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MEMO

Date 3-29-21

To DCR, Ms. Jennifer Norwood

From Friends of Herter Park Board

Re Input to Herter Park Master Plan

INTRODUCTION

The Herter Park island with its amphitheater is a unique resource in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It is an island carved out of the Charles River embankment with a sculpted landform that rises above the surrounding park. It is a beautiful and even magical place for those who are lucky enough to discover it. The Friends of Herter Park was formed in 2016 to promote better access to the park as a whole and to revive the amphitheater as a major performance venue and shared public space. A MOU was signed with the DCR on May 30, 2019 which has guided use of the space ever since. Julie Burros, the Boston Arts Commissioner at the time, advised us to simply repair the existing infrastructure - inadequate though it may be - and live with the space for a few years before suggesting major improvements. She encouraged us to learn from the artists, in other words before changing anything. Having staged nearly 200 performances for thousands of people the FOHP now has a much deeper understanding of how the space can be shaped and used for performances.

From the start, we wanted this space to become a far more accessible and democratic landscape where a broad variety of performers could find a diverse and appreciative audience. We wanted the island to be fully integrated with the park so that the general public could enjoy its special qualities throughout the day and throughout the seasons. These two goals are fully compatible and mutually supportive.

Accompanying this narrative is a slide deck that roughly conceptualizes our thinking. Its purpose is to start the conversation and lead to design alternatives.

We look forward to engaging in a dialogue with the DCR, their consultants, and the Herter Park public to fully realize the potential of the Herter Park amphitheater. The following comments provide a starting point for that conversation.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Landscape:** Create a cool and sustainable oasis in the city - a model of resiliency in the face of climate change. Improve the health of the soil, plants, and surrounding water.
- **Character:** Maintain the island's open and sculptural landscape and its maturing tree cover. Any future structures should relate to and reinforce this open landscape.
- **Access:** Provide seamless public access on and off the island so that all park visitors feel welcome and safe. Encourage the free flow of park users to and through the island to help activate the space.
- **Facilities:** Create a fully functional state-of-the-art performance space which can attract top performers and serve diverse audiences. Integrate the island with the park, ensuring that it flexibly serves a range of uses and park visitors.
- **Visibility:** Increase the visibility of the largely hidden island so that all visitors who walk, bike, or drive by the park can discover it.

LANDSCAPE

Vegetation: The plantings on parts of the island are in decline. The banks of the canal and steep rear slope of the island are eroding and crowded with invasive plants.

Recommendations:

- *Provide a planting plan and vegetation maintenance plan.*
- *Consider storage for maintenance tools and equipment on the island to support staff and volunteer efforts.*

Views: Views to the moat and river have grown in such that there is little sense of being on an island or next to the river.

Recommendations:

- *Open up filtered views to the river on either side of the stage from the heart of the amphitheater.*
- *Clear views to the moat from the surrounding paths.*
- *Remove or relocate visually intrusive elements such as the utility pole at the rear of the island.*

Paved surfaces: An excess of paved surfaces on the island degrades the park experience, contributes run off and increased the heat island effect. There are drainage issues at the bottom of the slope.

Recommendations:

- *Restore the verdant park-like character of the amphitheater by reducing pave surface where possible and using natural materials.*
- *Regrade the heart of the amphitheater to level up the areas and achieve better drainage.*

Moat: The moat and the island created from the excavated material are unique character-defining features of Herter Park. There is nothing else like this in the Commonwealth and it could never be reproduced today. Its preservation and enhancement as a cultural landscape should be a priority of the Herter Park Master Plan. The moat has filled in over the last several decades, slowing the river current and creating a stagnant breeding ground for mosquitoes. This is a major nuisance for audiences and a growing public health issue with the increasing prevalence of West Nile.

Recommendations:

- *Dredge the moat and increase circulation from the river by diverting river water into the moat.*
- *Consider fountains in the moat to aerate and move water. Stabilize and revegetate the slopes above the moat to slow erosion.*

ACCESS & SECURITY

Access to the island is limited to one vehicular bridge. (The Herter Center served as a secondary egress from the island in theory, but it is locked and inaccessible). This limited access is potentially dangerous in case of a public emergency and keeps the island hidden and isolated from the rest of the park. The lack of a lockable control gate makes it difficult to manage crowds and has left the island vulnerable to vandalism at night. The island is difficult for state police to monitor at night.

Recommendations:

- *As recommended in the 2002 Charles River Master Plan locate a second pedestrian bridge on the east side of the island connecting directly to the Dr. Paul Dudley White bike path. With the stage set back into the rear mound a second bridge would allow easy circulation through the center of the island for park users and allow the amphitheater to be discovered by many more people as they use the park.*
- *Two points of egress will more efficiently move audiences in and out of the amphitheater.*
- *It is essential that both bridges be equipped with lockable gates for use during performances and to protect vulnerable equipment at night. This is common practice (e.g., Delacorte Theater, Central Park).*
- *Provide a safe and direct pedestrian connection from the North Allston neighborhood to Herter Park and the amphitheater with clear signage.*
- *Consider security cameras on the island and increased state police surveillance if gates are to remain open.*

FACILITIES - BACK OF HOUSE (stage and support facilities)

Stage: The existing stage is quite large for its purpose and located in the center of the island breaking up the flow of landscape space. It is raised on piers creating a crawl space that collects debris. Essential support structures for performers and equipment are difficult to location or screen from view. Shipping containers placed behind the stage, as has been done in the past, are inadequate and visually intrusive.

Recommendations:

- Demolish the existing stage and regrade the area to create a plaza for flexible seating. Fit it out to support special events (power, tent system, etc. See Tiffany garden in Chicago).
- Set a new stage into the rear mound to become a part of the landform and accessible from both front and back paths. The stage, when not in use should be accessible to the public and integrated into the park landforms. Consider fronting the stage with steps so that people can sit on the stage and look back towards the plaza and amphitheater. Note: some performances could occur on the plaza with an audience on all four sides.
- Ensure that the stage surface is one that can support a broad range of uses including dance, yoga, and other high touch uses.

Stage pavilion:

Currently the amphitheater has no dressing rooms or shelter for performances between acts. Productions such as the Brown Box Theatre Project have to bring their own trailer for actors. All performers should be supported and treated with respect if we are to attract top talent to the Herter stage.

Recommendations:

- Locate a secure pavilion to the rear of the stage or across the circular path. This should house, at a minimum:
 - o 1. dressing room(s) and bathroom(s)
 - o 2. a green room
 - o 3. stage management functions
 - o 4. ample storage for equipment
- Issue: Are utilities lines (water, sewer) accessible from this location given the low elevation and moat?

FACILITIES - FRONT OF HOUSE

Seating: The stadium seating and wooden benches on the slope are uncomfortable to use for long periods of time, inaccessible for some, limited in number, and inflexible.

Recommendations:

- Replace the seating and paved area with stepped grass terraces which would visually link the grass-covered berms on either side.
- Provide easy access to the terraced viewing areas at the top of the slope for overflow audiences during large events.
- Loam and seed the side berms to withstand heavy use.
- In the lower plaza area, provide comfortable and movable seating that can be arranged in a variety of configurations for the stage productions or for special events centered in the plaza. Provide convenient storage for that seating when not in use.

Control booth: Currently the sound and light board operators set up and work from exposed temporary tables halfway up the slope of the amphitheater. They block views and are not protected from the elements.

Recommendations:

- Set a weather protected and secure control booth low into the amphitheater slope so as to preserve views.

Ticketing

Ticketing is currently done from temporary tables set up at the bridge with not protection.

Recommendations:

- Provide a highly visible weather protected ticketing station at the main bridge from the parking lot to mark the entrance to the amphitheater.

Public bathrooms: The “porta potties” that must be used are expensive to rent, can’t be left for long periods of time, and provide a subpar experience for park users.

Recommendations:

- Provide full service public bathrooms near the existing bridge to the Herter Center structure or in the center itself if accessible and practical.

Vendors: Having food and drink is an important part of the visitor experience and provides a revenue stream to help support free performances.

Recommendations:

- Locate one or two vending stations along the entry path to the seating. (Note: these could potentially be operated by the same entity that operates the nearby beer garden.)

PROTECTION FROM THE ELEMENTS

Canopy: Numerous performances over several seasons have demonstrated the need for some basic level of protection from the elements for the stage and performers and for the audience. The increasing heat of the summer months is making the space too hot to use on some days. To avoid the heat, audience members often retreat to the top of the berms to find shade of tree. Electric fans must be set up on occasion to cool the staff. Sound equipment is at risk in even lightest rain which can shut down a musical performance. If this space is to attract a loyal audience and talented performers, this core issue must be addressed.

Recommendations:

- Provide a permanent covering over the stage area to protect the actors and sound equipment and extend it over a portion of the audience seating.
- Consider a temporary seasonal covering over audience seating, taking into account the cost of operations for setting up and taking down these canopies.
- Any canopy structures should harmonize with the landforms and be as transparent as possible to preserve views.

SIGNAGE, LIGHTING, VISIBILITY

The island and amphitheater are largely invisible to pedestrians on the nearby river path and to drivers on the parkway or in the parking lot. This is a major liability for a public performance venue seeking to broaden its audience. Without losing its secluded woodland quality, strategies are needed to make the space visible to people passing by.

Recommendations:

- Locate highly visible signage for the amphitheater at the park approaches and the edge of the parking lot.
- Consider a system of changing signs or banners to signal that a performance is coming soon or underway. This is common practice in Europe dating back to Shakespearean times.
- Up-light trees and landforms on performance nights to indicate activity at the amphitheater.

HERTER CENTER BUILDING

The Herter Center building is a striking example of mid 20th century architecture. It was the home of the Institute of Contemporary Art for a few short years in the 1960s and later became the home of the New England Sports Museum. They lost their lease, and the structure is now empty and an easy target for vandalism. The lack of investment and active occupation over the two decades has taken its toll. Without a private operator and significant investment, the Herter Center will continue to decline until it is necessary to tear it down.

