

FRIENDS OF SPY POND PARK
Meeting Minutes
December 3, 2017
Jefferson Cutter House Meeting Room
Massachusetts Ave & Mystic Street
Arlington, MA

Present: Karen Grossman, President
Lally Stowell, Beautification Committee
Sally Hempstead, Communications and Outreach Committee Co-Chair
Marshall McCloskey, Recording Secretary
Dick Norcross, Beautification Committee
Fred Moses, Webmaster
Colin Blair
Bill Eykamp
Bithika Khargharia & Suhar (daughter), Beautification Committee
Rachel Stark
Lisa Reynolds
Myra Schwartz
Laura Kiesel
John Ellis, Arlington Tree Committee
Steve Moore, Arlington Tree Committee

Introductions: Those present shared a potluck supper from 5:00 pm on. Thanks to all who brought dishes to share. The food was much enjoyed before and during the meeting.

At 6:02 pm, Karen called the meeting to order and asked those present to introduce themselves and tell of their association with Spy Pond Park, and any recent experiences they would like to share in that regard. The people present introduced themselves, and after that Karen introduced the speaker for the evening, John Ellis, Arlington Tree Committee.

John is the founder of Optics for Hire, a company based here in Arlington. See (<http://www.opticsforhire.com>.) He mentioned that he used to sit on a bench in Waldo Park, enjoying the trees there. He became interested in how the Town is maintaining and growing its tree canopy after he learned a large bequest (\$150,000) to the Town for tree planting was unspent, and even more interested when he discovered the Town had not been posting tree removal notices on trees as required by state law. He found that there was, in fact, an Arlington Tree Committee established by the Board of Selectmen in 2010 and decided to join. He helped write a grant in the fall of 2016 to conduct a town-wide tree inventory that would be the basis for future tree planting and care in the Town, including the spending of the bequest.

In John's very interesting and informative talk, he touched on a number of issues and facets related to Arlington trees about which many people are probably not aware. Some of the highlights are presented below.

Presentation: Arlington Tree Committee

John noted that there are 80 miles of public streets in Arlington, as well as various parks and open spaces which are of concern to the Arlington Tree Committee. The DPW is responsible for the planting and maintenance of **public** trees (not private) in Arlington. Pine trees are not planted by the Town.

The 2017 Tree Inventory Project, conducted by 2 interns and 60 volunteers contributing 250 hours, resulted in mapping 10,500 trees, consisting of 8,750 public street trees, 1,750 private street trees, and public trees in parks, schools, and the bike trail. There were 6,401 empty planting sites on public streets. See www.OpenTreeMap.org/Arlington for the results of this effort. They observed 94 species of trees, the most common of which were: Norway Maple 42.2%, Ash 8.93%, Red maple 7.81%, Honey locust 5.71%, Callery pear 4.12%. Ideally there would be no more than 30% of a particular tree family, 20% of a genus

within that family, and 10% of a species within that genus. The large number of Norway maples in Arlington is due to the fact they are fast growing and were planted subsequent to the relatively recent Dutch Elm disease epidemic.

Some notable benefits of trees include:

- They lower summer air temperature, shade buildings and concrete, return humidity to the air through evaporative cooling.
- Improved Health - Trees help reduce air pollutants that can trigger asthma and other respiratory illnesses.
- Employees who see trees from their desks experience 23% less sick time and report greater job satisfaction than those who do not.

In monetary terms, total annual tree benefits to Arlington amount to \$767,829 saved. This is based on:

- Energy conserved -1,113,880 kwh/year saved \$621,659
- Storm water filtered-17,716,214 gal/year saved \$14,172
- Air quality improved-22,706 lbs./year saved \$112,656
- Carbon dioxide removed-5,790,662 lbs./year saved \$19,340
- Carbon dioxide stored to date -5,012,870 lbs. saved \$83,542

There is a standard goal of 90% of planting sites having trees. Arlington's current density is 58%.

8,743 trees + 6,401 empty planting sites = 15,144 possible tree placement locations on public streets.

Arlington removes 200 trees year, and only plants 175-200 trees/year. There has been a net loss of 500 public trees since 2006.

Some of the issues with planting trees are that one needs to make sure that they are planted at the correct depth, otherwise the tree may not be healthy or damage sidewalks. Each 1 inch in diameter of the tree requires 1 foot of root space around the tree. And it is extremely important to follow through with watering the tree for a year after the planting, i.e. not to simply pray for rain...

Future concerns with regard to Arlington trees are: Ash trees are at risk of pests, Maple family: high risk due to density of tree population, sidewalk tree root damage, meeting ADA requirements for public sidewalks, and the effects of storms and warming trends.

Moving forward, Arlington will concentrate on increasing street tree planting (800- 1000 per year stretch goal), increasing staff for watering, and stop planting maples.

Minutes of the October 17, 2017 meeting were reviewed and accepted.

