

Binney Park Advisory Committee

March 19, 2019 Minutes

I. **Attendees:** Committee: Nancy Chapin, Lynne Davenport, Mary Hull, Joanne Messina, Frank O’Gorman, Linnea Stenberg, Bill Rutherford, Pete Uhry, Darrin Wigglesworth --- **Absent:** Kevin McCarthy, Lisa Beebe, Joe Siciliano --- **Guest and Elected New Member:** Gregory Kramer, Superintendent of Parks and Trees and Tree Warden - Minutes prepared by Pete Uhry

II. **Opening:** Nancy Chapin called the meeting to order at 3:34 pm and attendees went around the room affording the newly hired Mr. Kramer an opportunity to “meet the members.”

III. **Approval of March 5th BPAC Minutes:** Minutes were adopted following a motion by Mary Hull and seconded by Lynne Davenport.

IV. **Landscaping the Island:** Frank, Bill and Darrin led a discussion of future plans for the island. It is hoped we will be able to make necessary improvements to the island this spring. Lisa Beebe is also involved. It was decided that: 1) use of professional landscapers would not be needed and that staff members of the Parks Department would develop a plan and accomplish most of the work. 2) Junipers by the bridges are to be removed. 3) Flowering shrubs and plants are to be added and the shelter building will be power washed, painted and repaired as needed. 4) Issues of pond bank erosion are to be addressed and create easier/safer access to and around the building. 5) Trees will be pruned, and wetland plantings will be evaluated 6) Bill R. acknowledged that the access bridges are not ADA compliant but we are not modifying the structures. Uhry observed that we should make every effort to work with those guiding the Town to make sites accessible to those with handicaps.

V. **Movement and Replacement of Shrubs and Trees:** Darrin W. noted that white oak, sycamore, dawn redwood and linden trees are among those being considered to replace the 8 trees designated for removal. Planting of flowering trees is under consideration. Lisa Beebe has studied the property and is working closely with Darrin, Frank O’ Gorman and Bill Rutherford on the plantings. Frank observed the west side of the pond has a weak edge. Bill R. noted that IWWA is aware of our intentions to move some plants and is cooperating as we adjust the shrubbery and trees along the pond’s edges.

V-1. **Consensus of Committee Regarding Trees:** The BPAC members agree that a diversity of trees is appropriate and desirable in Binney. The Committee will decide what goes where once ideas are fully vetted. The goal for all plantings should reflect both long term and mid-length objectives. (Peter U led segment)

VI. Role of Department of Public Works – Mr. Monelli: Nancy reported she had discussed our objectives for Binney with Al Monelli, Building Supervisor in DPW. . He will work with us and recommended that Darrin submit work orders for the Club House and Island Shelter. If the work is complicated, and more than maintenance, DPW will help. Parks should handle most of the less complex assignments. The bathrooms are up to code. Only one man cleans all the restrooms for the entire Parks Department.

VII. Memorial Trees: Lynne told us that over the years, the Garden Club of Old Greenwich has planted memorial trees honoring past GCOG members. There are several clusters of them including 7 unmarked crabapples in the north end of the Park. Lynne is to learn the location of them all and report back to us at a future meeting so we properly honor these memorials.

VIII: Dredging and the Loop Trail: Darrin described the need to contract out the installation of drain pipes near the flagpole in the north end. Mention was made of the poor drainage near the south end playground but that represents a bigger issue.... and one we might not be able to resolve. The south end of Binney was originally a swamp. Discussion of pond bank stabilization followed with indications that the worse sections will be amended to prevent further bank erosion. The loop trail will not be plowed in the winter and the Committee will walk the proposed route at their next meeting on April 2 (weather permitting).

IX. Closing Discussions:

Signs: Linnea, Mary and Pete will address location and content of proposed signs for the Park. The Town has a formula which some felt might be too elaborate for Binney.

Garbage Cans: Frank shared a brochure with Darrin who had not received a return bid for purchase of a type used near S. Water Street. Each unit (a double) is \$1,100.

Grasses in the North End: Discussion is under way to either remove or replace them with additional, and more appropriate, ornamental flowers. Maintenance is an issue and the Garden Club of OG is fully committed I thought Lynne said they have too much and cannot commit? Bill Rutherford has the lead on this issue and is working with IWWA.

Greg Kramer: He spoke briefly saying he was pleased to see the BPAC existed and that we seemed to be addressing most issues.

X. Next Meeting: If no rain, Binney Park on Tuesday April 2 at 3:30pm. Park on Binney Park Drive adjacent to the tennis courts. Wear walking shoes please. If it looks like rain, we will meet at the Parks Department Meeting Room at 3:30pm on the same day. If there is any doubt, contact Pete Uhry by email or phone: 203-536-8294.