



Commission Members:

Baxter Miatke, Robert Foster, Daniel Herzlinger, Patrizia Bailey (Chair), Simon Rucker, Jon Kachmar, Brian Wasser, Anna Trevorrow (City Councilor)

City of Portland
Land Bank Commission Agenda

September 13, 2023

5:00 PM

On the second Wednesday of the month at 5:00 pm, the Portland Land Bank Commission will hold a meeting remotely using Zoom.

The Land Bank Commission will conduct this meeting remotely via Zoom pursuant to the Remote Meeting Policy adopted by the Land Bank Commission. Allow your computer to install the free Zoom app to get the best meeting experience. If you are not able to attend live either in person or via Zoom, a recording will be available in the [Agenda Center](#) following the meeting.

For public comment, you will need to use the "raise your hand" feature. To raise your hand via the telephone, please hit *9. You will be unmuted by the host when it is time for public comment.

Please use the link below to join the webinar:

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Webinar ID: 984 9724 8698

- I. Call to Order
- II. Citizen Comment Period
 - i. Emailed Citizen Comment
- III. Agenda Items
 - i. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes: June 14, 2023
 - ii. New Business

The Land Bank Commission is responsible for identifying and protecting open space resources within the City of Portland. The commission seeks to preserve a balance between development and conservation of open space important for wildlife, ecological, environmental, scenic or outdoor recreational values.



- a. Secretary's Report
 - b. Treasurer's Report
 - iii. Old Business
 - a. Update on hand carry boat launch - Baxter Miatke
 - b. Update on North Deering Park - Ethan Hipple
 - iv. Communications and Parcel Updates
 - a. Parks Commission Report
 - b. Parks Division Report
 - v. Commissioner requests for Agenda Items
- IV. Adjournment

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Madeline Groeger <mgroeger@portlandmaine.gov>

Observations On the 2023 City of Portland Parks CIP Process

1 message

'Karen Snyder' via Parks Commission <parkscommission@portlandmaine.gov>

Wed, Sep 6, 2023 at 11:58 AM

Reply-To: karsny@yahoo.com

To: "parkscommission@portlandmaine.gov" <parkscommission@portlandmaine.gov>, LandBank <landbank@portlandmaine.gov>

Dear Park Commissioners and Land Bank Commissioners,

In 2014, The "Save the Park" Referendum" was passed because the City Councilors at that time attempted to sell public land called Congress Square Park to a developer. This 2014 referendum that passed was designed to install greater check and balances in order to keep the city owned park land from being sold to a commercial business or commercialized.

However, now in 2023, it appears the same system that was approved by voters in 2014 which was installed to protect the parks systems from commercial business is now being used to commercialize the park system from within the systems designed to protect it. Unfortunately, this is especially true for the Eastern Prom. ***From my research, there is NO other historic park system where food trucks are permanently installed 7 days a week. Only in Portland is this type of commercialization to the park system being allowed.***

Evidence of this attempt to commercialize the park system can be seen in the way non-transparent way City of Portland Parks CIP process is currently designed by the timeline of events below.

Timeline of City of Portland 2023 Parks Dept CIP Process:

1. April 6, 2023- Parks Commission Meeting

- CIP discussion with no attachment project detail.
- Parks Commission • City of Portland Meetings & Agenda Portal • CivicClerk

2. May 6, 2023- Parks Commission Meeting

- CIP discussion with no CIP project detail except for Hadlock Field.
- Parks Commission • City of Portland Meetings & Agenda Portal • CivicClerk

3. June 1, 2023 - Parks Commission Meeting

- No discussion on CIP
- Parks Commission • City of Portland Meetings & Agenda Portal • CivicClerk

4. June 23, 2023- Parks Dept sent out email to ***The Friends of the Parks system and Neighborhood organizations*** wanting them to rank the proposed CIP projects in the Parks with no detail as to what the proposed projects consists of. (See following google drive link of letter) https://docs.google.com/document/d/1dxBm8biTgrl_Djv9DxMqTD_wyWPS1bld/edit?usp=sharing&oid=104030899245828451031&rtpof=true&sd=true

5. **July 6, 2022 - Parks Commission Meeting** was canceled.
 - Parks Commission: CANCELLED • City of Portland Meetings & Agenda Portal • CivicClerk
 - No opportunity to address with Parks Commission the June 25th email that was due on July 21st.
6. **July 21, 2023** - Parks Departments deadline for feedback to prioritize CIP Parks proposals that had no project detail.

It is to be noted for Eastern Prom, this year was a surprise \$2.75 million proposal allocated to Eastern Prom which was to make Cutter street ADA compliant although it appears this proposal is basically under the guise to install the food truck plaza in a more permanent capacity in order to commercialize the park system even more than it already is.

This \$2.75 million proposal was a graduate student end of term project which the Park Dept used as the basis for justifying the Cutter St ADA improvements. The following link provides the student project proposal detail that was used in the CIP process to justify the Cutter St improvements. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DkdbgaKvc6MK-Z_RuJaRsmH6t_PJQvmx/view?usp=sharing

As one can see above, the City of Portland Parks Dept CIP process was stretched out, opaque, no place for residents to view any of the project detail in an efficient since it was never attached in the earlier Parks Commission meetings. This most concerning part of this process was the short and hurried timeline to request CIP project prioritization of under a month for any Friends of Park or Neighborhood organization to barely meet one time and discuss, during the summer which knowingly most residents are at their busiest time of year and infrequently in meetings.

