

**Rose F. Kennedy Greenway
Leadership Council Meeting
October 20, 2009
4:00 PM**

MINUTES

Present: Mike Cantalupa, Dawn Chavez, Donna Freni, Francine Gannon, Bill Lane, Dan Nuzzo, Dave Seeley, Rick Sullivan, Ann Thornburg

Staff: Nancy Brennan, Linda Jonash, Priscilla Bradley

Guests: Sy Mintz, Ted Furst, Ann Fanton, Shirley Kressel, Chris Fincham, Blanca Batteau, Matt Conti, Caitlin Marlotte, John Romano, John McQueen

Welcome and Review of Previous Meeting

Chair Ann Thornburg reviewed two items from previous meetings. First she briefly reviewed the Conflict of Interest discussion. Both the Conservancy Board and GLC members are unpaid volunteers – not paid employees or elected officials of public entities. In this circumstance where volunteers are involved, the key to a good conflict of interest practice is disclosure. She noted that the draft policy is on the Conservancy website for comments. After review of any comments, the Council will vote on the policy at another meeting.

Ann noted that she would like to have more input about the role of the GLC as a conduit to and from the community. She encouraged people to use the comments email to send their input. She will also call each member of the GLC and gather individual feedback and will present a summary of these conversations at a future meeting.

Overview of Park Enhancements

Linda Jonash noted that the purpose of the meeting was educational and to provide an overview of all of the potential park enhancements for the Greenway. The presentation includes not only those that are fully funded, permitted and about to get underway, but some proposed as interim uses. Still others are in the concept stage. This is the full list of active park enhancements, some proposed by the Conservancy, some by others.

All of the projects proposed are within the parks. Some are corridor-wide projects such as signage, shade and park furniture. Others are parcel-specific.

The Conservancy wanted to review the full list with the Leadership Council so as to look at the Greenway comprehensively and put the whole palette of projects in front of the group. Many need funding; some need a considerable amount. The Leadership Council's input is needed on the projects themselves and for prioritization of what is needed first and what can wait.

The Conservancy has several objectives that they use to evaluate all projects: They must add value to the Greenway, have quality design, be sustainable, flexible, speak to the continuity of the parks, and have a sound budget.

The projects reviewed in order were:

Greenway Park Signage

Greenway Park Shade Study

Both of these projects have a high priority for the Conservancy because they address elements that are basic to visitors' use and enjoyment of the parks. The Conservancy is looking for funding for the signage project, which would provide wayfinding information and a unifying, branding design element throughout the parks.

The shade study proposes a variety of treatments for areas of the parks that would be far more enjoyable to visitors if protected from the sun. Pros, cons, costs and maintenance for each of the proposed treatments were shown. The intent is to begin a public process to help with decision making on shade structures.

Parcel 12 Urban Nursery Project

This is an interim project for the unimproved ramp parcel the Boston Museum originally planned to use. A sustainable Urban Tree Nursery would transform this highly visible site into a productive, attractive and educational space that will have a bold physical impact. The Conservancy is looking for partners to work on this project.

Armenian Heritage Park

Harbor Pavilion Park

These two projects have been developed by other organizations. For both projects, construction is planned to begin either late this fall or early next spring.

Dewey Square Parks Initiative

These parcels now host temporary gardens that were installed in a Sub-License between the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and the Conservancy within a License agreement between the MTA and the Conservancy.

As the district around the Greenway develops, there are new opportunities that did not exist in the 1990's. With more development on the adjacent edges and the Seaport area now much more robust, Boston has an opportunity to think about creating a wonderful green space amenity that also creates positive social and civic connections in these spaces.

Significant subsurface maintenance issues exist on these parcels (Parcel 19, 21 and 22) - soil compaction, drainage, grading and contouring. Over time these issues must be remediated.

Linda Jonash reviewed some early ideas for temporary park features proposed by Maryann Thompson Architects and Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, landscape architects, to further improve the park as the maintenance work is completed.

- Completing landscape improvements;
- Experimenting with interim, temporary structures on Parcels 21 and 22 to support needed or desired park amenities, farmers market activities, free public programming, educational programs, etc.; and,
- Evaluating the results: what works and what doesn't. Share the results with the public and public agencies.

