

## 1. Parks Commission Meeting

### Documents:

[PARKS COMMISSION AGENDA 02012017.PDF](#)  
[PARKS COMMISSION MINUTES 11022017.PDF](#)  
[PARK COMMISSION AND LAND BANK REPORT 2018-02.PDF](#)  
[PARK COMMISSION AND LAND BANK REPORT 2018-01.PDF](#)



**Commission Members:** Dory Waxman, Chair, Jaime Parker, Vice Chair, Councilor Belinda Ray, Carol Hutchins, Craig Lapine, Cynthia Loebenstein, Meri Lowry, Michael Mertaugh, Nathan Robbins, Chelsea Malacara, Colette Bouchard, Zack Anchors and Amy Segal.

**Parks Commission Agenda**  
**February 1, 2017**  
**5:00 PM**  
**Portland City Hall**  
**389 Congress Street, Room 24**

*The Mission of the Portland Parks Commission is to advocate for the enhancement and stewardship of our parks and open spaces. Review and propose projects that impact parks and open spaces and recommend action. Foster collaboration among park users and the City. Promotes public access and enjoyment. Advocate for public and private funding for parks and open spaces. Enjoy Portland for Life*

- |      |                                                                   |          |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| I.   | General Citizen Comment Period                                    | (5 min)  |
| II.  | Agenda Items ( <i>public comment taken on action items only</i> ) |          |
| a.   | Acceptance of November Meeting Minutes                            | (5 min)  |
| b.   | New Business                                                      | (20 min) |
| i.   | Pesticide Update                                                  |          |
| c.   | Communications/Updates                                            | (60 min) |
| i.   | Parks Conservancy – Ethan/Sally                                   |          |
| ii.  | Subcommittee Updates                                              |          |
| iii. | Parks Division Updates - Ethan                                    |          |
| d.   | Commissioner requests for Agenda Items                            | (5 min)  |

*City of Portland Commissions are not required to take public comment under FOAA and are Ordinance is silent regarding the duties of the Commission. The Commission has the discretion to not allow or allow public comment during its meetings, including the authority to limit the duration of comments. Since the Commission makes recommendations to the City Council, public comment is available at that level.*



**In attendance:** Commission Members: Dory Waxman, Chair, Councilor Belinda Ray, Carol Hutchins, Craig Lapine, Cynthia Loebenstein, Michael Mertaugh, Nathan Robbins, Chelsea Malacara, Colette Bouchard, Zack Anchors and Amy Segal. Staff Members: Ethan Hipple and Alli Carroll. Members of the Public: Alex Pozzy and George Rheault.

**Parks Commission Minutes**  
**November 02, 2017, 5:00 PM**  
**Portland City Hall**  
**389 Congress Street, Room 24**

**I. General Citizen Comment Period**

Alex Pozzy of North Deering began the public comment period. He was here last month and brought up the fact that the City of Portland needs a lot more athletic fields. He believes very strongly that this is not an optional thing. The longer the City waits the harder it is because the population is growing. He brought 63 acres in the Stroudwater area to the Commission's attention. With new fields, he would like to bring disc golf to Portland.

George Rheault requests that the Commission's email gets put on agenda and that the meetings should be recorded. He said 22 Hope Avenue is a large subdivision on the planning board level but he is concerned that this has not been presented to the the Parks Commission members. He then went on the discuss the "10 Minute Walk to a Park" campaign. He said that not every 10 minute walk is equal and he would like to see the methodology behind this released to the public. Finally, Bayside Learning Community serves about 30 children and has been without a playground since the school has been relocated. The City should consider creating a playground for them.

**II. Agenda Items**

**a. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes October 05, 2017**

Michael gave Alli minor corrections. Belinda Ray moved to accept the minutes as amended of the October 5th, 2017 Parks Commission meeting, Dory seconded. Passed with 8 in favor. Craig, Cynthia and Nathan abstained.

**b. New Business**

**i. Rake and Bake Invite**

Ethan described the event as a team building exercise for the employees. This event occurred many years ago and now the City is bringing it back. It would be nice to see the Parks Commission there. It will be at Western Cemetery. RSVP with Alli.

**c. Communications/Updates**

**i. Subcommittee Reports**

The Community Outreach Subcommittee (Zack, Jaime, Amy and Sally) met. Their focus is on the months ahead and engage with the friends groups. They had drafted a letter to them inviting them to a meeting for an opportunity to present particular issues or ideas, and to remind them of what the Parks Commission does and how they can work together. They would like the Commission's input on the letter. Amy is working on the email list to check that they have every group. Alli will put both onto Google Drive for everyone to access easily. The Commission showed concern of the groups expecting them to fix all of their problems. Ethan said that it is always important to hear from the groups but to balance that with the bigger picture. It would also be important for the groups to present what they are currently doing in the parks.