The US park systems are more important than ever and below is the Trust for Public Land definition. [Our Mission: Trust for Public Land \(tpl.org\)](https://www.trustforpublicland.org/our-mission)

Quality parks and green spaces are fundamental for sustaining equitable, resilient communities. Access to nature and the outdoors—close to home, in the cities and communities where people live—is a matter of health, equity, and justice. That's why we work alongside communities across the country to create, protect, and steward the nature-rich places that are vital to human well-being.

We're driven by four commitments: equity, health, climate, and community.

Below is the City of Portland Parks Commission mission statement as I don't see commercialization of the park system as a good steward practice.

CITY OF PORTLAND PARKS COMMISSION MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Portland Parks Commission is to advocate for the enhancement and stewardship of our parks and open spaces, to review and propose projects that impact parks and open spaces and recommend appropriate action, to foster collaboration among park users and the City, to promote public access and enjoyment of our parks and open spaces, and to advocate for public and private funding for parks and open spaces. Enjoy Portland for Life!

Source: Parks Commission | Portland, ME - Official Website (portlandmaine.gov)

I can only "hope" in the future the groups which are supposed to protect the parks from all types of commercialization begin to focus on respecting the natural and community aspect that is essential to park systems and not just seen as a tool for commercialization which only corrupts and pollutes the park system.

Regards,

Karen Snyder

Waterville St Resident.



Commission Members:

Chair Pat Bailey, Jayne Foley, Daniel Herzlinger, Robert Foster, Jon Kachmar, Simon Rucker, Baxter Miatke, Brian Wasser, and City Councilor Anna Trevorrow

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June 14, 2023

5:00 PM

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Webinar ID: 984 9724 8698

- I. Call to Order
- II. Citizen Comment Period
 - No comments
- III. Agenda Items
 - i. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes: May 10, 2023
 - Minutes were passed unanimously.

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ii. New Business

a. Secretary's Report

- Simon Rucker updated the Google Drive, primarily with hand carry boat launch updates.

b. Treasurer's Report

- The report was deferred due to the treasurer not being present.

iii. Old Business

a. Update from Baxter Miatke on hand carried boat launch discussion

- Simon Rucker gave a brief update in Baxter's absence. Still waiting on an estimate from EZ Dock to build out the budget.
- Ethan Hipple asked about getting a quote for a fixed versus a floating dock or longer dock for low tide. Baxter does not believe there will be a significant difference in cost.
- Simon: How often do people go out at low tide? Do we need a dock that goes out to the lowest tide area? We can get public input from paddleboarders, kayakers, etc.
- Jon touched base with Harbor Master.

b. Update from Ethan Hipple on North Deering Park (5 minutes)

- Today was the closing for North Deering Park. \$800k purchase price was funded by several different sources, including the Land Bank.
- 24 acres, including athletic field and open space
- Next phase is developing trails
- Grand opening later this summer or fall

iv. Communications and Parcel Updates

a. Parks Division Report

- Ethan reported on vacancies in the department, some key openings are for City Arborist and Director of Cemeteries and Historical Projects
- New position included in the budget is Assistant Parks Director to oversee operations, such as signage, fencing, trail repairs, etc.
- Encampment update: since the report was written the number of encampments has increased from 132 to 184 (some on Land Bank properties, such as Fore River Preserve), Encampment Crisis Response Team (ECRT) focused on finding shelter and housing opportunities
- Jon to Ethan: Are you the only Parks & Recreation employee on the ECRT? Yes, Ethan heads the Logistics Committee. It is a collaborative effort involving different organizations and departments.

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b. Parks Commission Report

- Jon: Jon will be more involved in the Land Bank Commission and step back from the liaison role between the Parks and Land Bank Commissions.
- Ethan described the role of the Parks Commission: advises the Parks Department on what projects should be prioritized in the Capital Improvement Plan based on community outreach, hosts Green Space Gathering, advise on major policy changes within Parks
- Jon explained the role of liaison – communicates relevant information between the Parks and Land Bank Commissions.
- Robert Foster self-nominated for the role of liaison. Liaison will need to be voted in by both the Land Bank and Parks Commissions, since they are a voting member in both. The City Clerk will be consulted to determine the appropriate steps for Robert to become liaison.
- Robert Foster was voted in unanimously for the role of liaison by the Land Bank Commissioners.
- Other updates from Jon: new weekly concert series on the Western Prom starting July 12, informed Commissioners about Brad Roland's presentation on the Back Cove South Storage Facility project
- Discussion about restoration of Capisic Pond area
- Jon discussed parcels of interest: Davis Farm property (12 acres, Jon is waiting to meet with out-of-state owner), parcel adjacent to many Land Bank properties off of Coolidge Avenue (could be used for parking/access to the other properties)

v. Commissioner requests for Agenda Items

- No requests

IV. Adjournment

- Unanimous vote to adjourn the meeting.

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