

Binney Park Advisory Committee

March 5, 2019 Minutes

I. **Attendees:** Committee: Lisa Beebe, Nancy Chapin, Lynne Davenport, Mary Hull, Joanne Messina, Frank O’Gorman, Linnea Stenberg, Bill Rutherford, Pete Uhry, Darrin Wigglesworth Absent: Kevin McCarthy, Bruce Spaman, Joe Siciliano Guests: Char Barnes, Dana Whamond.

II. **Approval of January 29th and February 19th minutes:** Minutes were adopted with one change noted by Lynne; Garden clubs have an interest in, but not obligated to plant and maintain.

III. **History of Binney Park Master Plan and formation of the Binney Park Advisory Committee:** Pete opened the discussion and shared the following documents:

- A. April 22nd 2015 Public Forum
- B. A Time line of Key Events in the history of Binney Park.

Pete noted that the park is a total of about 32 acres with the addition of the Hillside annex and Binney Kitchel Natural Preserve. Pete noted the skating rink of the 30s and raised possibility of this now. Pete shared the history of Bill Rutherford father’s relationship with the park 30-40 years ago and his documentation and participation in tree planting. Pete shared that there were various Friends Groups that disappeared with loss of Nancy Caplan. Frank shared that he was part of the Friends group. The group was formed due to Binney Park’s state of decline. The Parks and Rec department hired an outside consultant to address the need for a comprehensive design. Martha Lyons did extensive research with the help of many residents, including Karen Sadik-kahn’s and her historic records from the Binney family. There were numerous public meetings with many diverse opinions for improvement including; dredging (#1), more user-friendly pathways and crossings, improving the park while adhering to its original intent. The town determined step #1 was dredging, but it stalled the Binney Park Master Plan implantation. Pete stated that it would have been better if they could have moved ahead with the parts of the plan that were not impacted by the dredging back in 2015.

IV. **Tree Hearing:** Lynne shared her notes of the meeting. Darrin shared the Tree Warden’s decision.

https://www.greenwichct.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Minutes/_02262019-2676 The committee felt the Tree Warden’s decision was a positive outcome to the hearing. Darrin and Joanne shared how the town works with the Tree Conservancy. Mary raised the issue of removing and replanting of the “misplaced” trees and the poor work done by the contractor hired for the dredging project. All agreed that this is a priority. The Parks dept and DPW both get blamed for work they did not do. Further discussion on the poor seed mix and planting done at the recommendation of IWWA. Committee noted the stray from agenda.

V. **PR and communications with the community:** Nancy and Pete will be the primary contacts for PR. Nancy shared that Joe approves Darrin as our primary contact for P&R staff. Lynne is the liaison for the Garden clubs; primarily Riverside and OG however will try to include other garden clubs in town. Linnea will be liaison for neighborhood associations.

VI. **Old Business:**

A. Loop Trail: Discussed this as a priority. Committee will plan to walk on April 2nd. Committee should meet and work with the neighbors. Parking is a problem. Darrin continuing to work on garbage can upgrades and replacements. Will look into reducing the number of cans.

B. Club House: Storage will remain for P&R. Discussed potential for patio, concession not an option and discussed the potential for a parking area for food truck. Hold off on landscaping until hardscaping completed. Darrin was recognized for stump removal.

C. Island: Darrin, Bill, Frank and Lisa set a date to meet and discuss landscape plans and how best to move “mis-placed trees”. Wondered how much could be done “pro bono”. And the need for additional proposals.

VII. Comments from Attending Guests: The committee recognized Char’s in-depth presentation at the Tree Hearing and how she and others resulted in positive changes to the Tree Warden’s original plan. Char shared her concern with schematics and landscape plans. Called for more detail in the site plans, elevations, and trees should be to scale. Bill acknowledged her concerns and shared that the posted plans show engineering topicals vs a landscape architect’s rendition. Char raised numerous concerns with the current plan and need for “bigger picture” planning.

VIII. Date and Time of Next Meetings: March 19th 2019, April 2nd 2019 3:30PM