The Parks Initiative Committee (Cynthia, Carol, Jaime, and Ethan) met. Ethan had an idea for an initiative and they would like the blessing before it goes off. They would research different places that have a correlation to Baxter Trail and develop an online trail similar to the Forest City Trail.

Michael reported that the Finance Subcommittee did not have a chance to meet as a whole but Dory and he met to discuss the focus of the group. There are two broad missions: one is fundraise and the second is to make changes in the mobilization of funds. Haven't had a meeting but met with dory about the focus of the group. Dory and Chelsea will help with fundraising. They are adding Craig to the subcommittee.

Dory mentioned Meri's letter that she had emailed to the Commission since she couldn't attend this month's meeting. She had suggested that the Parks Commission create a moratorium on raising money or writing grants while the Parks Conservancy gets their feet on the ground. Potentially a two year waiting period. Dory has sat at a few of the Blue Sky Commission and says it may be premature to make that kind of decision. She believes that they should wait until the Blue Sky Commission comes to the Parks Commission with a presentation of their definite plan for the future. Councilor Ray said the ordinance would have to be changed in order for them to create a moratorium.

Nathan reported that the Annual Report & Inventory Committee has not met. He has marked up the 2016 annual report and sent it to everyone. He did meet with Travis Wagner to get an understanding on how to go about this. The ordinance says they need to submit it to City Council so that should be our main focus. Councilor Ray proposed that because this report should be done now that we go to council and present last years and focus on one for next year. Questions came up about lining up the annual report with the budget and CIP process. Councilor Ray said that September would be a good time to present it so that the Council has a packet of information to be prepared for the CIP and budget process.

**ii. Pesticide Update - Ethan**

This is at Council level now. Right now, there are three year exemptions for public safety at high use athletic facilities. The golf course still has an exemption. Some of the practices, though, the City is already doing. Takes more time and labor so the City is looking at additional labor costs. This will first affect the City and then later, the citizens. Ordinance will not impact sales of pesticides but it will impact citizen use.

**iii. Monthly Parks Report - Ethan**

The Parks Division is cleaning up after the storm on Monday. There are 175 known locations where they are cutting down trees, and a lot of those locations have multiple trees or wires tangled up in them which means we need CMP to help but they have a lot of other priorities right now. Parks will hit the City district by district. This will take about a month. Priorities are streets, sidewalks, school routes, and then parks.

Fort Gorges project may need to go into next week. Getting closer and closer to finishing.

The City is 87% in compliance with the “10 Minute Walk to a Park Initiative” with the Trust for Public Land ([www.10minutewalk.org](http://www.10minutewalk.org)). This refers back to the Open Space Study (<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/14562>). 100% is the goal. We are currently working with Portland Trails on how the metrics were done and if it included trails. The Redlon Woods acquisition, if passed by City Council, would help increase our percentage, and fill in a gap that will help some of the Libbytown Neighborhood.

**iv. Blue Sky Commission Update**

Sally is currently at the Blue Sky Commission’s meeting. Ethan said that they have gone through bylaws and memorandum. They have been working on a lot of technicalities but things are moving along smoothly.

**d. Commissioner requests for Agenda Items**

Councilor Ray suggested adding Alex Pozzy and will get his contact information to Ethan.



Sally L. DeLuca  
Director  
Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

Ethan Hipple  
Deputy Director  
Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

### **Memorandum**

**TO:** Parks Commission and Land Bank Commission

**FROM:** Ethan Hipple, Deputy Director, Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department

**SUBJECT:** Parks Division Update

**DATE:** February 2018

#### **Park Manager Search**

Continuing national search for Park Manager for Portland's Park Division (Parks, Athletic Facilities, Playgrounds, Cemeteries, Forestry, Horticulture). Aiming to have someone in place by April. Position description at: <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/1107/Current-Job-Opportunities>

#### **Open Positions in Parks**

Recently filled Horticulture position that attracted over 60 applications. Currently hiring for an Arborist to join our Forestry division.

#### **Winter Parks Operations and Plowing**

Parks Division Staff are responsible for clearing of 120 miles of sidewalks, as well as school parking lots, fire stations, and city buildings. Crews have been kept very busy with a cold and snowy start to winter.