Recommendations

If possible, the Herter Center structure should be preserved and enhanced as a fully functional building. For this to be possible it may be necessary to find a private operator with the resources necessary to take on a long-term lease and invest heavily in this facility. This would be an entity that, in addition to its own programmatic needs, would support public use of the parkland and amphitheater. While the Herter Center is not essential to the success of the amphitheater (assuming support facilities are provided on the island itself) it could play a supporting role. It might, for instance, provide 1. public bathrooms, 2. storage space for equipment, 3. office space for a site manager, or 4. flexible space for special events. Alternatively, the structure could be converted for outdoor park use that would not require an operator. Further study is needed.

These supplemental ideas have evolved over the course of our experience facilitating the performances. They are not prioritized:

1. A sculpture park through the island
2. Fly poles – high flying banners identifying the space
3. Full ADA compliance through the site
4. Way finding via signage, showing people the way through signage
5. Site lights, house lights, and theater lighting
6. Air circulation, mosquito mitigation
7. Potable water
8. Bike racks
9. Café
10. Strengthening alliances with community gardens and the brewery
11. Relocating electrical away from the stage

There is much to do, and we are thrilled that the theater can rise to its potential through the combined efforts of the master planning efforts of the DCR, the Community's drive, and new development partners in Allston-Brighton.

We applaud the DCR for initiating this process and welcome the opportunity to discuss these ideas, and others, as the process unfolds. We look forward to our first meeting. Thank you very much!

Respectfully submitted:

Joy Arcolano
Peggy lafrate
Tim McHale
Herb Nolan
Victoria Rowe

| Name (First) | Name (Last) | Comment | Address (City) | Address (State) | Address (Zip) |
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| Jessica | Mink | <p>One of the most important problems is water drainage issues, especially between the Herter Center and the Eliot Bridge underpass. Elevation of the mixed use path is needed, including through the underpass, with additional drainage conduits there.</p> <p>Where possible, it would be good to separate bicycle and pedestrian paths, especially near the Artesani Playground where family groups with small kids often fill the entire path.</p> <p>Sharp turns in the path, especially those around the Henderson Boathouse, often puddle and ice up, creating a major hazard even after the path is plowed. Separate paths and better drainage are both needed there. The path should be completely built from the Boathouse to the Arsenal St. Bridge with a signalized bike/ped crossing and safe connection to bike lanes across the bridge to Watertown.</p> <p>Make sure that there is a through path on the Soldiers Road side of the Herter Center that can be plowed in the winter and used when the boardwalk gets too slippery.</p> | Roslindale | MA | 02131 |
| Sarah | Perks | <p>I reviewed the slide deck from the community presentation.</p> <p>I love all of the opportunities presented. Standouts that I'm most in favor of: Adding/improving pedestrian access at multiple points across Soldiers Field road, including to Smith Park access. Improving drainage with natural wetlands Access close to the water: beach, bench, or wood platforms.</p> <p>Less concerned about revitalizing the building, but I bet a refreshment stand would make money.</p> | Brighton | MA | 02135 |
| Stefan | Poltorzycski | For me, the #1 issue with the current state of Herter Park is mosquitos. | Boston | MA | 02135 |
| Eleanor | Jewett | <p>What I love about Herter Park and wouldn't want to change.</p> <p>1)The DCR staff, who work throughout the watershed in different capacities. As the Liaison from the Herter Community Garden, I have found the staff in the last 12 years to be open and very helpful. They are a pleasure to work with. [sent as Herter Garden Liaison to DCR]</p> <p>2)The opportunity to have access within the Park to the Herter Community Garden, and enjoy gardening, the diverse community, and the location.</p> | Cambridge | MA | 02140 |
| Eleanor | Jewett | <p>What is the #1 issue that needs improvement I have 2!</p> <p>1. Be: Herter Community Garden - Designated Parking for Gardeners, as close to the garden as possible, making it more accessible and safe.</p> <p>About 2 years ago when DCR restricted our parking near the garden, we were told that we would have parking spots reserved for gardeners (much like the bicyclists have special spaces).</p> <p>Now we have to park in the general lot, and cross the entry street that often has moving vehicles. At Herter Garden we have a number of elders, some children, and all gardeners carrying gardening items across the street where cars enter.</p> <p>Could you put Designated Parking for Gardeners and Special Needs Folks close to the Garden and perhaps close to the Theater? If you could re-design the entry (from Cambridge/WBZ), perhaps there could be a small amount of parking on the right for these purposes, and others could turn left for the main lot. [send as The Christian Herter Community Garden Liaison to DCR]</p> | Cambridge | MA | 02140 |
| Eleanor | Jewett | <p>What is the #1 issue that needs improvement [send as jq citizen, not as affiliated with Herter Garden]</p> <p>1. Slow Down the Bicyclists in the Park - make the park safer. As much as possible, separate pedestrians from bicyclists.</p> <p>As the region's most heavily used park, I would like bicyclists to yield to pedestrian, and to slow down. Walking to and from the garden, more often than not, I have to stop as fast-moving bicyclists (and there are more than a few) do not slow down or yield to pedestrians.</p> <p>When I walk around the whole Park, I find that some bicyclists yell at people "in their way," and move too fast around adults and children. All bicyclists do not do this. But the few who do, ruin it for others. I'd like to have posted a speed limit or Notice to Bicyclists, or something else that you can come up with to slow down people on bicycles in the Park.</p> <p>2. Be wary of over lighting the park. Maintain the intimate space.</p> | Cambridge | MA | 02140 |

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| Eleanor | Jewett | <p>What is missing from the Park program</p> <p>1. The Plan mentions community gardens in general. Could you include the specific community garden names in your Plan. We're particularly proud that ours is the Christian A. Herter Community Garden. [sent as Herter Garden Liaison to DCR]</p> <p>2. The Park could commemorate Mrs. Herter. In 1987 the state enacted the following: "The public garden located within Christian A. Herter Park, in the Allston district of the city of Boston, shall be designated and known as the Mary Caroline Herter Memorial Public Garden in memory of the late widow of the former governor, Christian A. Herter, for whom the park is memorialized.</p> <p>The Park could create a public flower garden and/or special seating area in honor of Mrs. Herter. [sent as Herter Garden Liaison to DCR]</p> <p>a. Appreciate your including flooding and drainage issues, and providing stormwater treatment measures. [send as jq citizen not Liaison]</p> | Cambridge | MA | 02140 |
| Eleanor | Jewett | <p>Other Ideas / feedback</p> <p>1. Communications: It would be very helpful to have a calendar of events in many languages- plays, events etc. This could be online - the URL needs to be posted in multiple locations. Although many people are not computer literate. Maybe there could be a small unobtrusive "billboard" near the pop-up restaurant and/or elsewhere, of upcoming events at the theater and in the park in general. Then people would know when to participate or when it might be too busy.</p> <p>THANK YOU</p> | Cambridge | MA | 02140 |
| Eleanor | Jewett | <p>Other Ideas / Comments I have 2!!</p> <p>(as jq citizen)</p> <p>1. Please Keep the Reverse Turn on Soldiers Field Road Extension. It is needed and works very well. You may have ideas on a better design, but the turnaround is invaluable. Otherwise you have to go farther down the road close to Newton and a very busy turnaround area. This is much safer.</p> <p>2. I like the pedestrian overpass. It is a much safer alternative, especially for children, people with challenging issues. those carrying items, athletes, and other, than crossing any street, but especially a busy one. You can simply go at your own pace, and not be concerned about vehicles.</p> | Cambridge | MA | 02140 |
| Kenneth | Dupuis | <p>I'm a 20+ year volunteer with the Head of the Charles Regatta, and have spent the past 15 years of race weekends stationed at Herter park. There are a number of issues I would like to see addressed:</p> <p>Stormwater Management: improve the surface runoff and drainage in multiple targeted areas of Herter Park including Parking Lots #1-4, the fields next to the Eliot Bridge and the fields near the Canoe & Kayak Rental. Highlighted areas can be viewed on this map: https://bit.ly/3vKg0d7</p> <p>Riverbank Management: support the removal of invasive species to be replaced with native species that will allow year-round views of the river as suggested in the 2002 master plan. The granite armoring should be reset to maintain turf edge and prevent erosion. If the granite armoring is reset permanent infrastructure to anchor temporary docks could be installed.</p> <p>Open Spaces: support maintaining the open, pastoral character of Herter Park with open lawn running down to the edge of the water as suggested in the 2002 master plan.</p> <p>Parking: Maintain the open Artesani parking lot and smaller lots to accommodate vehicles and trailers for events and general usage</p> <p>Electrical Infrastructure: support creating permanent electrical infrastructure to improve sustainability and limit the need for temporary generators.</p> <p>Water Access: support adding additional water fountains and access points for potable water.</p> <p>Site Lighting: Ensure light poles are maintained to help park users safely traverse the park in the evening.</p> | Andover | MA | 01810 |
| Anna | Buehler | <p>The area needs more water fountains. This is a health and safety issue.</p> <p>Also, I ride my bike through there sometimes - it needs better lighting at night.</p> | Brighton | MA | 02135 |