Treasurer's Report: Joanie Walls prepared an end of year (12/1/2017) summary, subject to additional returns from our Fall solicitation, some other deposits to be made, and payment of some remaining year end expenses not yet billed or accounted for, most notably \$1000 for the portable toilet in the Pond Lane lot. Our checking balance was **\$20,221**, compared to a 2016 balance of **\$20,296**. Her report, as indicted by Karen Grossman, shows that we are essentially at the same level we were last year at this time in terms of expenses and revenue. We spent a fair amount less on solicitations in 2017, since in 2016 we also purchased our indicia mail stamp (\$220 one-time cost), and created what the PO calls an "Advance Deposit Account" from which to withdraw postage costs. With regard to projected expenses for 2018, Dick Norcross suggested that perhaps we might divert the park bench cost to Art in the Park projects, subject to consideration of the need for an additional bench, as well as Town revised rules for installation and contractor costs. Marshall McCloskey questioned the \$400 increased cost of the portable toilet, which Karen indicated should probably be assumed by the Arlington/Belmont crew, as they are more the beneficiaries of it than we are. It was noted that the \$50 town fee for the FSPP Feast of the East booth should be included in 2017 expenses. Marshall thinks he may have done a direct debit from our checking account ATM card for it at the time.

We have yet to hear if the recent re-filing of our 2017 Massachusetts Public Charity Annual Report has been accepted with the addition of a Board of Directors list. It is expected to be accepted.

A copy of Joanie's report is attached at the end of these minutes.

2017 Accomplishments, 2018 Budgets and Goals:

Joanie's Treasurer's report includes the 2018 projected budget. It was agreed that most of the goals set for 2017 were largely met. These were:

- Aid in applying for CPA funds for feasibility study, 30% design, engineering, survey, and presentation costs to curb shoreline erosion along Spy Pond Park area, etc.
- Rally support for a presentation concerning Conservation Commission's request for CPA funds to Selectmen and Town Meeting.
- Help prepare and support application for funds for permits and construction from the CPC.
- Plan and promote a Spy Pond Park Fun Day with the Arlington Land Trust in September.
- Facilitate Kevin Duffy's making "Penny" the swan sculpture permanent art in SPP.
- Follow up on replacement of one backless bench near Linwood Beach.
- Continue to pursue replacement of Serviceberry to the right of second bench from Linwood.
- Complete the job descriptions for officers and committee chairs.
- Assess the number and placement of trash barrels in Spy Pond Park and determine if more permanent barrels should be purchased for the park.
- Recruit two new board members from a broad range of the membership

In addition to our standing annual goals:

- Increase *active* membership, enlarge the core group of volunteers
- Maintain the park as needed
- Have Town Day, EcoFest, & Feast of the East outreach
- Send bi-monthly meeting announcements & agendas
- Sell more t-shirts
- File annual report and PC report to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- Have a library display, as permitted
- Increase awareness of FSPP and park events: hold a successful park activities day for children and families
- Maintain and update the FSPP database
- Maintain and update the FSPP website
- Publish quarterly FSPP Newsletter (next year – 3 issues)
- Maintain archives of news items on Spy Pond Park (Memory Scrapbooks & Newsletters)
- Create a scorecard on annual goals

We did not circulate a call for a Fundraising Chair and appoint someone to that position nor mount a campaign to raise money to cover rehabilitation costs, since these were not deemed necessary. And we were not invited to participate in EcoFest this last year, as the theme was changed.

Goals for 2018:

- Look into alternatives for handling litter/trash, investigate how other towns do it.
- See that benches get repaired, perhaps order a new one.
- Monitor the Conservation Commission efforts re: shoreline rehab. & path improvement
- Explore additional Art for the Park
- Recruit a General Vice-President
- Recruit a Park Activities Co-chair
- Coordinate with Hardy School re: a unit for study of the Spy Pond Park environment, involving parents, the DPW, and Charlotte Milan from Arlington Recycle.
- Support efforts to provide environmentally sound rat control measures in Spy Pond Park and Arlington, in general

Website: The database is currently up to date with respect to dues and donations, new members, Work day contacts, street and email addresses. Thanks to Daniel Jalkut for excellent work in this respect. Deepak Bidwai has recently assumed new responsibilities as a father and with a new job and has not been able to keep up with posting all recent information to the website. Fred Moses, our Web and IT Master, indicated he will work with Deepak to provide access to the tools he uses for maintaining the website, and that he may be able to recruit someone to take on this responsibility.

Beautification: Lisa Reynolds collected 4 bags full of trash in Spy Pond Park around Thanksgiving week. (Lisa also bravely rids the park of poison ivy during the year). Dick Norcross noted that people voluntarily picking up litter make a huge difference in the park's appearance. Lisa, as well as some others, considers the trash barrels in the park at the end of Pond Lane somewhat of an eyesore. It was suggested that instituting a carry-in/carry-out policy might solve the problem. That might be ideal, however, the general consensus was that it probably would not work in practice. We will consider alternatives to the barrels, or perhaps even additional barrels in the coming months. Karen brought up the fact that our handicapped ramp has suffered from erosion, it now being necessary to negotiate a bump to access it. Karen noted that the 30% design for the erosion control project includes a small deck for handicapped viewing of the Pond, but it does not cover repairing or maintaining the handicapped ramp. She will be attending a meeting of the Conservation Commission this coming Tuesday evening. She also said that Jon Marshall has informed her of new regulations re: benches in the park. A contractor charge of \$3000 for the bench and an accompanying concrete base with the installation, now required.

