

Puffer's Pond 2020 Committee
MEETING
Thursday, April 15, 2010
Lower Meeting Room, Bangs Community Center
6:30 p.m.

Members Present: E. Jones, M. Sharma, E. Shopper, M. Gage, E. Hamin, J. Pistrang, B. Angus, J. Patulak, P. Muska

Staff: N. Malloy, D. Ziomek

M. Gage provided an update on the Puffer's Pond Breakfast to be held on June 5th. The Committee discussed possibly making a presentation at the breakfast or whether it would be better to invite the breakfast committee members to the Conservation Committee meeting where the Puffer's 2020 recommendations are presented. At a minimum, the work of the Puffer's Pond 2020 Committee will be advertised at the breakfast and be incorporated into the marketing of the breakfast.

Recommended Measures

The Committee had a brief discussion of how funds for recommended improvements would be obtained. N. Malloy indicated that grant monies would be sought for many of the projects. E. Hamin wondered whether the Committee should reconstitute itself after the current process as a Steering Committee that could assist with implementation and possibly fund raising efforts.

The Committee agreed that the first step is to finalize recommendations and resolve outstanding issues. Step 2 will be to prioritize measures. Step 3 will be to develop an implementation strategy. The implementation strategy is out of this Committee's scope.

E. Hamin read an email from A. Hayden into the record.

The Committee resumed the discussion of recommended measures, using the table of options as a guide.

- **Perimeter Trail:** The Committee discussed whether the Perimeter Trail should be moved up and away from the edge of the pond past the North Beach. There was a brief discussion of a boardwalk, as suggested in several of the UMass Studio presentations. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the Perimeter Trail be kept in its current location, with minor redirection if needed in sensitive area, and that vegetation, signage and natural fencing be used to protect sensitive areas.
- **Lester Trail:** The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the Lester Trail be redirected in sensitive areas, that traffic should be directed to the main trail, and that some

type of mulch or surfacing should be installed. The Committee agrees that this is a high priority issue.

- **State Street:** The Committee discussed the following three options for State Street: 1) one-way year round, 2) seasonal full closure, and 3) year round full closure. There were seven votes in favor of making the road one-way, with parking on one side, with a designated pedestrian path; one member abstained from the vote. No Committee members were in favor of closing the road entirely. The Committee then discussed whether to restrict parking in front of the pond between Sand Hill Road and the Cushman Brook. The Committee also discussed parallel parking vs. pull-in parking, and agreed that there are trade-offs between providing a larger amount of parking on the road and needing to build a separate parking lot to the east of the pond. The Committee needs additional information on how many on-street spots could be accommodated.

The final recommendation of the Committee with regard to State Street is: One-way traffic from west to east, with a drop off space. No parking from Sand Hill Road to Cushman Brook. There should be traffic calming measures in areas where there is no parking. There should be a designated pedestrian path along State Street. The Committee acknowledges that giving up parking from Sand Hill Road to Cushman Brook may require that a parking lot be installed to the east of the pond. The Committee prefers pull in parking starting at the Kevin Flood trail.

- **North Beach:** The discussion regarding the North Beach centered on whether to improve and maybe expand the beach or leave it in its current state. The Committee agreed that the meadow area was separate from the discussion of the beach. The Committee agreed that we should try and attract more people to the North Beach. The Committee discussed whether this would spread out the population of pond users or increase the overall population. The Committee discussed the following improvements at the beach: more gradual drop-off into the water, a wider view of the water from the beach, and a nicer sand area. The Committee voted on whether to recommend a larger and improved North Beach. 7 Committee members voted in favor, 1 member opposed.
- **North Beach Meadow Area:** The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that ecologically viable meadow flowers be planted in this area. The Committee also recognizes that the sumac is important to this area.
- **Fees:** The Committee agrees that fees are necessary at the pond. The Committee voted unanimously on the following structure: Fees will be generated through parking passes. The passes will be tied to vehicles; one pass per car. The passes will be required between April 1st and October 15th and between 10 am 8 pm. The fee should be different for Amherst residents and non-residents, although the non-resident fee cannot be more than twice as much as the resident fee. Day passes at a more expensive rate should be available. The Committee would like free day passes to be available at the public library and recommends that passes should be subsidized to low income users and seniors. There should be additional signage and enforcement along abutting residential streets to reduce illegal parking and users trying

to avoid getting the parking pass. It is essential that revenue from the parking pass goes directly to the Conservation Department.

The Committee voted on the fee structure. The Committee recommends unanimously that the annual pass should be \$40 for residents and \$80 for non-residents. Five Committee members recommended that the day pass should be \$8; two Committee members recommended that the day pass should be \$10.

The next regular Committee meeting is scheduled for May 6, 2010.

Submitted by B. Angus.