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| Henriette | Lazaridis | <p>I am a long-time volunteer with the Head of the Charles and a frequent user of Herter Park as a rower, runner, and cyclist. Here are some of the issues I hope will be addressed in the Master Plan:</p> <p>Stormwater Management: improve the surface runoff and drainage in multiple targeted areas of Herter Park including Parking Lots #1-4, the fields next to the Eliot Bridge and the fields near the Canoe & Kayak Rental. Highlighted areas can be viewed on this map: https://bit.ly/3vKg0d7</p> <p>Riverbank Management: support the removal of invasive species to be replaced with native species that will allow year-round views of the river as suggested in the 2002 master plan. The granite armoring should be reset to maintain turf edge and prevent erosion. If the granite armoring is reset permanent infrastructure to anchor temporary docks could be installed.</p> <p>Open Spaces: support maintaining the open, pastoral character of Herter Park with open lawn running down to the edge of the water as suggested in the 2002 master plan.</p> <p>Parking: Maintain the open Artesani parking lot and smaller lots to accommodate vehicles and trailers for events and general usage. This is especially useful for cyclists wishing to start rides from there.</p> <p>Electrical Infrastructure: support creating permanent electrical infrastructure to improve sustainability and limit the need for temporary generators.</p> <p>Water Access: support adding additional water fountains and access points for potable water. There are now not enough drinking fountains along the 17-mile bike path, so it would be really great to have more here in Herter Park.</p> <p>Site Lighting: Ensure light poles are maintained to help park users safely traverse the park in the evening.</p> | Cambridge | MA | 02138 |
| Daniel | Beckham | <p>Stormwater Management: improve the surface runoff and drainage in multiple targeted areas of Herter Park including Parking Lots #1-4, the fields next to the Eliot Bridge, and the fields near the Canoe & Kayak Rental.</p> <p>Riverbank Management: support the removal of invasive species to be replaced with native species that will allow year-round views of the river as suggested in the 2002 master plan. The granite armoring should be reset to maintain the turf edge and prevent erosion. If the granite armoring is reset permanent infrastructure to anchor temporary docks could be installed.</p> <p>Open Spaces: support maintaining the open, pastoral character of Herter Park with an open lawn running down to the edge of the water as suggested in the 2002 master plan.</p> <p>Parking: Maintain the open Artesani parking lot and smaller lots to accommodate vehicles and trailers for events and general usage</p> <p>Electrical Infrastructure: support creating permanent electrical infrastructure to improve sustainability and limit the need for temporary generators.</p> <p>Water Access: support adding additional water fountains and access points for potable water.</p> <p>Site Lighting: Ensure light poles are maintained to help park users safely traverse the park in the evening.</p> | Newton | MA | 02458 |
| Brendan | Mulvey | <p>Stormwater Management: improve the surface runoff and drainage in multiple targeted areas of Herter Park including Parking Lots #1-4, the fields next to the Eliot Bridge and the fields near the Canoe & Kayak Rental.</p> <p>Riverbank Management: support the removal of invasive species to be replaced with native species that will allow year-round views of the river as suggested in the 2002 master plan. The granite armoring should be reset to maintain turf edge and prevent erosion. If the granite armoring is reset permanent infrastructure to anchor temporary docks could be installed.</p> <p>Open Spaces: support maintaining the open, pastoral character of Herter Park with open lawn running down to the edge of the water as suggested in the 2002 master plan.</p> <p>Parking: Maintain the open Artesani parking lot and smaller lots to accommodate vehicles and trailers for events and general usage</p> <p>Electrical Infrastructure: support creating permanent electrical infrastructure to improve sustainability and limit the need for temporary generators.</p> <p>Water Access: support adding additional water fountains and access points for potable water.</p> <p>Site Lighting: Ensure light poles are maintained to help park users safely traverse the park in the evening.</p> | Brighton | MA | 02135 |

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| Janet | Moonan | CRWA Comment #1 As you are aware, Charles River Watershed Association ("CRWA") hosts numerous education and outreach events in Christian A. Herter Park, including the Run of the Charles. We are invested in park's success and pleased to see the Department of Conservation and Recreation ("DCR") progressing with a master planning process to restore and enhance this important public park right along the Charles River. CRWA submits the following comments to help inform development of the Herter Park Master Plan currently being prepared by DCR and Halvorson Design and associated subcontractors (collectively, the "Project Team"). Our comments are in response to the content presented at the June 10, 2021 Public Meeting. We have organized our comments to match the presentation topics. | Weston | MA | 02493 |
| Janet | Moonan | CRWA Comment #2 - Circulation CRWA supports increased and improved safe access to the park by pedestrians and bikers. We are pleased to see the Project Team incorporating consideration of connectivity with other nearby project's open space areas, as well as with schools and students. Our educational programming often includes students and better access to the park will facilitate that work. | Weston | MA | 02493 |
| Janet | Moonan | CRWA Comment #3 - Parking CRWA encourages the Project Team to incorporate green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) and other stormwater best management practices (BMPs) into the parking areas to reduce runoff quantities, reduce pollution from stormwater runoff (e.g., phosphorous, solids, bacteria, etc.), and enhance visibility of these practices to the public. In addition, we are pleased to see that the Project Team is considering which parking lots should remain and in what form-any opportunities to reduce overall impervious cover should be incorporated into the Master Plan. We recognize that some events (i.e., Head of the Charles) have significant parking needs; however, alternative parking options-such as overflow parking on Soldiers Field Road-could be arranged for those limited events. This would allow for greening of the parking lots and reduction of impervious cover, improving stormwater management and river health. Implementation of GSI in parking lots that provides year-round and long-term benefits should not be sacrificed in order to accommodate two or three large events a year that need extended parking, especially when such parking is available on existing roadways. | Weston | MA | 02493 |
| Janet | Moonan | CRWA Comment #4- Vegetation Existing mature trees should be preserved, except those with health issues or those that pose a public safety risk. We urge the Project Team to consult with an arborist to evaluate trees for suitability of presentation and that as many trees as possible be maintained (specifically those whose suitability is determined to be moderate or high). We request more information from the Project Team on the "goals" of the moat (e.g., is it supposed to flow? provide fish habitat? flood storage? accessible recreational area? etc.). The plan's recommendations should be aligned with those goals. CRWA supports removal of invasive plant species that threaten ecosystem health, and supports restoration efforts to bring back native vegetation. Overall, ecosystem health should be improved across the entire park. We ask the Project Team to consider designating specific areas for use like passive recreation vs active recreation and associated planting needs. There may be opportunities to reduce "lawn" areas and replace them with more diverse species. In addition, the Commonwealth recently completed a healthy soils plan. Herter Park would be a great place to put some of those recommendations into action. We ask the Project Team to explain consistency with this effort in its development of the Master Plan. | Weston | MA | 02493 |
| Janet | Moonan | CRWA Comment #5 Program Activities CRWA holds the following types of events at Herter Park on a periodic basis (Educational table with "watershed in a box" demonstration; walking tours of the park features; in collaboration with Paddle Boston, canoe and kayak tours of the River; and educational sessions for students in nearby schools. Since these events typically draw groups up to 40 people or less, or are for passers-by, the park's current parking and circulation are more than adequate. Our Run of the Charles event is a large event that draws hundreds of people and typically fills the parking lots, including for use as space for tents and booths. Improved pedestrian and bike access, as well as streamlined parking, would benefit this event and reduce overall parking needs. This event does not require changes to the circulation of the park. We anticipate that these needs are consistent with the needs of other stakeholders for their programming. | Weston | MA | 02493 |
| Janet | Moonan | CRWA Comment #6- Herter Amphitheater We are pleased to see consideration of a second egress and improved accessibility for the Herter Amphitheater. However, in doing this work, we urge the Project Team to preserve mature trees (in collaboration with an arborist as noted in our previous comment on vegetation) and remove invasive species. | Weston | MA | 02493 |
| Janet | Moonan | CRWA Comment #7- Herter Center We support preservation of the history of the park, including the Herter Center. The original building constructed in the 1950s, still on site, once had a spectacular views of the Charles River. The architecture emphasizes the connection between the built environment and nature and reminds users of the importance of the River and all of its functions. We hope that this sentiment will be carried forward in the next iteration of the Herter Center. | Weston | MA | 02493 |

