

## **Questions and Answers**

### **Charles River Esplanade – New Basin Complex Resource Management Plan (RMP) Public Meeting October 10, 2013**

#### **DCR Staff Present**

Joe Orfant, Director, Bureau of Planning and Resource Protection; Andy Backman, Director, Office of Regional Planning; Rick Corsi, Charles River Planner; Jim Baecker, Project Manager for the Charles River Esplanade-New Basin RMP; Jeffrey Harris, Preservation Planner; Stephen Brown, Project Manager; Conrad Crawford, Director of External Affairs and Partnerships; Steve Cyr, Boston Rivers District Manager; and Angelo Tilas, Esplanade-New Basin Field Team Leader.

#### **Public Attendees**

Ozzie Bateman, The Esplanade Association; Sabrina Thulander, Emerson College; Pallini Mande, Charles River Watershed Association; Brenna O'Brian, Emerson College; Maria Santora, Emerson College; Bridget McCarthy, Emerson College; Zoe Lyrintlis, Emerson College; Christina Choing, Emerson College; Catherine Zusy, Cambridge Neighborhood Association; Meredith Mooney, Boston University; Stuart Dash, City of Cambridge; and Marilyn Wellons, Cambridge resident.

**Note: The following summary does not serve as a verbatim transcript of the October 10 public meeting. This summary highlights comments received and issues that were raised and replies provided during the Question-and-Answer segment of the meeting. Questions were answered by Joe Orfant, Rick Corsi, and Jim Baecker.**

Question: Control of false indigo and invasive plants along the shoreline is a time-consuming operation. How can DCR re-introduce native plants along the river?

DCR: Volunteer groups can assist in controlling invasive plants along the river. Existing invasive plants are routinely removed during construction of capital projects and replaced with native plant species.

Question: What management actions can DCR take to improve the water-quality of the Charles River?

DCR: DCR can implement best management practices for fertilizers, erosion control, landscape maintenance, and stormwater management. In addition, the Mass DOT bridge renovation projects include improved stormwater management systems.

Comment: The new flood zone maps raise issues about flood impacts on park infrastructure and facilities. The RMP should consider increasing wetland flood storage and bluing of the park.

Question: What is the pumping capacity of the new Charles River Dam? Does it have an emergency power back-up system?

DCR: The existing pumps can lower the water level in the basin by one foot per hour to prevent flooding. We'll investigate the emergency back-up system.

Question: What is the status of the proposed skateboard park? Young skateboarders have been waiting a long time for this facility.

DCR: The skateboard park is sponsored by the Charles River Conservancy (CRC). DCR and the CRC are finalizing sponsorship agreements and permits to construct the park. DCR and Mass DOT are resolving permit issues related to use of land located under the highway ramps. The goal is to begin construction next spring.

Question: The Cambridge Front Neighborhood Association has been working with DCR to improve Magazine Beach. Should Magazine Beach be included in the Esplanade-New Basin RMP?

DCR: Magazine Beach is managed by the Charles Complex and is not included in this RMP. DCR's commitments to improve Magazine Beach will not be affected by its inclusion in a separate management complex RMP.

Question: Will completion of the Memorial Drive Phase 2 bike bath be included in the RMP?

DCR: Completion of Memorial Drive Phase 2 improvements will be addressed in the RMP.

Question: Can short-term repairs be made along Memorial Drive?

DCR: DCR is investigating the use of Mass DOT funding to perform interim bike path repairs along Memorial Drive. In November, a new bike trail planner will begin work with DCR engineers to address statewide needs for repairing DCR bike paths.

Question: Does DCR prepare RMPs internally or use outside consultants?

DCR: Some RMPs have been prepared with the assistance of outside consultants. This RMP will be prepared in-house by DCR staff.

Question: What are the next steps after an RMP is approved?

DCR: Approved RMPs are used to prioritize DCR's limited staff and financial resources and to guide field staff's management of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. Periodic implementation reports are submitted to the Stewardship Council.