BPAC MEETING October 8, 2019
Town Hall - 1:30 to 3:10pm


Absent: Frank O’Gorman and Bill Rutherford
Others: Lenore Caserta and Joe Siciliano Kevin McCarthy

Finances and more: The meeting opened with general agreement that we are making excellent progress but need to clarify what the future will hold. To facilitate: 1) JoAnn Messina suggested Darrin W. prepare a report on what has been accomplished while 2) a separate financial report be prepared by Greg Kramer so the BPAC can identify what is doable going forward with remaining funds.... which might still be around $120,000. Committee members generally had not registered that the new playground in the Southwest corner had been paid for from the BP fund back in 2017.

Showcasing accomplishments and showing off Binney:
1) Linnea Stenberg suggested a walking tour which will likely occur in the spring.
2) JoAnn M. is scheduling a tree tour on November 17 between 2-4pm.
3) Lisa B. has prepared an excellent inventory of trees in Binney with location map which might be turned into a display in the future. (She emailed it to all BPAC members.)

Update on the Island: Now that the island’s patio and landscaping are basically finished, the question is what remains to be done. Everyone agreed Peter Grunow did a fine job. 3 benches have yet to be installed. Two on the new patio and one on the East side. One will honor the Criscuiti’s donation allowing the Grunow work and another will honor Nancy Caplan for her dedication to improving Binney. (Lynne Davenport will ask Nancy's daughter for copy ideas for the bench plaque). One bench damaged one on the west side of the island, already there, will be exchanged for a "good one."(Darrin). Additionally, once proper wording is agreed upon in the months ahead, a bronze plaque describing the history of Binney will be placed on the north side wall of the warming hut. (Look at Cos Cob Park plaque for inspiration. - Uhry) Joanne M. suggested we seek contributions from outside for both benches and trees. All items approved, in a motion that unanimously carried, the ideas outlined above.

Northwest Corner: Having visited the site in our previous “tour” meeting, the discussion in today’s gathering focused on what can be done now and what should wait for the future. The BPAC unanimously approved a motion to move forward on many of the ideas agreed to when the Committee did the walking tour on Sept 24th. Specifically: 1) replacement of the yew bush border on the west side of the creek inlet with a 3 rail split rail fence that will be muted next spring by some plantings...like lace cap hydrangea. Mary Hull questioned if a split race was "appropriate" and the general consensus was yes...for safety and ease to replace in the future if the split rail proved to be an improper decision. 2) the creek banks will be stripped of their invasive vegetation. 3) the east bank of the creek will not have a split rail fence but a higher density of vegetation installed for safety reasons. 4) approval was given to remove a weakened birch tree, two very old azaleas and several forsythia bushes on the east bank. 5) approval was given to remove the barberry bushes bordering the sidewalk along Sound Beach Ave and replace them with rocks creating a barrier. The rocks will run alongside of the sidewalk to the point where the crosswalk comes from the library. 6) agreed to
accept a donated tree from Peter Grunow to be placed in the Northwest corner area as designated by Greg Kramer. 7) placement of signage in this area will be deferred until next spring when hopefully much of the described work mentioned here will be accomplished.8) a long range plan will be developed for this area so that when the Sound Beach Avenue Bridge is completed by DPW, an understanding of the Committee's wishes will be known. (For further reference, see the email “BPAC September 24 Site Walk Notes from the Field - Peter Uhry)

Priorities looking backward and ahead: BPAC members looked back at the Master Plan, additionally correspondence dated January 29, 2019 as well as a resident's piece (undated and submitted by Lisa Beebe) identifying 32 things to improve Binney Park. Incredibly, we were able to strike off several items (like the Island and Clubhouse...at least partially...and set up a discussion for our next Town Hall meeting to outline plans - ie: a) short-range = by year end b) mid-range= by June, 2020 and c) long-range= by end of 2022 goals. The group agrees BPAC should not be a career activity and ultimately should evolve into a Friends of Binney Park group with the right to regroup should the need exist. At issue is the long term plans of the Dept of Public Works who intend to replace bridges on Sound Beach Avenue and Wesskum Wood Road. Nancy Chapin was to establish a meeting to see where their bridge planning stands. (Note: this date is set for October 16th with Pete U. and Nancy C. attending)

The question of who should be responsible for landscaping the areas disrupted by DPW came up and need to be addressed by BPAC. It would seem to us that DPW has some responsibility here since they are the ones up ending the status quo. It seems appropriate that BPAC have a recommended landscaping plan to present to DPW.

Volunteer Day #2: Saturday morning October 19th from 9-noon will be our second volunteer day. Uhry updated the flier and Linnea, Mary and Lynne are to mail same to potential volunteers.

Loop Trail: Approval was given in a unanimous motion for Darrin W. to move forward with the section of the planned south end loop trail on the West side. This means from the tennis court along Arch Street and around the playground in the Southwest corner then along Binney Park Drive East to a crossing point behind the Eastern most baseball backstop.

Club House: BPAC is unsure how to move forward to complete the east side patio. The size of the patio makes it notably expensive and the Committee deferred any further action until our November meeting.

Next Meeting: Town Hall November 12th at 2:30pm. Nancy Chapin to issue the agenda and reserve the Conference Room 2nd floor.

Respectfully submitted...

Peter Uhry -BPAC