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| Janet | Moonan | CRWA Comment #8- Visitor Experience CRWA strongly supports improvements for universal accessibility. For any improvements that would extend impervious areas, we encourage the Project Team to utilize permeable solutions as feasible to comply with ADA requirements. We are pleased to see that the Project Team is considering adding amenities such as water fountains, bicycle racks, and trash receptacles. With proper maintenance, trash receptacles and even pet waste stations will help reduce the quantity of trash and pollution entering the Charles River. CRWA also supports the intent to maintain vistas at targeted locations and provide access to the River's edge while balancing river health, ecosystem health, and nuisance species issues. | Weston | MA | 02493 |
| Janet | Moonan | CRWA Comment #9 -Signage and Wayfinding Generally, we are pleased to see the Project Team give attention to the need to simplify messaging and reduce the overall number of signs in the park, as well as add educational information as appropriate. We would hope this Master Planning effort results in improved signage about the Park. CRWA would like to see signage incorporate information about Christian A. Herter, the history of the site, Charles River pollution cleanup progress, impacts from stormwater runoff, what green stormwater infrastructure can do, and what people can do at their own homes to reduce pollution in stormwater runoff. Additional information about invasive species, native plantings, and pollinators would be appropriate in various places in the park. Continuing to emphasize messages about not feeding wild animals (particularly geese), removing trash, and picking up after pets is also critical to river health. | Weston | MA | 02493 |
| Janet | Moonan | CRWA Comment #10-Stormwater and Drainage Given this site's proximity to the Charles River, improvements to stormwater management provide significant opportunities to mitigate detrimental environmental impacts from stormwater pollution and manage runoff quantities and rates under current and anticipated climate change scenarios. | Weston | MA | 02493 |
| Janet | Moonan | CRWA Comment #10.1-Stormwater and Drainage As you are aware, the Lower Basin of the Charles River is subject to a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for phosphorus (Total Maximum Daily Load for Nutrients In the Lower Charles River Basin, Massachusetts, June 2007 (EPA TMDL No. 33826)) and a TMDL for bacteria (Final Pathogen TMDL for the Charles River Watershed January 2007 (EPA TMDL No. 32371)). In addition, DCR is subject to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) in Massachusetts ("MS4GP") (effective July 1, 2018, subsequently modified on December 7, 2020), which includes provisions requiring DCR to develop and implement a Phosphorus Control Plan (PCP) that includes use of non-structural and structural controls to reduce the annual phosphorus load entering the river. Herter Park offers an incredible opportunity for DCR to address this MS4GP requirement for two key reasons (1) following the Master Planning effort, the park will undergo some construction which is the opportune and most cost-effective time to add structural stormwater controls, and (2) there is a great deal of available space in the park. We look forward to seeing more information in the Master Plan documenting how the drainage and stormwater improvements will address the pollutants of concern both in the TMDLs, as well as the most recently approved Final Integrated List of Waters. | Weston | MA | 02493 |
| Janet | Moonan | CRWA Comment #10.2-Stormwater and Drainage In addition, according to the National Climate Assessment, the amount of precipitation falling in very heavy events increased by 71% in New England from 1958 to 2012. The Climate Ready Boston Map Explorer shows that areas of Herter Park, as well as nearby areas that may drain to the moat in Herter Park or to the River through conveyances under the Herter Park land area, stormwater flooding in the near-, medium-, and long-term. The Boston Water and Sewer Commission ("BWSC") City of Boston Inundation Model shows extensive areas of flooding in and around Herter Park under various extreme weather events, some of which are predicted to be over one foot. CRWA requests that the Project Team provide additional detail in the Master Plan about the stormwater management systems' ability to manage-and, as feasible, reduce-current and predicted flooding from the drainage areas contributing the Charles River in this area, using the best available science. | Weston | MA | 02493 |
| Janet | Moonan | CRWA Comment #10.3-Stormwater and Drainage Finally, the Resilient MA Action Team (RMAT) "Climate Resilience Design Standards and Guidelines" have been released as a draft and include guidance for state-funded projects to enhance assessment of climate resilience as part of the state capital planning process to ensure consistency with the State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan (SHMCAP). We request that the Project Team use the "beta" Climate Resilience Design Standards Tool to document the risks from climate change and guide design of mitigation strategies, as well as include the output as an appendix to the Master Plan. | Weston | MA | 02493 |
| Janet | Moonan | CRWA Comment #11 Thank you for considering these comments. We look forward to seeing a full draft of the Herter Park Master Plan sometime in Fall 2021 and anticipate providing additional comments at that time during the stakeholder and public input process. Janet Moonan, PE Stormwater Program Director | Weston | MA | 02493 |

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| Tom | Martin | <p>Stormwater Management: improve the surface runoff and drainage in multiple targeted areas of Herter Park including Parking Lots #1-4, the fields next to the Eliot Bridge and the fields near the Canoe & Kayak Rental. Highlighted areas can be viewed on this map: https://bit.ly/3vKg0d7</p> <p>Riverbank Management: support the removal of invasive species to be replaced with native species that will allow year-round views of the river as suggested in the 2002 master plan. The granite armoring should be reset to maintain turf edge and prevent erosion. If the granite armoring is reset permanent infrastructure to anchor temporary docks could be installed.</p> <p>Open Spaces: support maintaining the open, pastoral character of Herter Park with open lawn running down to the edge of the water as suggested in the 2002 master plan.</p> <p>Parking: Maintain the open Artesani parking lot and smaller lots to accommodate vehicles and trailers for events and general usage</p> <p>Electrical Infrastructure: support creating permanent electrical infrastructure to improve sustainability and limit the need for tempo</p> | Melrose | MA | 02176 |
| Mason | Cox | <p>Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on the Herter Park Master Plan. I would like to suggest the following;</p> <p>Stormwater Management: improve the surface runoff and drainage in multiple targeted areas of Herter Park including Parking Lots #1-4, the fields next to the Eliot Bridge and the fields near the Canoe & Kayak Rental. Highlighted areas can be viewed on this map: https://bit.ly/3vKg0d7</p> <p>Riverbank Management: support the removal of invasive species to be replaced with native species that will allow year-round views of the river as suggested in the 2002 master plan. The granite armoring should be reset to maintain turf edge and prevent erosion. If the granite armoring is reset permanent infrastructure to anchor temporary docks could be installed.</p> <p>Open Spaces: support maintaining the open, pastoral character of Herter Park with open lawn running down to the edge of the water as suggested in the 2002 master plan.</p> <p>Parking: Maintain the open Artesani parking lot and smaller lots to accommodate vehicles and trailers for events and general usage</p> <p>Electrical Infrastructure: support creating permanent electrical infrastructure to improve sustainability and limit the need for temporary generators.</p> <p>Water Access: support adding additional water fountains and access points for potable water.</p> <p>Site Lighting: Ensure light poles are maintained to help park users safely traverse the park in the evening.</p> | Belmont | MA | 02478 |
| James | Poulos | <p>Stormwater Management: improve the surface runoff and drainage in multiple targeted areas of Herter Park including Parking Lots #1-4, the fields next to the Eliot Bridge and the fields near the Canoe & Kayak Rental. Highlighted areas can be viewed on this map: https://bit.ly/3vKg0d7</p> <p>Riverbank Management: support the removal of invasive species to be replaced with native species that will allow year-round views of the river as suggested in the 2002 master plan. The granite armoring should be reset to maintain turf edge and prevent erosion. If the granite armoring is reset permanent infrastructure to anchor temporary docks could be installed.</p> <p>Open Spaces: support maintaining the open, pastoral character of Herter Park with open lawn running down to the edge of the water as suggested in the 2002 master plan.</p> <p>Parking: Maintain the open Artesani parking lot and smaller lots to accommodate vehicles and trailers for events and general usage</p> <p>Electrical Infrastructure: support creating permanent electrical infrastructure to improve sustainability and limit the need for temporary generators.</p> <p>Water Access: support adding additional water fountains and access points for potable water.</p> <p>Site Lighting: Ensure light poles are maintained to help park users safely traverse the park in the evening.</p> | Charlestown | MA | 02129 |

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| Mark | Marder | <p>I'm a member of CBC and the Head of the Charles (HOCR) volunteers. My particular interest is in the lack of attention to anchoring the temporary docks that are set up on the river near parking lots 3 and 4. Not mentioned is the contour of the bank sloping to the river. The key concern is the safety of the rowers who must carry rowing shells and sculls over uneven ground and especially the river banks. We have multiple mitigation strategies to increase the rower's safety but with the ever changing bank erosion, basin water level changes, and invasive plant growth we are constantly in fear of injury to our rowers.</p> <p>If the riverbank plan could be amended to include concrete steps 10 to 15 feet wide and inverted U pipes on both sides of the steps for rope anchors for securing the docks, that would allow year long locations for sitting at the shore and while the HOCR is running it would provide a safe locations to anchor the temporary docks and better protect the rowers from unwanted falls and injury.</p> <p>Myself and any other members of the HOCR Dock Logistics volunteers would be able to help site the steps to the 5 locations we currently use for temporary docks. The site where Boston Latin and other High Schools locate their dock is another candidate for the steps.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p> | Weston | MA | 02493 |
| Courtney | Forrester | <p>Stormwater Management: improve the surface runoff and drainage in multiple targeted areas of Herter Park including Parking Lots #1-4, the fields next to the Eliot Bridge and the fields near the Canoe & Kayak Rental.</p> <p>Riverbank Management: support the removal of invasive species to be replaced with native species that will allow year-round views of the river as suggested in the 2002 master plan. The granite armoring should be reset to maintain turf edge and prevent erosion. If the granite armoring is reset permanent infrastructure to anchor temporary docks could be installed.</p> <p>Open Spaces: support maintaining the open, pastoral character of Herter Park with open lawn running down to the edge of the water as suggested in the 2002 master plan.</p> <p>Parking: Maintain the open Artesani parking lot and smaller lots to accommodate vehicles and trailers for events and general usage</p> <p>Electrical Infrastructure: support creating permanent electrical infrastructure to improve sustainability and limit the need for temporary generators. This would really cut down on GHG emissions.</p> <p>Water Access: support adding additional water fountains and access points for potable water. I travel to Philly several times a year, they have had drinking fountains along the Schuylkill river for several years - it's GREAT!</p> <p>Site Lighting: Ensure light poles are maintained to help park users safely traverse the park in the evening.</p> <p>Thank you!</p> | Watertown | MA | 02472 |
| Katy | Ruderman | <p>Stormwater Management: improve the surface runoff and drainage in multiple targeted areas of Herter Park including Parking Lots #1-4, the fields next to the Eliot Bridge and the fields near the Canoe & Kayak Rental. Highlighted areas can be viewed on this map: https://bit.ly/3vKg0d7</p> <p>Riverbank Management: support the removal of invasive species to be replaced with native species that will allow year-round views of the river as suggested in the 2002 master plan. The granite armoring should be reset to maintain turf edge and prevent erosion. If the granite armoring is reset permanent infrastructure to anchor temporary docks could be installed.</p> <p>Open Spaces: support maintaining the open, pastoral character of Herter Park with open lawn running down to the edge of the water as suggested in the 2002 master plan.</p> <p>Parking: Maintain the open Artesani parking lot and smaller lots to accommodate vehicles and trailers for events and general usage</p> <p>Electrical Infrastructure: support creating permanent electrical infrastructure to improve sustainability and limit the need for temporary generators.</p> <p>Water Access: support adding additional water fountains and access points for potable water.</p> <p>Site Lighting: Ensure light poles are maintained to help park users safely traverse the park in the evening.</p> | Dedham | MA | 02026 |

