



Commission Members:

Chair: Michael Mertaugh, Vice Chair Jaime Parker, Amy Segal, Jon Kachmar, Marie Gray, Zack Anchors, Eleanor Sears, Beth Rabbitt, Stephen Bentsen, Michael Catania. **Staff:** Alex Marshall, Samara Ray

City of Portland **Parks Commission Minutes** **March 3, 2022** **5:00 PM**

I. Call to Order - Michael called the meeting to order

II. General Citizen Comment Period

George Rheault made a public comment about the renaming Bedford park controversy. He said the City used to have annual reports. He wondered what the City Parks Department did to research on this- he looked back and saw this park never had an official name and in the 1950's they started calling it Bedford. He wondered why we would disturb this.

III. Agenda Items

a. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes: February 3, 2022 Action Item (5 min)

Marie made a motion to approve the minutes Michael C seconded. The chair took a roll call vote and the minutes were passed unanimously.

b. New Business

i. Renaming of Farm Field in Payson Park to Ron A. Farr Field- Action Item (5 min)

Coach Farr has been part of the Portland Little League community since 1962 and the Little League community would like to dedicate the field to him. The Parks Department is in support of the name change. This is the first time this item has been brought to any City Council or Commission. Stephen asked if the Parks knew of any reason why it was called Farm Field. Alex said he did not think it was significant. Amy and Jon attested to the commitment that Ron Farr made to Portland Little League.

Michael made a motion for the Parks Commission to bring the proposed name change to the City Council and it passed unanimously.

ii. 165 Sheridan St. Site Plan - Action Item (10 min)

Alex said that as a department we do not support encroachment, they would not be supportive of the soil nail part of this project . There are unknown challenges along the road so they cannot endorse an encroachment.

The Chair asked Michael C about his experience in New Jersey where he previously worked. Michael C said there used to be no policy to consider this request. In New Jersey they were getting constant requests for small encroachments so they adopted a stringent policy. He does not see a compelling public purpose for this request, this would have a permanent impact on the park and it would invite similar requests.

Michael C made a motion to deny the request and recommend that the City Council would not approve this request. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted 9 in favor and on abstention.

Michael M. would like the Commission to develop guidelines on future encroachments. Michael C said he would be happy to work on a policy on encroachments that could be shared. Michael and Alex can have a check in about what type of document he would like to develop and work with Parks staff.

iii. Request City Council to declare 2022 the “Year of Portland Parks” in partnership with the Portland Parks Conservancy - Action Item (5 min)

Michael mentioned that there were a number of significant park related events coming up in Portland. Can we try to draw more attention to our Parks? There are a number of activities and he would like to draw the Council and the public's attention to these parks activities.

Nan mentioned that this is really to have the community recognize the importance of Portland Parks. C

Michael C made a motion to bring this proclamation to the City Council, Zach seconded. The motion passed.

c. Old Business

i. Tree Planting ARPA Grant Update (5 min)

Alex provided a quick recap. The Council granted \$250,000 to go towards tree canopy improvements. The goal is to plant a minimum of 80 trees in the Bayside neighborhood. This funding will allow hiring outside the city and take the burden off the City staff to get more trees in the ground.

ii. Update on Olmsted Bicentennial Events (10 min)

The kick off event will be a showing of the Documentary, “Designing of America” in Congress Square Park in April. Still developing more activities and will have activities all summer.

d. Communications and Updates

i. Parks Report (5min)

Nan discussed the proposal for North Deering Park. The Parks Conservancy is working with the Trust for Public Land- they are hoping to close by the end of December. The Parks Commission is working as a fundraiser for this property acquisition.

ii. Land Bank Commission Report (5)

HP Kensington parcels have already been purchased

March 7th City Council will vote on the purchase of the Hale Parcel, if they vote to approve it will be purchased by the Land Bank.

Bayside Community Garden approached the Land Bank about purchasing the land for the Community Garden.

iii. Update on Interpretive Sign Project (5 min)

Amy said that the Parks Initiatives Committee was meeting after this meeting this evening. Michael has had conversations with many resources. This committee will be looking to Nancy Mongomer and Daren Ranco for early guidance and they will be forming their steering committee and developing a schedule for the work in the subcommittee on how to move forward. They want to be able to build up on the work that the Parks Commission has already done. One idea is to start with a project that would begin to broaden. Amy is intrigued with adding language to signs. Amy wanted to comment that her term is ending in June and she wanted to offer as a volunteer to keep the work up with the committee. This could be a multi- stage endeavor.

iv. Committee Updates (10 min)

Zach touched base with the Commission about the GreenSpace gathering. There is a lot of interest in holding the Green Space gathering outdoors. Typically the event is in May but they are thinking of June for better weather. The date would be June 2nd. The event would be about trees with Potentially asking Jeff Tarling to present or speak about and the Co-op Planting program and Tree Planting Surge. Jeff and his crew could actually plant a tree and the responsibility for tree planting possibly.. This is seen as an opportunity for Friends Groups that have been especially active in tree planting.

Michael asked if anyone had an issue with the date. Amy said that she may have some documents that would be helpful to look at in terms of tree planting. Beth would not be able to attend on June 2nd but wanted the Commission to consider the diversity of experience and the role of students and people that may have unique perspectives.

Michael M. shared that the Finance Committee has not been active.

e. Commissioner requests for Agenda Items

There were no requests.

IV. Adjournment of Parks Commission March meeting 6:30 PM

Michael adjourned the meeting.

V. Parks Initiatives Committee Meeting 6:30 PM-7:30 PM