



In Attendance: Commission Members: Chair Cynthia Loebenstein, Vice Chair Michael Mertaugh, Dory Waxman, Colette Bouchard, Amy Segal, Caitie Whelan and Marie Gray. City Staff: Sally DeLuca, Alex Marshall and Alli Carroll.

**City of Portland Parks Commission
Thursday, November 7, 2019, 5:00PM
389 Congress Street, Rm 24, Portland, Maine**

I. General Citizen Comment Period

Carol Schiller requested a conversation with Sally DeLuca, Jon Jennings and Ethan Hipple about the want of electricity and lighting in Longfellow Park. She expressed that at the last event held at the park, generators had to be brought in in order for them to have a sound system. She would like to continue to activate the park but feels electricity is needed to do so successfully. Sally and Cynthia will follow up with Carol regarding a meeting.

George Rheault would like to see a copy of the letter to the National Park Service regarding being out of compliance with the Land and Water Conservation Fund. He also suggested that the Commission share the rules of shooting game in Portland now that is hunting season.

II. Agenda Items

Cynthia introduced Interim Parks Director, Alex Marshall to the Commission.

a. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes October 3, 2019

Amy motioned to accept the meeting minutes of October 3rd, 2019. Marie seconded. Motion passed with six in favor. Michael abstained.

b. New Business

i. Friends of Congress Square Park

Bree Lacasse of the Friends of Congress Square Park and Caitlin Cameron, Urban Designer at the City of Portland, Planning and Urban Development Department presented a powerpoint presentation about the Congress Square Park Redesign to the Commission. This process began in 2013 when the City started a visioning process. This led to public forums where the public and project partners, the City of Portland, Friends of Congress Square Park, and Portland Public Art Committee, could weigh in and pick the landscape designer and sculpture artist. The landscape design firm WRT and artist Sarah Sze were chosen to develop design concepts for the intersection, park, and public art commission. Curvilinear designs are being used to offset the linear side of the buildings and streets. Patrick Colena is the horticulturist on the team. The goal is to make year round appeal.

Phase A: Will have target construction dates of July 2020-June 2021 to work on the intersection, roadway, traffic signals, crosswalks and sidewalks.

Phase B: Will work on the Congress Square Park and Portland Museum of Art Plaza at a later date.

ii. Back Cove Update from Public Works

Brad Roland, Senior Project Engineer of the Water Resource Division of Public Works presented to the Commission. His goal is to prevent sewage from going into Casco Bay. He presented images and maps of sewer overflows throughout Portland. Next project is storage tanks. The Back Cove South Storage Project will add a 3.5 million gallon storage tank under the Preble Street soccer fields and a facility control building. This size of the building is not determined yet but is expected to be small. This project will restore the playing fields at a higher elevation to assist with tidal inundation. The project will install a new drainage system from Back cove to Marginal Way providing additional storm capacity to the Franklin Street corridor. Backflow prevention will be installed on the system preventing high tides from inundating the Bayside area. Landscape decisions are years away but meetings are set up with City Arborist, Jeff Tarling. The next public meeting regarding this project is December 4th, 2019 at 5:30PM at City Hall, Room 24.

c. Communications/Updates

i. Subcommittee Updates

Parks Initiative Subcommittee: They are working towards interpretive signage at Fort Gorges and Riverton Trolley Park. They also did a lot of research regarding the names of parks and discussed renaming a park after someone of color. Staff suggested to not change the name of a current park but instead open that conversation up in future namings. Sally would love the history of the names of parks for the website. She also suggested that the next time there is a chance to name a park, Parks Commission could make a formal recommendation to Council to consider other histories and demographics in the naming.

Finance Subcommittee: They met with Sally and Alex. They discussed exploring how to work with Friends Groups to open communications regarding annual financial information for park improvements.

Annual Report Subcommittee: The last annual report needs to go to Council. Alli will get it on a Council agenda in December.

Outreach Subcommittee: They are talking about possible speakers for the Green Space Gathering.

ii. Parks Report

The Historic Preservation Committee and Parks Commission will meet together to review the Western Prom Master Plan. Potential dates are January 8th or 9th, 2020. Those present can do the 9th. Staff will confirm actual meeting time and place with Commissioners when it is finalized.

Alex explained the black tarping over Franklin Meadow off of Franklin Street. It is a solar tarp. The purpose is to kill the grass underneath to then plant new wildlife and meadow. Signs will be going up soon.