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| Tom | Meier | <p>I attended the first zoom meeting on Herter Park Master Plan and was very impressed. I volunteer at the Head of the Charles Regatta and am also a private person using the park during the summer living in Melrose and traveling to Boston to park and enjoy the area. My comments are as follows:</p> <p>The "lagoon" by the "winter wooden bridge" is mosquito infested and should be recast to do something other than just sit and be overgrown. Perhaps a Koi Pond, private garden area or just filled in.</p> <p>Drainage for the grass lands would be great, and better access to the Charles that has more permanent transfer to floating dock would be great so long as it is compatible with the HO CR.</p> <p>Storm water Management: improve the surface runoff and drainage in multiple targeted areas of Herter Park including Parking Lots #1-4, the fields next to the Eliot Bridge and the fields near the Canoe & Kayak Rental. Highlighted areas can be viewed on this map: https://bit.ly/3vKg0d7</p> <p>Riverbank Management: support the removal of invasive species to be replaced with native species that will allow year-round views of the river as suggested in the 2002 master plan. The granite armoring should be reset to maintain turf edge and prevent erosion. If the granite armoring is reset permanent infrastructure to anchor temporary docks could be installed.</p> <p>Open Spaces: support maintaining the open, pastoral character of Herter Park with open lawn running down to the edge of the water as suggested in the 2002 master plan.</p> <p>Parking: Maintain the open Artesani parking lot and smaller lots to accommodate vehicles and trailers for events and general usage</p> <p>Electrical Infrastructure: support creating permanent electrical infrastructure to improve sustainability and limit the need for temporary generators.</p> <p>Water Access: support adding additional water fountains and access points for potable water.</p> | Melrose | MA | 02176 |
| Gregory | Kelly | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •No path in the park feel wide enough for mixed use, please widen them all to accommodate speeds that range from pushing a stroller to bike commuting. •It would be great to see multiple points of access to the water for canoe/kayak/SUP, on either side of the amphitheater. Additionally a landing where paddlers can pull up/tie up for a while. Think about Herter as a destination for paddlers, not just a start/end point for trips. It could attract paddlers from Watertown to the Esplanade. •Similarly, make Herter a bike destination. Bike parking throughout the park would be very helpful. •Herter Center would make an outstanding events center/public art space/meeting space upstairs. Downstairs it would be nice to have a café/market so that people arriving by foot, bike or paddle can travel light to the park, and still be able to pick up a picnic lunch, sunscreen, towel, and other sundries. •The area east of Elliot bridge is underutilized, perhaps this is a place for a Mitch Ryerson playground tucked into a well shaded area of the park. It could offer relief/contrast to the sun exposed splashpad and playground at Artesani •All of the benches seem to face directly at a stand of weeds/invasive species, and would be much nicer with improved sightlines to the water. •Consistent signage for motorists along Soldiers Field beginning at Elliot Bridge and extending to the Henderson Boathouse would help reinforce that it is one large public space, instead of just the side of the park that is accessible based on the lot where you find parking. | Brighton | MA | 02135 |
| Tom | West | <p>Stormwater Management: improve the surface runoff and drainage in multiple targeted areas of Herter Park including Parking Lots #1-4, the fields next to the Eliot Bridge and the fields near the Canoe & Kayak Rental. Highlighted areas can be viewed on this map: https://bit.ly/3vKg0d7</p> <p>Riverbank Management: support the removal of invasive species to be replaced with native species that will allow year-round views of the river as suggested in the 2002 master plan. The granite armoring should be reset to maintain turf edge and prevent erosion. If the granite armoring is reset permanent infrastructure to anchor temporary docks could be installed.</p> <p>Open Spaces: support maintaining the open, pastoral character of Herter Park with open lawn running down to the edge of the water as suggested in the 2002 master plan.</p> <p>Parking: Maintain the open Artesani parking lot and smaller lots to accommodate vehicles and trailers for events and general usage</p> <p>Electrical Infrastructure: support creating permanent electrical infrastructure to improve sustainability and limit the need for temporary generators.</p> <p>Water Access: support adding additional water fountains and access points for potable water.</p> <p>Site Lighting: Ensure light poles are maintained to help park users safely traverse the park in the evening.</p> | Belmont | MA | 02478 |
| Audrey | Richardson | Please see comments from Friends of Boston Latin School Crew and Friends of Brookline Rowing, emailed to Daniel Cushing and Jenny Norwood. Thank you. | Roslindale | MA | 02131 |

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| Nicholas | Wright | <p>I am a member of the Head of the Charles Regatta Race Operations group, and I fully support these HO CR comments:</p> <p>Stormwater Management: improve the surface runoff and drainage in multiple targeted areas of Herter Park including Parking Lots #1-4, the fields next to the Eliot Bridge and the fields near the Canoe & Kayak Rental. Highlighted areas can be viewed on this map: https://bit.ly/3vKg0d7</p> <p>Riverbank Management: support the removal of invasive species to be replaced with native species that will allow year-round views of the river as suggested in the 2002 master plan. The granite armoring should be reset to maintain turf edge and prevent erosion. If the granite armoring is reset permanent infrastructure to anchor temporary docks could be installed.</p> <p>Open Spaces: support maintaining the open, pastoral character of Herter Park with open lawn running down to the edge of the water as suggested in the 2002 master plan.</p> <p>Parking: Maintain the open Artesani parking lot and smaller lots to accommodate vehicles and trailers for events and general usage</p> <p>Electrical Infrastructure: support creating permanent electrical infrastructure to improve sustainability and limit the need for temporary generators.</p> <p>Water Access: support adding additional water fountains and access points for potable water.</p> <p>Site Lighting: Ensure light poles are maintained to help park users safely traverse the park in the evening.</p> <p>As a nearby resident, and as one of two people in charge of parking the boat trailers, I would like to comment:</p> <p>-Please keep the center of Artesani parking lot free of light poles and islands</p> | Cambridge | MA | 02140 |
| Courtney | Wilson | <p>Stormwater Management: improve the surface runoff and drainage in multiple targeted areas of Herter Park including Parking Lots #1-4, the fields next to the Eliot Bridge and the fields near the Canoe & Kayak Rental. Highlighted areas can be viewed on this map: https://bit.ly/3vKg0d7</p> <p>Riverbank Management: support the removal of invasive species to be replaced with native species that will allow year-round views of the river as suggested in the 2002 master plan. The granite armoring should be reset to maintain turf edge and prevent erosion. If the granite armoring is reset permanent infrastructure to anchor temporary docks could be installed.</p> <p>Open Spaces: support maintaining the open, pastoral character of Herter Park with open lawn running down to the edge of the water as suggested in the 2002 master plan.</p> <p>Parking: Maintain the open Artesani parking lot and smaller lots to accommodate vehicles and trailers for events and general usage</p> <p>Electrical Infrastructure: support creating permanent electrical infrastructure to improve sustainability and limit the need for temporary generators.</p> <p>Water Access: support adding additional water fountains and access points for potable water.</p> <p>Site Lighting: Ensure light poles are maintained to help park users safely traverse the park in the evening.</p> | Cambridge | MA | 02139 |

**The BLS Boathouse: Submission to DCR and the Herter Park Master Plan Design Team
June 24, 2021**

Friends of Boston Latin School Crew, Inc., and Friends of Brookline Rowing, Inc., submit the following, with the request that it be acknowledged in writing and placed into the public record of the Herter Park Master Plan Design Process for further discussion.

Part 1: History and Context

Since approximately 2011, the Boston Latin School (BLS) Crew team has used the former Brighton Bathhouse, on the west end of Christian Herter Park, as the BLS Boathouse. This location was scouted and implemented by Friends of BLS Crew working together with DCR, after BLS Crew was priced out of using the Community Rowing, Inc. (CRI) boathouse.

BLS Crew in its current formation was founded as a girls' program in 2002. In 2015 BLS Crew added a boys' program and currently serves approximately 125 Boston public school students per year. Although BLS Crew has the full institutional support of BLS leadership, it is entirely operated and funded by the non-profit organization Friends of BLS Crew and does not receive any financial support from the Boston Public Schools.

The mission of Friends of BLS Crew is to make rowing accessible to any BLS student, regardless of the racial and socioeconomic barriers that have existed in rowing and that may have previously kept many students from engaging in the sport.

Brookline High School (BHS) Rowing was founded in the late 1980s and, like BLS, has become one of the largest public high school rowing programs in the Commonwealth, with roughly 125 boys and girls in the program. In 2017, BHS Rowing was priced out of the Riverside Boat Club boathouse. With the support of DCR, BLS Crew welcomed the Brookline team to join BLS in rowing out of the BLS Boathouse location. Friends of BHS Rowing is the non-profit organization that raises funds, purchases equipment, employs coaches and provides need-based scholarships for athletes, in coordination with Brookline High School Athletics, which supports the program only during the Spring season.

We would like to clarify a statement that was made in the June 10 public presentation by Rob Adams of Halvorson/Tighe & Bond. Mr. Adams stated that Friends of BLS Crew does not have an agreement for the use of the BLS Boathouse structure. We note that the absence of an agreement is because DCR has yet to act on a 2014 Act of the Legislature which directed DCAMM, in consultation with DCR, to enter into a boathouse agreement with Friends of Boston Latin Crew, as follows:

- In 2010, the Legislature directed DCAMM to execute leases or other agreements with various boating facilities, including private and university boathouses, that occupied locations along the City's waterfront:
<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2010/Chapter65>
- In 2012, this was amended to include Northeastern University's Henderson Boat House:
<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2012/Chapter143>
- In 2014, it was further amended to include the Friends of Boston Latin School Crew:
<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2014/Chapter282>

Since 2014, Friends of BLS Crew has engaged with DCR with the goal of getting the agreement in place, but to date that agreement has not been executed. As a result, we are unable to make any improvements to the boathouse or surrounding area, nor are we able to adequately maintain the facility and grounds until such time that we have a use agreement. At this time, we

have proposed minor improvements to remove dead and dying trees, address major flooding issues in and around the path between Henderson Boathouse and the boathouse, as well as take some minor steps to make the boathouse more user-friendly within its existing footprint. None of these improvements can move forward without an executed use agreement. It should be further noted that the current boathouse, which is used by 200+ public high school students six days each week between March and November, has no plumbing/running water or bathroom facilities, no lighting or electricity, and is often surrounded by large puddles and mud due to poor drainage.

