

PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES  
PHASE 1 – BAILEY BROOK OPEN SPACE RECREATION PROJECT  
AUGUST 17, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. VIA ZOOM

Members present: Mark M. Schafron/*Chairman*, Robert Swartz/*Vice-Chairman*, Robert J. Bettez, Sr., Stephen Cormier, and Paul A. Cormier/*Members*, and Trevor Beauregard/*Director-City Planner*.

Members absent: *None.*

Also present: Chris Coughlin-Engineering, Christine Fucile-DCDP, Jon Allard of Fuss & O’Neill, City Councilors Judy Mack & Elizabeth Kazinskas, Jeffrey Legros-DCDP, and several Gardner residents (*copy of attendance on file*).

ANNOUNCEMENT - Any person may make a video or audio recording of an open session of a meeting, or may transmit the meeting through any medium, subject to reasonable requirements of the Chair as to the number, placement and operation of equipment used so as not to interfere with the conduct of the **meeting**. Any person intending to make such recording shall notify the Chair forthwith. All Documents referenced or used during the meeting must be submitted in duplicate to the Director of Community Development & Planning pursuant to the Open Meeting and Public Records Law. All documents shall become part of the official record of the meeting.

***Mr. Schafron, Chairman called the Public Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.***

***Mr. Schafron read aloud the Public Meeting Notice for Phase 1 of the Bailey Brook Open Space Recreation project site plan.***

***T. Beauregard made note this meeting will not be streamed live on “You Tube” due to technical issues, but will be posted to the City’s website tomorrow. However, the Cable TV access is recording and will be added to the Cable Access TV in the near future.***

Jon Allard of Fuss & O’Neill displayed the Overall Site Plan - Phase 1 for the Leo Drive recreational project. Mr. Allard pointed out the pink section which are the areas of Phase 1, mostly the trail system, the parking area, and some pruning/grubbing limits. Mr. Allard pointed out Leo Drive at the bottom of the plan, with Bailey Brook running at the top of the property, as well as Clark Street to the south, over to the left on the plan.

Mr. Allard pointed out on the Site Layout Plan – Phase 1, the 24 foot wide gravel access driveway into a gravel lot, with approximately 36 parking spaces there. In addition, there is a paved handicap parking area, and an accessible gravel walking trail. Within the area, there will be some clearing and grubbing of existing vegetation. On the east side of the accessible walking path, propose to build up an earthen berm, and seed as part of Phase 1.

Mr. Allard also pointed out the wetland area with a deck overlooking the wetland area at the west side of the site.

Mr. Allard spoke of drainage on the site which will include a catch basin in the corner of the parking lot that will drain into a proposed rain garden as part of the drainage plan.

Mr. Allard said this is pretty much all of the Phase 1 elements. Mr. Allard closed out his presentation to open up questions.

Mr. Schafron asked how long will this work take. Mr. Allard answered hope to be done by end of September.

Mr. Schafron asked about the buffer zone between abutters and the edge of the site. Mr. Allard said there will be a 75 foot buffer space to the path. Mr. Schafron then asked how high the berm is. Mr. Allard responded about four feet, give or take, and in some places higher than four feet tall.

T. Beauregard explained to everyone why this plan is in front of the Planning Board at this time because 15 more parking spaces were created, therefore, needs to go before the Planning Board for approval.

Mr. