



Neponset River Greenway Council Meeting

Wednesday, July 1, 2015, 7:00 – 9:00 pm

St. Brendan's Church, 589 Gallivan Blvd., Dorchester, MA

AGENDA

1. Welcome & Introductions

How will we be affected by DCR retirements?

2. Greenway Planning and Design – David Ouelette, and Robert M. DiRamio, DCR

- Segment 1 – Martini to Neponset Valley Pkwy (*under construction*)
 - Opening ceremony? Please! Is work really done?
 - Granite Ave stabilized soil section – Girlz Roll rode the pavement June 17
 - Post at Granite Ave. intersection sticks up enough to be dangerous and interfere with plowing.
- Segment 2 – Central Ave to Mattapan Sq
 - Progress over the past month
- Port Norfolk Park
 - How much of the concrete breakup is complete? What's next?
- Segment 3 – Victory Rd to Morrissey Blvd (National Grid / rainbow gas tank)
 - Planning and permitting status
- Segment 4 – Tenean Beach to Victory Rd
 - Strategy for design, funding, working with MassDOT
 - Ralph Bruno, of Venezia Restaurant, is proposing to build 200 condos across from Tenean Beach
- Future segments to start planning:
 - Crossing Blue Hill Ave. Milton? Boston?
 - Neponset Valley Pkwy to Paul's Bridge
 - Fairmount to Dana Ave
 - Connecting to Morrissey/UMass

3. Greenway Management – Kevin Hollenbeck, DCR Neponset Stony Brook District Manager

- Kennedy Playground – Tasks and schedule to complete
- Trail tree root damage repair between Medway St. and Butler St.
- Dorchester Reporter: "Pope John Paul II Park: A picture of neglect" responses on back and at http://www.masspaths.net/neponset/dot_response201506.pdf
- Squantum Point as a 2024 Olympics Beach Volleyball site? http://www.bostonherald.com/news_opinion/local_coverage/2015/06/environmental_concerns_cloud_volleyball_site

4. Programs & Volunteers

- Reports on June 17 and 28 bike rides, June 27 Milton Music Festival & Fireworks
- Thursday, July 9: 6:00 pm Geology Walk at Milton Lower Falls.
- Martini Shell: Movies on Tuesdays July 7 – August 25, Boot Camp, Zumba, and more
- Saturday, July 25 9-4: 4th Annual Mattapan on Wheels Event
- Saturday, August 8 1-5: Tenean Beach Fun Day

5. NepWRA News

6. TTOR News

Upcoming Meetings – Meetings held first Wednesday of the month at 7:00pm

August 5, 2015	Foley Senior Residences, Mattapan
September 2, 2015	Milton Yacht Club, Milton
October 7, 2015	Hyde Park Police Station, Hyde Park
November 4, 2015	St. Brendan's Church, Dorchester

Issues on the trail? (non-emergency)

MassParks line: 617-626-1250, 0 for operator or email mass.parks@state.ma.us

Greenway Council Community Representatives: Jessica Mink, Maria Lyons, Martha McDonough, Paul Nutting, Vivian Ortiz, Ellie Spring, Lee Toma

To the Editor: Pope Park's beauty reflected in its natural state

Jun. 3, 2015

By Maria Lyons



Pope John Paul II Park: As seen from the Neponset River. Bill Forry photo

To the Editor:

I respectfully disagree with Judge James Dolan's remarks concerning Pope John Paul II Park (["A picture of neglect," Reporter, May 28](#)). The present conditions at Pope John Paul II Park are a reflection of the natural state of the riverfront/estuary ecosystem, modified to allow limited recreational use. The site is within the Neponset Estuary Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), designated in 1995, after substantial public input and review. This designation restricts the nature and intensity of activities permitted, in order to protect the ecosystem and wildlife habitat (M.G.L. c. 21A, 301 C.M.R. 12). In addition, the remediation of the Hallet Street landfill was completed using methods restricting future uses and allowed excavation. This precludes tree planting in much of the park, because the landfill cap may not be randomly pierced, in order to protect users from exposure to materials remaining underground onsite. The article unjustifiably attacks DCR, and supports modification to the site which are both impractical and inappropriate. DCR does in fact have a plan for selective mowing throughout the growing season, in order to support the natural riverfront ecology.

The Neponset Estuary is an important environment which must be protected. There are only a few areas around the Neponset that still have the marshes and natural wild lands that are meant to be there and support ocean, river and land ecosystems and wildlife habitats. The term "passive park" is often used in a pejorative manner, but the real beauty and success of PJP II lies in the fact that it represents a rare space within the City of Boston where nature is permitted to run its own course. Certainly the people of Dorchester deserve such a place.

There are already many activities going on in the park. There is a soccer league, a playground, walking and bike trials and activities sponsored by the DCR, such as Canoe Trips, Movie Night, The Pumpkin Float, Easter Egg Hunts, Kite Making, Art Classes and more. Extra maintenance crews that work in the summer have not started yet.

Natural wildflowers have not bloomed yet. The DCR is investing millions of dollars in Dorchester on the completion of the Neponset Greenway Walking and Bike Trail that runs through the park and the clean-up and completion of Port Norfolk Park, a continuation of PJP II Park. Notice the C in DCR, it stands for Conservation, the priority in these parks. The Neponset River Watershed Association, The Boston Natural Area Networks, BNAN, and the Neponset Greenway Council have done work with volunteers to improve Pope John Paul II Park such as co-sponsoring activities with the DCR, tree, flower and blueberry bush plantings, and clean-up days. The BNAN is now a part of the Trustees of Reservations. Perhaps they will direct some of their resources and experience to help maintain the park. More volunteers to help maintain the park as an ACEC would be wonderful.

I agree with Judge Dolan that some improvements could be made. The original plan for PJP included a community room and comfort station at the main entrance, near the car wash, where the porta potties are now stationed. The issue as usual was lack of appropriations, due to lack of funds. Perhaps that could become the focus of a collective effort to raise funds privately, as has been done by the Esplanade Association, and provide a structure which would serve both the Park and the bike path.

PJP Park was never meant to be a garden or an intensive recreation area. In fact, work has been done to help areas of the park return to their original state, which as stated by Judge Dolan is beautiful. It must remain a natural environment. We are part of a city. Adults need areas of peace and rest. Our children need areas to interact with nature. Saint Pope John Paul II prayed for peace and the environment. I think he is smiling down on Pope John Paul II Park.

– Maria Lyons, Science Teacher

Environmental Chairperson, Port Norfolk Civic Association

Member - Neponset Greenway Council, Neponset Watershed Association