Our immediate request is that DCAMM and DCR act as directed by the Legislature to execute a use agreement. But, as part of the Herter Park Master Plan, and as set forth below, we want to put forth a larger vision for public school rowing that should be incorporated into the programming discussions for the Master Plan.

Part 2: A Vision for Public School Rowing on the Charles

Our vision is to create a boathouse dedicated to expanding access to rowing on the Charles River for a diverse group of public high school students from Boston and the surrounding communities in order to promote the sport of rowing, health and fitness, enjoyment of the river and its natural beauty.

The Charles River is the main stage of American rowing and includes over 15 miles of rowable water from the Museum of Science to Watertown. The river is home to one of the most iconic rowing regattas in the world (the Head of the Charles), serves as a training center for many elite rowers, and is the site of some of the most important rowing history in the country. The river is currently home to 13 rowing-focused boathouses: five buildings for colleges (MIT, BU, Harvard, Radcliffe and Northeastern), three buildings for private clubs (Union Boat Club, Riverside Boat Club, and Cambridge Boat Club -- some of which host public school programs, such as Cambridge Rindge & Latin School), four buildings for private high schools (Belmont Hill, Noble & Greenough, BB&N, Windsor) and one community-access organization, Community Rowing, Inc. (CRI). Nowhere along this 15-mile stretch of river is there a facility dedicated to public high school rowing. Public high schools use sub-optimal space inside (or often completely outside of) these well-resourced private facilities -- sometimes with no heating, plumbing, electricity, site drainage, restrooms or even a secure place for students to leave their belongings.

Historically, Boston public high schools, such as English High School and the O'Bryant High School (previously Boston Technical High School), maintained rowing programs, but access to the river for Boston Public Schools students is currently quite limited.¹ We believe DCR's Herter Park Master Plan provides a compelling opportunity to ensure that a diverse group of public high school students in the Greater Boston area has access to rowing on the Charles River.

¹ We note that Community Rowing, Inc. (CRI), which was commented on as addressing the need for public school access to rowing and the river in the public presentation, is distinguishable and not duplicative of our proposal to provide access to public high school rowing teams. CRI, through RowBoston, provides space for up to 50 Boston public high school students from various schools to compete as RowBoston in a minimally competitive, club team atmosphere. This program does not provide opportunity for school team rowing, nor does CRI have the capacity to house individual public school teams. While we believe Community Rowing's outreach efforts to Boston Public Schools students, particularly with indoor rowing to elementary and middle school students, should be commended, we distinguish the RowBoston club model as very different than a robust varsity and novice high school team, rowing as representatives of their school with their classmates.

Our Goal(s)

At a minimum, we aim to substantially improve the current boathouse site with a renovated or replaced structure and appropriate landscape modifications to improve convenience, safety, drainage and boat trailer access.

The larger goal, however, is to build a boathouse elsewhere within Herter Park that could accommodate multiple public high school rowing programs and support the launch of at least one new public high school rowing program (potentially a single team comprised of rowers from across all Boston public high schools to start) that would provide a more diverse group of student athletes across Greater Boston access to rowing on the Charles River. The Herter Park Master Planning process provides an exciting opportunity to enlist others in this vision and build support for both the near-term and longer-term goals.

Core Values

- **Equity:** 12 of the 13 rowing boathouses on this stretch of the Charles River exist to serve private schools, private clubs and private universities. Only one of these facilities (CRI) consistently provides public access, but that access is expensive and constrained. Although CRI hosts RowBoston's scholastic program, that program is limited in its capacity and different, as described in the footnote above.
- **Inclusion:** The sport of rowing, for too long, has been a sport that failed to welcome diverse communities with regard to race and socio-economic status. Public access to the river through public high school rowing creates a unique opportunity to cultivate a more diverse community of rowers and athletes.
- **Collaboration:** Creating a new building in a public park requires collaboration and commitment across a broad range of stakeholder groups, funders, public and private interests and local communities; we are committed to work productively with all of these groups to ensure the long-term success of this vision for our community.

Possible Models/Reference Projects

We have identified several reference projects around the country which we believe are relevant to this vision and could inspire a unique and successful facility here in Boston that meets the needs of our community.

- [Thompson's Boat Center](#) (Washington, DC): Home to several collegiate programs, high school programs, community programs, and public space and rental access. Combines rowing and sailing. Owned by the U.S. National Park Service.
- [Donahue Rowing Center](#) (Shrewsbury, MA): The [mission](#) of the Donahue Rowing Center is to provide and maintain: facilities, instructions, assistance, encouragement and guidance in the sport of rowing to students, adults, adaptive rowing programs and the general public. The original 6-bay facility was completed in 1994 at a cost of \$1m, and 4 additional boat bays were added in 2002 for an additional \$700k.
- [Anacostia Boathouse](#) (Washington, DC): Home to several collegiate, high school, club rowing programs, as well as various community organizations in waterfront preservation.
- [Walker Creek Boathouse](#) (Austin, TX): A mixed-used boathouse where the community can rent kayaks & paddle boards, take learn-to-row and indoor rowing classes, as well as house club rowing programs. Walker Creek also provides a public cafe and restrooms. Owned by the City of Austin and managed by the Austin Rowing Club.

We believe these examples illustrate the powerful impact that a dedicated public access rowing facility can have by increasing access to the river for a diverse community of participants.

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June 23, 2021

Via Form on website [DCR Public Comments | Mass.gov](#)

Department of Conservation and Recreation
Office of Public Outreach
251 Causeway Street
Boston, MA 02114

Re: Herter Park Master Plan

CRWA Comment #1

As you are aware, Charles River Watershed Association ("CRWA") hosts numerous education and outreach events in Christian A. Herter Park, including the Run of the Charles. We are invested in park's success and pleased to see the Department of Conservation and Recreation ("DCR") progressing with a master planning process to restore and enhance this important public park right along the Charles River. CRWA submits the following comments to help inform development of the Herter Park Master Plan currently being prepared by DCR and Halvorson Design and associated subcontractors (collectively, the "Project Team"). Our comments are in response to the content presented at the June 10, 2021 Public Meeting. We have organized our comments to match the presentation topics.

CRWA Comment #2 - **Circulation**

CRWA supports increased and improved safe access to the park by pedestrians and bikers. We are pleased to see the Project Team incorporating consideration of connectivity with other nearby project s' open space areas, as well as with schools and students. Our educational programming often includes students and better access to the park will facilitate that work.

CRWA Comment #3 - **Parking**

CRWA encourages the Project Team to incorporate green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) and other stormwater best management practices (BMPs) into the parking areas to reduce runoff quantities, reduce pollution from stormwater runoff (e.g., phosphorous, solids, bacteria, etc.), and enhance visibility of these practices to the public. In addition, we are pleased to see that the Project Team is considering which parking lots should remain and in what form—any opportunities to reduce overall impervious cover should be incorporated into the Master Plan. We recognize that some events (i.e., Head of the Charles) have significant parking needs; however, alternative parking options—such as overflow parking on Soldiers Field Road—could be arranged for those limited events. This would allow for greening of the parking lots and reduction of impervious cover, improving stormwater management and river health. Implementation of GSI in parking lots that provides year-round and long-term benefits should not be sacrificed in order to accommodate two or three large events a year that need extended parking, especially when such parking is available on existing roadways.

CRWA Comment #4- **Vegetation**

Existing mature trees should be preserved, except those with health issues or those that pose a public safety risk. We urge the Project Team to consult with an arborist to evaluate trees for suitability of presentation and that as many trees as possible be maintained (specifically those whose suitability is determined to be moderate or high). We request more information from the Project Team on the "goals" of the moat (e.g., is it supposed to flow? provide fish habitat? flood storage? accessible recreational area? etc.). The plan's recommendations should be aligned with those goals.

CRWA supports removal of invasive plant species that threaten ecosystem health, and supports restoration efforts to bring back native vegetation. Overall, ecosystem health should be improved across the entire park. We ask the Project Team to consider designating specific areas for use like passive recreation vs active recreation and associated planting needs. There may be opportunities to reduce “lawn” areas and replace them with more diverse species. In addition, the Commonwealth recently completed a healthy soils plan. Herter Park would be a great place to put some of those recommendations into action. We ask the Project Team to explain consistency with this effort in its development of the Master Plan.

CRWA Comment #5

Program Activities

CRWA holds the following types of events at Herter Park on a periodic basis (Educational table with “watershed in a box” demonstration; walking tours of the park features; in collaboration with Paddle Boston, canoe and kayak tours of the River; and educational sessions for students in nearby schools. Since these events typically draw groups up to 40 people or less, or are for passers-by, the park’s current parking and circulation are more than adequate.

Our Run of the Charles event is a large event that draws hundreds of people and typically fills the parking lots, including for use as space for tents and booths. Improved pedestrian and bike access, as well as streamlined parking, would benefit this event and reduce overall parking needs. This event does not require changes to the circulation of the park. We anticipate that these needs are consistent with the needs of other stakeholders for their programming.

CRWA Comment #6- Herter Amphitheater

We are pleased to see consideration of a second egress and improved accessibility for the Herter Amphitheater. However, in doing this work, we urge the Project Team to preserve mature trees (in collaboration with an arborist as noted in our previous comment on vegetation) and remove invasive species.

CRWA Comment #7- Herter Center

We support preservation of the history of the park, including the Herter Center. The original building constructed in the 1950s, still on site, once had a spectacular views of the Charles River. The architecture emphasizes the connection between the built environment and nature and reminds users of the importance of the River and all of its functions. We hope that this sentiment will be carried forward in the next iteration of the Herter Center.