The Beautification Committee will determine the 2018 Work Days in January. Lally mentioned that it will be necessary to buy new t-shirts this year, which should be factored into the budget. Bill Eykamp suggested that we wait 'til summer to consider any new bench location. Anne Ellinger and Emily Snyder are maintaining the SPP rain garden.

Outreach: We will now publish a Summer, Fall/Winter, and Winter/Spring newsletter as opposed to quarterly newsletters as we have done in the past. Stewart Ikeda has spearheaded an effort to have 1st thru 4th grade students at the Hardy School engage in learning about Spy Pond and the Park, and have a "field trip" there, possibly next June. A Hardy PTO Committee and FSPP will be coordinating to form 3 groups of 30 4th graders, each group rotating amongst the park activities. The school will raise the funds to support this project.

Communications: James Ciocco has been doing an outstanding job of laying out the FSPP newsletter for 9 years! Karen noted that we are grateful he serves the FSPP in this capacity since he is very highly regarded in his field and he continues to do so despite being very busy with other professional obligations. Lally has also been very diligent in maintaining the FSPP archives, which were in view at the meeting.

Miscellaneous: Laura Kiesel, an environmental scientist, lives near the park, and wanted to bring the attention of the group to problems associated with efforts to control the local rat population. She said that poisoning the rats, as is being pursued, is very bad for the environment and counter-productive, because other animals and birds (hawks and owls) that prey on the rats then also die as a result of eating them. Thus, their natural predators, who reproduce at a much lower rate than the rats themselves, disappear. She said there are some 20 rat poison stations in the area. Other measures, such as rat contraception as done in Somerville, better trash control, including rat resistant trash cans are more effective. Karen suggested we support Laura's efforts in this endeavor and asked her to write an article that we could include in the Winter/Spring Newsletter.

Sally suggested we think about ways to possibly get a better turnout for the annual meeting. More publicity, more organization re: the potluck supper, ...??

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 pm.

Next Meeting: Sunday, January 28, 2018, 7 pm at Karen Grossman's: 32 Hamilton Rd, Unit 402, Arlington.

Respectfully submitted,
Marshall McCloskey
Recording Secretary

Friends of Spy Pond Park

Financial Report 2017

Joanie Walls 12/1/2017

Friends of Spy Pond Park Projected Budget 2018	
Projected Income	
Membership Dues	\$3200
Donations	\$2300
Merchandise Sales	\$100
Miscellaneous	<u>\$200</u>
Total Projected Income	\$5800
Projected Expenses	
Portable Toilet	\$1400
Beautification Committee	\$600
Solicitations	\$700
Newsletters	\$900
Park Bench	\$1250
Misc (Web, fees, supplies)	\$800
Database repairs	<u>\$500</u>
Total Projected Expenses	\$6150

2017 Expenses	Amount
Winter Newsletter & Outdoor Brochure holder	321.20
Database	600.00
Web Hosting	192.17
Portable Toilet	700.00
Spring Newsletters	230.95
Spring Solicitation Letters	95.96
Prepaid Postage	300.70
Town Day Booth	70.00
Newsletters for Fun Day	139.99
Posters for Fun Day	279.53
Bulletin Board Repairs	200.00
MA Filing & Annual Report Fees	65.00
Painting Bench in Tot Lot	500.00
Food Link - 7 Work Days	70.00
Beautification tools/supplies	254.16
Newsletter Copies	118.09
Fun Day Generator Rental	46.73
Fun Day Supplies	109.06
Fall Solicitation Printing, Year End Solicitation and Envelopes	880.85
NCOA address processing	50.00
Bank Fees	27.50
total newsletter	\$810.23
total solicitations	\$976.81
Total Expenses	\$5,251.89
Total Income	\$5,911.83
Difference (Income - Expenses)	\$659.94
Assets End 2016	End 2017
Cash Box \$50.00	\$50.00
Checking \$20,296.00	\$20,221.06
Net Increase in Assets	\$74.94
Difference see note 2	\$585.00

Notes:

Above schedules are all prepared on a cash basis.

- 1) Not included above are \$225 of 2017-2018 mailing permit fees and \$40 mail processing fees paid by Marshall McClosky on his credit card. Will reimburse him and include in revised version in January 2017.
- 2) Not included in the bank balance is \$585 additional checks of which \$300 is in honor of Neal Lesh and Rachel Massey's wedding, all in Daniel Jalkut's possession.
- 3) Have not been billed yet or paid for 2017 portable toilet (\$1000)