- NEMBA supports the RMP process; the process does an excellent job of balancing resource protection and recreation. The RMP process is fair and allows for many opportunities for public comment. It is appropriate that the professionals at DCR make the final polices.

Closing Comment

- No Closing Comments

Meeting Schedule

- Next meeting will be held Friday, December 2 at Lawrence Heritage State Park.

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Elisa Campbell, seconded by Councilor Whitney Hatch at 3:20 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.