CRWA Comment #8- Visitor Experience

CRWA strongly supports improvements for universal accessibility. For any improvements that would extend impervious areas, we encourage the Project Team to utilize permeable solutions as feasible to comply with ADA requirements. We are pleased to see that the Project Team is considering adding amenities such as water fountains, bicycle racks, and trash receptacles. With proper maintenance, trash receptacles and even pet waste stations will help reduce the quantity of trash and pollution entering the Charles River. CRWA also supports the intent to maintain vistas at targeted locations and provide access to the River’s edge while balancing river health, ecosystem health, and nuisance species issues.

CRWA Comment #9 -Signage and Wayfinding

Generally, we are pleased to see the Project Team give attention to the need to simplify messaging and reduce the overall number of signs in the park, as well as add educational information as appropriate. We would hope this Master Planning effort results in improved signage about the Park. CRWA would like to see signage incorporate information about Christian A. Herter, the history of the site, Charles

River pollution cleanup progress, impacts from stormwater runoff, what green stormwater infrastructure can do, and what people can do at their own homes to reduce pollution in stormwater runoff. Additional information about invasive species, native plantings, and pollinators would be appropriate in various places in the park. Continuing to emphasize messages about not feeding wild animals (particularly geese), removing trash, and picking up after pets is also critical to river health.

CRWA Comment #10-Stormwater and Drainage

Given this site’s proximity to the Charles River, improvements to stormwater management provide significant opportunities to mitigate detrimental environmental impacts from stormwater pollution and manage runoff quantities and rates under current and anticipated climate change scenarios.

CRWA Comment #10.1-Stormwater and Drainage

As you are aware, the Lower Basin of the Charles River is subject to a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for phosphorus (Total Maximum Daily Load for Nutrients In the Lower Charles River Basin, Massachusetts, June 2007 (EPA TMDL No. 33826)) and a TMDL for bacteria (Final Pathogen TMDL for the Charles River Watershed January 2007 (EPA TMDL No. 32371)). In addition, DCR is subject to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) in Massachusetts (“MS4GP”) (effective July 1, 2018, subsequently modified on December 7, 2020), which includes provisions requiring DCR to develop and implement a Phosphorus Control Plan (PCP) that includes use of non-structural and structural controls to reduce the annual phosphorus load entering the river. Herter Park offers an incredible opportunity for DCR to address this MS4GP requirement for two key reasons (1) following the Master Planning effort, the park will undergo some construction which is the opportune and most cost-effective time to add structural stormwater controls, and (2) there is a great deal of available space in the park. We look forward to seeing more information in the Master Plan documenting how the drainage and stormwater improvements will address the pollutants of concern both in the TMDLs, as well as the most recently approved Final Integrated List of Waters.

CRWA Comment #10.2-Stormwater and Drainage

In addition, according to the National Climate Assessment, the amount of precipitation falling in very heavy events increased by 71% in New England from 1958 to 2012. The Climate Ready Boston Map Explorer shows that areas of Herter Park, as well as nearby areas that may drain to the moat in Herter Park or to the River through conveyances under the Herter Park land area, stormwater flooding in the near-, medium-, and long-term. The Boston Water and Sewer Commission (“BWSC”) City of Boston Inundation Model shows extensive areas of flooding in and around Herter Park under various extreme weather events, some of which are predicted to be over one foot. CRWA requests that the Project Team provide additional detail in the Master Plan about the stormwater management systems’ ability to manage—and, as feasible, reduce—current and predicted flooding from the drainage areas contributing the Charles River in this area, using the best available science.

CRWA Comment #10.3-Stormwater and Drainage

Finally, the Resilient MA Action Team (RMAT) “Climate Resilience Design Standards and Guidelines” have been released as a draft and include guidance for state-funded projects to enhance assessment of climate resilience as part of the state capital planning process to ensure consistency with the State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan (SHMCAP). We request that the Project Team use the “beta” Climate Resilience Design Standards Tool to document the risks from climate change and guide design of mitigation strategies, as well as include the output as an appendix to the Master Plan.

CRWA Comment #11

Thank you for considering these comments. We look forward to seeing a full draft of the Herter Park Master Plan sometime in Fall 2021 and anticipate providing additional comments at that time during the stakeholder and public input process.

Janet Moonan, PE
Stormwater Program Director

Master Plan (9/23/2021) Feedback

TO: DCR, Daniel.cushing@mass.gov
FR: Christian A. Herter Community Garden “Herter Garden” - Planning Committee Member, DCR Liaison, Eleanor Jewett
DT: October 5, 2021
RE: FEEDBACK — REMAIN IN OUR CURRENT HERTER GARDEN LOCATION
Do Not Remove, Relocate/Consolidate, or Isolate
Do not take the “community” out of our community garden

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[Herter Park Master Plan Public Meeting #2 | Mass.gov](#)

Links to a copy of the slide deck and recording, in the section titled "Additional Resources." is the form for Public Comments. comment period will be open until October 20th.

[DCR Public Comments | Mass.gov](#)

Link to Public Comments form. Comment period will be open until October 20th.

For questions and concerns please reach out by email to: Daniel.cushing@mass.gov

Introduction

Our Current Location integrates Herter Gardeners with people and activities in all of Herter Park and has important location and historical significance associated with Herter Park and Herter Center, and Herter Theater.

We do not want to be removed from our current historically-significant Herter Garden location. We do not want to be relocated to a consolidated area, farthest west near the woodland. We do not want to be isolated within Herter Park; we want to remain integrated with visitors and activities.

Importance of Place

The individual characteristics of place are vital in determining quality of life.

The Christian A Herter Garden, “Herter Garden,” is on land close to, and with views of, the Charles River. While most community gardens are commonly found surrounded by apartments, schools, condominium building etc. The Herter Garden has a stunning location along the southern banks of the Charles River, among the trees, water, trails, and visitors.

We take the beauty of our location and its place in the natural world seriously. Our relationship with Herter Garden goes beyond planting seeds and watching them grow. **It is a privilege for us to keep the Herter gardening tradition and Herter historical connections alive by remaining in our current location.**

Pride of place matters. Sustaining a commitment to gardening in this location is important to us. We do not want to be removed and consolidated with another garden. We want to maintain our current circumstance of being integrated with the whole community.

Historical Significance

Our Garden and gardeners are connected to a long-standing, almost half a century, tradition of gardening in our current location.

Herter Garden was established 45 years ago, in 1976, and located next to the Herter Center. It was one of the programs for community outreach offered through the Herter Center, developed by the daughter of Christian A Herter, Adele Seronde, then President of the Center.

The Garden was started by people who were committed to community gardening during the Revival Program when dozens of other community gardens popped up to take back the land. Without Seronde and her philanthropic efforts, the Herter Garden would not exist.

Historical connections have major significance, and are important to maintain.

Removing the Garden will erase the historic footprint of the garden. It will take away both past and present gardeners’ long-standing connection to working that particular land.

Negative Impacts of Changing the Location

Isolation & Exclusion from the Mainstream of the Park

Herter gardeners currently integrate with people and activities in Herter Park, and as such, are an integral part of the Park.

Gardeners want to be remain integrated with people and activities at Herter Park, and not separated and excluded from them.

1. Separation of Gardeners from most Park Visitors and General Park Activities

The proposed location is the farthest point west next to the woodlands. Moving Herter Garden and gardeners to the farthest west end of the park will **ISOLATE gardeners, putting them out of sight** of most Park users and **separating them from most people using the park and the general activities of the Park.**

2. Marginalization of Elders and All Herter Gardeners

We have many 55+ gardeners. Your suggested proposal will take our elders out of site of most of the people and activities of the Herter Park adding to our elders marginalization, which occurs often in our society. **This physical separation is a form of disempowerment and exclusion from the mainstream of the Park.**

To a different extent, the disempowerment and exclusion extends to all the Herter Gardeners.

3. Negative Impact of Greatly Reduced Foot Traffic, and General Traffic

The proposed relocation plot is so isolated that general Park visitors will no longer have an opportunity to find and stop by the garden. There will be many fewer people who pass by. We often find new gardeners this way. We often invite people in to see what we do and share the experience. We often have people visit with their children, and share stories and produce with them. **These chance encounters with non-gardeners will not happen if we move to an area in the far western part of Herter Park.**

4. Safety Concerns

With diminished foot traffic and traffic in-general, gardeners are **less safe at dawn, dusk, and when gardening alone in the proposed location.** The presence of adults and children on foot, bicyclists, skate boarders, amphitheater visitors, pop-up restaurant guests, racers, rowers, and others, makes gardeners safer, and discourages negative behavior.

When I go to Herter Garden to work or pick up some herbs and vegetables in the early evening or early morning, there are always some people around. Let me underscore that this **greatly enhances the experience of community gardening at our current location.**



5. Remote Parking Location

The suggested new parking location is very remote, with no physical connection to the main parking lot, and the people in it. This adds to the further isolation and exclusion of gardeners from the mainstream of visitors and activities at Herter Park.

6. Health Concern - Potentially more Mosquitos and Bugs from Woodland.

Removing us from the main Park and isolating us at the farthest point possible next to the woodland has another negative effect. Potentially, there may be more mosquitos and other bugs than in our current garden, which is more open and less closed in by woodland.

7. Aesthetics – Removing Visual Access to River

We currently have a wonderful view of the Charles River. The suggested proposal will take away that view and replace it with one of Storrow Drive Extension.