#### **Winter Recreation Map**

Created google map to provide real-time updates for skating and sledding conditions.

<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/1906/Winter-Recreation>

#### **Stormwater Projects in Parks**

Working with Stormwater Division concerning impacts to parks from multiple projects: Bedford Stormwater project will require multiple crossings of Back Cove Trail. Trail access will remain open with detours. Project starts Spring 2018.

Multi-million gallon stormwater detention tank will likely be installed under Preble St athletic field. Field will be unusable for up to two seasons, but the project will make it possible to raise the elevation of the field which will reduce or eliminate saltwater intrusion from storm surges. This will result in a greatly improved field with much better turf conditions. Project starts late Fall 2018.

#### **Budget Season**

Developing Parks, Recreation and Facilities budget to submit to City Manager and City Council.

#### **Congress Square Park Redesign**



Sally L. DeLuca  
Director  
Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

Ethan Hipple  
Deputy Director  
Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

The private fundraising committee has a solid timeline for private fundraising, and is actively recruiting distinguished board members to donate and solicit large gifts for this project. City staff are meeting with the group regularly to monitor progress and coordinate.

### **Portland Landing**

Planning continues with CIP request for 30% construction drawings and permitting. View the current plan here: <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/2011/Portland-Landing>

### **Loring Memorial Damage**

Loring Memorial damaged in third vehicle accident in 2 years, 2 of them OUI. Working with Traffic Division to install safeguards to reduce damage to memorial.

### **Cemetery GIS Project**

Cemetery staff working with with IT , GIS mapping sub-contractor to create cemetery mapping / online web site project. Will be ready for spring launch.

### **Parks Conservancy**

Inaugural meeting of Parks Conservancy Board. Provided overview of Parks system, negotiating details of draft MOU. The Board's first order of business will be to hire an Executive Director and to finalize MOU with City.

### **Pollinator Habitat**

Presented at annual meeting of Portland Pollinators, shared Department efforts at reducing pesticide use, increasing pollinator habitat, Golf Course innovation, and switch from annual display beds to perennial beds in many locations throughout the city.

### **Audubon Partnership**

Working with Eric Topper of Audubon concerning partnerships for 2018 projects: Western Prom meadow, Eastern Prom meadow, school collaborations.

### **Trail Projects**

Working with Student Conservation Association on securing a high school crew to do trail projects in Portland Parks summer 2018. Also have funding lined up to once again hire a Maine Conservation Corps crew to do projects in Portland. Met with Portland Trails to discuss 2018 trail priority projects on city property.

### **Fox Field Food Forest**



Sally L. DeLuca  
Director

Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

Ethan Hipple  
Deputy Director

Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

Met with East Bayside Neighborhood Association and City Legal Counsel concerning Fox Field Food Forest. Existing permit from Planning (2015) will allow installation of garden beds and Parks Division supports that. City will take this on as a city project, and EBNO will sign a 5 year maintenance MOU to maintain beds and small fruit trees.

### Shipping Containers in Parks

Met with Friends of Congress Sq Park and Architect to discuss guidelines for placing container to be used as storage and programming space in Congress Sq Park. This could be an innovative model for other parks as well for programming storage, small scale food/beverage for events, etc...

### Park Projects Update

Staff are working on the following funded CIP/Park Improvement projects:

- Cousins Memorial Reconstruction: out to bid
- Deering Oaks Playground Improvements: Zip line and net climber
- Evergreen Cemetery Stevens Ave Wall: 60% complete
- Fort Gorges Hazard Mitigation--Army Corps funded: 100% complete
- Fort Gorges Preservation Plan: Design complete.
- Futsal Court, Fox Field: Funded by CDBG, planning for Spring construction
- Hall School Playground: Design complete, staff will be managing construction
- Island Playground Improvements: funding secured, spring installation.
- Libbytown Community Garden: 100% complete
- Lincoln Park Fence Restoration: funding secure, design and specs 90%
- Lyman Moore Athletic Facility Drainage and Reconstruction: funding and design complete, out to bid, summer install.
- Park Signs: funding secured, spring install.
- Payson Playground improvements, summer install.
- Payson Softball Title IX restroom and locker room improvements: funding secured, spring installation

### "A Walk In the Park" Series

Our monthly series of Park walks and lectures continued with "Portland Parks, Past and Present" slideshow on December 6th at Ocean Gateway.

- Upcoming events: XC Ski through Evergreen, February 10
- More info at: <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/1990/A-Walk-In-The-Park-Tours-and-Talks>

### Baxter Trail

Site visit to fine-tune route, crossings, and interpretive signage for Baxter Trail honoring Mayor Baxter. The trail will run east to west from Baxter Boulevard, through Baxter Woods, to Evergreen Cemetery.