On Parcel 22 (closest to South Station), for example, the Conservancy recommends both strengthening the landscaping framework and introducing an open-air performance/activity space using sustainable technologies, collaborative partnerships, and a design approach that is driven by public program opportunities

This is a new way of approaching park improvements because any structures will be temporary without permanent foundations. Also the ideas have been conceived to allow components to progress incrementally as approvals and funding are secured..The Boston Redevelopment Authority, within its responsibility for land use decisions, has supported this interim approach as it considers further master planning for these parcels.

Chinatown Park

Several projects are currently planned or proposed for this area including Mary Soo Hoo Park renovations, the 120 Kingston Project, and shade structures. The Conservancy is trying to get everyone talking to one another so that the planning and work can involve how each piece affects the whole.

For all of the *Conservancy proposed* projects, Leadership Council and community input is needed. It will be important to talk about which are priorities and which are not. Funding will be sought to implement.

Following the presentation, the Leadership Council and members of the public asked questions and provided input – **Attachment A**, on page 5 of this document.

Discussion of Community Involvement and the Leadership Council's Role

Ann Thornburg posed questions to the members of the Leadership Council. What is the best way for the GLC to be involved in this process? What is the most constructive way to involve the community?

The discussion included the following:

Where are the pros and cons of how these projects get discussed and approved? What are the pros and cons of each method we might use? It doesn't require the entire GLC attending every meeting with the government agencies, but whoever does needs to be able to provide the input and feedback to the GLC.

We need to know more about the projects before we can tell what the process should be. It needs to be visually presented. It has to answer the questions:

Where is it?

How big is it?

Is it fundable?

What's the priority, considering the economy and other measures?

What is the timeline for projects?

What is the timeline of priorities?

What has been funded?

What are the appropriate things to ask for?

We need to help the Conservancy get their job done.

How do we become integral to the process?

How do we know what's happening?

How do we give input?

How does it come back so we can work cooperatively and cohesively?

More definition to the process for the review of these proposed projects would be presented after Linda Jonash meets with the governmental agencies to obtain their input. The Conservancy staff will develop the agendas for meetings in 2010 with the GLC for our review and commentary around proposed timing and process.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM.

ATTACHMENT A

Overall Greenway

1. There are a lot of Spring 2010 construction projects-Armenian Heritage Park, the Harbor Pavilion, the Urban Nursery, Signage. This can cause a lot of upheaval and coordination problems.
2. Can we afford expansion? How do we put our arms around it?
3. When looking at this meeting an education process, I can't help but react to the images. But that takes us off the process path we are on. If we had the schematic without the images it would be less distracting and easier to talk about process.
4. Thank you for having this long and involved discussion. The Federal requirement for these projects is that they have to have City/State/Community involvement. There needs to be Community representation. The GLC might figure out who among you is the best representative of the community for each of these projects.

Dewey Square Parks

1. Do we know how to correct the technical issues, such as irrigation and grading, in these parks?
2. When the Conservancy inherited the parks from the MTA, was there any conduit back to the MTA for remediation?
3. Would we be approaching the legislature for more funding for these since this is technically a development parcel, or is the Conservancy expected to take care of any problems and improvements?
4. I have a fear that the interim design, intended to be temporary, will become permanent.
5. If you think that a presentation like this will cover Dewey Square because it's an interim project, you may be mistaken. One of my primary goals is to champion public interest. If you are trying to do things on a temporary basis then it feels like an end-around a more rigorous process.
6. I think this is two projects – maintenance issues and the programming projects.
7. It feels like a downgrade.
8. It needs benches and seating.
9. Also there is the lack of an edge on the west side of the Wharf District – you should study this.

Urban Nursery

1. I remember hearing about this awhile ago, but I don't remember any other meetings about it. Greater attention should be given to this than some of the others because it is such a prominent place. More needs to be done, especially on the side where nothing is planned that faces the neighborhood.
2. Another five or ten years could go by before the ultimate fate of the parcel is decided. It's important for the interim use to be an important upgrade. It needs to feel part of the whole Greenway corridor and not something one off.
3. Is it really a development parcel? This is not a park, but it should not be overlooked.
4. Can you get some money from the legislature for this? It is an eyesore.

5. For an interim solution, the Urban Nursery looks like an elegant solution.
6. I like the concept but it really needs to be thought about. What will it look like the second or third year? It might be horrible.

Armenian Heritage Park

Shouldn't a GLC member have been at the last meeting about this project?

We need to know when something is contrary to community interest.