COUNCILLOR NOLAN
VICE MAYOR MALLON
MAYOR SIDDIQUI
COUNCILLOR SIMMONS

WHEREAS: It has come to the attention of this City Council that the Herter Community Garden, founded in 1976, is a 45-year-old community garden situated along the Charles River that has provided organic, urban community gathering for decades, including providing 13 current Cambridge residents with a garden plot; and

WHEREAS: Gardeners in the community garden are largely older, immigrants, and people of color who rely on the gardening community for both sociability and food security, and provide a true community of well-being and support for each other; and

WHEREAS: The Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) unveiled a plan to remove the garden and replace it with a “picnic lawn” on September 29, 2021; and

WHEREAS: An outpouring of opposition to the DCR plan emerged, with a petition to save the Herter Community Garden gathering over 2000 signatures; and

WHEREAS: The DCR proposed solution of moving the garden to a different spot along the river has been characterized as impossible by experts - 45 years of soil enrichment and features such as trellises and paths are not transferable; and

WHEREAS: The new proposed site is sloped, filled with invasive vegetation, and contains depleted soil with poor drainage; and

WHEREAS: Removal of the Herter garden and construction of an inadequate garden elsewhere would decrease accessibility and equity for the vulnerable communities which rely on it; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That this City Council go on record strongly opposing the DCR plan to remove the Herter Community Garden and stands behind the Herter Community Gardeners; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the City Clerk be and hereby is requested to forward a suitably engrossed copy of this resolution as soon as possible to the leadership of DCR, to the Cambridge delegation, and to the organizers of the “Save Herter Community Garden” petition on behalf of the entire City Council.

In City Council October 25, 2021.
Adopted as amended by a ye and nay vote:-
Yeas 9; Nays 0; Absent 0.
Attest:- Anthony I. Wilson, City Clerk

A true copy;

ATTEST:-



Anthony I. Wilson, City Clerk

memo

Date October 20, 2021
To Department of Conservation and Recreation
From Herb Nolan, Solomon Foundation
Re **Herter Park Master Plan - Concept Proposals**

These notes reflect my personal thoughts on the extraordinary master plan that the DCR rolled out at the public meeting on September 29th. It is visionary plan that takes some very necessary risks. Kudos to the senior DCR team and the design consultants. Thanks to Ginna Johnson who listened to FOHP requests and came for a site visit a week later. We learned a lot together and look forward to further discussions. Detailed comments on the amphitheater program and layout will be forthcoming from the FOHP as they learn more and move through the design process.

I believe a reimagined amphitheater and performing arts program is as important to the future of Herter Park as any of the other bold ideas embedded in this imaginative plan. A reinvented amphitheater will help attract top notch performers. With a robust organization to bring it to life the amphitheater will in time become the jewel in the crown of a revitalized Herter Park.

Feedback on the draft master plan as it relates to the amphitheater

Visibility

- The reconfigured and more sustainable parking lot is a wonderful idea, however, it further isolates the amphitheater entrance making a hidden asset potentially more invisible. If true this would be a real liability for the performing arts on the site. The amphitheater and its programming should have a visual presence at the Everett Street entrance to the park. Large-scale information displays on upcoming shows and a ticketing kiosk could be accommodated here. Having a banner system at the edge of Soldeirs Field Road for day-of-performances as is done in Europe would help. Further study is needed.

Access

- The addition of a second pedestrian bridge will integrate the amphitheater into the park as a whole which vitally important. During vast majority of time when the amphitheater is not being used for performances the island should be open to public access and support spontaneous gatherings.
- Introducing the second bridge will deliver people to the back side of the existing stage where back-of-house equipment and containers are currently stored in a very ad hoc manner. We need fresh thinking on how to resolve this awkward front/back situation and accommodate the programatic needs of any active performance venue. A key goal should be to integrate the amphitheater into the life of the park as a whole.

Moat

- The commitment to dredging the moat and landscaping the eroding banks, while expensive, is important. Doing so will help in some measure eliminate the stagnate water and avoid

future public health problems. With global warming and mosquito born diseases such as West Nile on the rise we need to get ahead of potential problems. Sequencing this necessary dredging in advance of future park construction in order to accommodate the extensive processing of materials will avoid future disruptions to the park. (Note: An alternative approach to the canal could be to convert it to a bioswale for the treatment of stormwater run off from the island and surrounding land including the parking lot. While visitors love the idea of crossing over water to get to the island, a vegetated “moat” would eliminate stagnant water which breeds mosquitoes and would not require periodic dredging.)

Herter Center

- The use of the ground floor of the Herter Center to support High School rowing as well as public restrooms accessible 24/7 is a good use of this facility. Would it be possible to use the indoor space in a flexible manner to support outdoor public events on occasion?
- If the amphitheater is to survive and thrive, the FOHP or their successor will need more access to the second floor of the Herter Center than currently shown. The modest office, bathrooms, and support space are much needed but control over all or part of the multi-purpose room for special events will be essential. Private events in the amphitheater on occasion may become an important revenue stream to sustain a non-profit producing organization. Having the second floor as an attractive and flexible space may prove essential.
- Due to its location the Herter Center is far from ideal as a greenroom and changing facility for performers who need easy access to the stage. Further Study is needed to understand the operation and programmatic needs of a fully successful amphitheater.

Feedback on the master plan as a whole

Soldiers Field Road

- For decades the Allston/Brighton community has asked that something be done to make Soldiers Field Road safer to cross and less of a barrier to the Park. This plan with its narrowed two-lane roadway and its four at-grade crossings exceeds our expectations. Given the slower speeds, narrow width and four light controlled pedestrian crossings, expensive pedestrian bridges or tunnels are likely no longer necessary. Further study is needed to confirm this.
- Reducing the capacity of SFR may induce more people to take public transportation and walk or bike to get where they need to go. The long term success of this road diet is tied to the provision of better regional public transit and dedicated paths for active transportation.
- A fifth pedestrian crossing of SFR further west and closer to the reclaimed Speedway Headquarters may be worth considering.

High School Rowing

- Dropping new structures into an existing park should always be done as a last resort. I think the DCR has made a convincing case for this new facility but I have a number of design and operational concerns. In return for access to state land we should have high expectations
- Critically important is the case for equitable public access to the high school rowing program. What ongoing and well funded efforts will be made to ensure that rowing as a sport is made more accessible to all?
- The rowing facility should be large enough to accommodate the projected High School rowing programs from the start without boats and equipment encroaching onto park land or the facility sprawling in future years. How can this be assured? Note: Alt. 2 is considerably smaller than Alt 1, is further from the water, and has somewhat awkward circulation for crews carrying shells. Alt. 1 appears to have twice as much space as Alt 2 and is screened with planted mound which preserves the Shady Grove to some extent.

- What is to prevent this facility from sprawling in the future. Can proper design limit that potential?
- The 200 foot long timber landing for the rowing program is a public asset that should benefit other users at certain times of day or week. It should be available for occasional ferry service to the amphitheater's east entrance for instance. Will it be gated and locked or will it be accessible to the general public as is the case with the Community Rowing docks?

West End

- Consolidation of the community gardens at the west end of the park with new and improved support facilities for the gardeners is an essential move. The gardeners should be involved in its design. Direct access by car to the plots and better support facilities such as water and composting facilities are a big improvement over the current location. It may be possible to stockpile the existing top soil from the existing plots and transport it to the new location. I would love to see some commitment to public programming at the community gardens with educational displays and demonstration plots for example. Given that this is public land, equitable access to garden plots should be assured for all potential gardeners - old and new alike.
- The small isolated parking lot near the shore may be unsafe to enter and exit given the geometry of SFR. Consider consolidating parking at the Community Garden parking lot and requiring visitors to walk to the shore.
- The existing degraded woodland may not be worth attempting to reclaim. It grew up on a heavily disturbed work site and as a result has large amounts of invasive plant materials throughout. Consider starting with a blank slate by removing construction debris and importing quality soil, re-grading the site, and replanting with native plants. Further assessment is needed

Central Area

- The current location of the community gardens is problematic for a number of reasons and should be consolidated to the west end. Challenges include:
 - It is essentially a private use of public land at the heart of Herter Park. this is a very congested part of the park and should be dedicated to open and equitable public use.
 - It is difficult to access from the parking lot for older gardeners resulting in cars being parked illegally on the public path from time to time.
 - Though in a high visibility location at the entrance to the Herter Amphitheater it is very unkept in appearance and blocks views to the Charles River.
 - It is directly adjacent to the canal with likely impacts to water quality from fertilizers
 - We support the reconfigurations and reduction in pavement for the Artisan parking lot. A combination of best practices (pervious pavement, extensive tree cover, and well maintained bioswales) should be part of the design since this large lot drains directly to the river. Note: The parking lot should be managed so that park visitors have priority and commuters pay market rate for storing their vehicles during the day. Any revenue stream from parking fees or other private uses should support public programming in the park as managed by non-profit organizations.
 - We support multiple (10+) “view terraces” that allow visitors to be lower down the embankment and directly adjacent to the river. This kind of direct experience of the water is rare along the Charles River.
- *Amphitheater improvements (see separate statement from the FOHP)*

East Lawn

- The formal oval and the natural amphitheater looking west up river are wonderful idea. These will become natural gathering places for the public.
- Holding the river path back from the edge of the river and creating what looks like a wet meadow is an ecologically sound idea. How wet will that meadow be and how will it be maintained by the DCR maintenance crew? What is to prevent walkers and runners from wearing a desire line along the edge of the bank especially during big events like Head of the Charles? Will an informal path be inevitable and, if so, does it make sense to show a secondary softer surface path system closer to the bank?

East Meadow

- The substantial new open space created on the north side of Elliot Bridge will become a brand new “park within the park” for the Charles River reservation. Fabulous.
- The distinction between formal lawns, informal lawns, dry meadows and wet meadows is wonderful to see.

Park maintenance and operations

- Can operations step up to the level of care suggested by this complex master plan? I see several landscape types including formal lawns, informal lawn, bioswales, upland meadows, wet meadows, and woodlands
- What level of training, staff and equipment would it take to steward this new park? Is a maintenance plan and schedule part of the scope for the master plan?
- Would a crew with specialized skill be needed and could they be housed onsite or nearby?
- Could a a sustainability fund be established and manage by a non-profit in order to deploy a maintenance crew dedicated to Herter Park?

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