Portland, Maine



Yes. Life's good here.

Sally L. DeLuca  
Director  
Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

Ethan Hipple  
Deputy Director  
Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities



Sally L. DeLuca  
Director  
Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

Ethan Hipple  
Deputy Director  
Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

### Memorandum

**TO:** Parks Commission and Land Bank Commission

**FROM:** Ethan Hipple, Deputy Director, Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department

**SUBJECT:** Parks Division Update

**DATE:** January 2018

#### **Pesticide Ordinance**

City Council passed pesticide ordinance that included exemptions recommend by staff to protect our 20,000 valuable and beloved street trees, preserve biodiversity by eliminating invasive species, and preserving the viability of our highest use athletic fields and golf course. Of 721 park acres, 710 acres (98.5%) are already pesticide free prior to the passage of this ordinance.

#### **Cutter Street Middle Lot Winter Recreation Area**

Staff have closed Cutter Street middle parking lot to parking this winter and are maintaining as a winter recreation and sledding run-out area. Situated at the bottom of our very popular sledding hill on the Eastern Promenade, the parking lot serves as a natural run-out area for kids and adults on sleds, skis and snowboards, but when it is filled with cars and snow banks, can create a very hazardous situation with sledders dodging parked cars and bailing out to avoid hazardous blocks of ice and snow. The lot will be closed to parking (and snow ban parking) throughout the winter to provide a safer sledding run-out area for the hundreds of sledders, skiers and snowboarders who use our iconic Eastern Promenade for winter fun. The lower and upper Cutter Street lots remain available for general parking and snow ban parking, and the Eastern Promenade road is also available for snow ban parking, from Congress St to Pole #33 (near East End School).

#### **Ice Skating Ponds**

Deering Oaks, Payson Park, Ludlow Pond and Riverside Skating Ponds all open for business and groomed daily.

#### **Winter Recreation Map**

Created google map to provide real-time updates for skating and sledding conditions.

<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/1906/Winter-Recreation>

#### **Redlon Woods**

Majority of city parcels in Redlon Woods accepted into Land Bank by City Council. Work continues on acquisitions to complete this open space preserve near Brighton and Stevens.

#### **Dog Waste Enforcement**



Sally L. DeLuca  
Director  
Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

Ethan Hipple  
Deputy Director  
Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

Designated multiple Parks Supervisors as constables so that they may issue tickets to dog ordinance violations. Coordinating training.

### **Cousins Memorial Out to Bid**

Jacob Cousins Memorial Restoration project going out to bid. This project will create a small plaza at the intersection of Eastern Promenade and Cutter St, and will involve moving the existing hidden Jacob Cousins Memorial to the plaza. The Cousins Memorial honors Jewish veterans and their contributions during times of conflict. Funding for the project from City of Portland and Friends of Eastern Prom.

### **Fort Gorges Special Event Planning**

Site visits to Ft Gorges with Event Permitting staff, police, fire and legal to discuss possibility of future special event permitting on the island. Groups have been requesting use of this park site for special events and city staff are evaluating safety, egress, fall hazard, crowd control and other factors to determine if this will be feasible.

### **“A Walk In the Park” Series**

Our monthly series of Park walks and lectures continued with “Portland Parks, Past and Present” slideshow on December 6th at Ocean Gateway.

- Upcoming events: XC Ski through Evergreen, February 10
- More info at: <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/1990/A-Walk-In-The-Park-Tours-and-Talks>

### **Evergreen Cemetery Wall (Stevens Ave)**

Disassembling of stone wall on Stevens avenue complete, new wall construction ongoing.

### **Winter Sidewalk Plowing**

Parks Division Staff are responsible for clearing of 120 miles of sidewalks, as well as several school parking lots, fire stations, and city buildings. Crews have been kept very busy with a cold and snowy start to winter.

### **Hall School Playground**

Parks staff spending more time coordinating construction management for new Hall School playground.

### **Baxter Trail**

Developing plans, route, and interpretive signage for Baxter Trail honoring Mayor Baxter. The trail will run east to west from Baxter Boulevard, through Baxter Woods, to Evergreen Cemetery.

### **Skatepark Expansion**

Convened Skatepark committee meeting: developing fundraising, special event, grant writing plans.

Portland, Maine



Yes. Life's good here.

Sally L. DeLuca  
Director  
Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

Ethan Hipple  
Deputy Director  
Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities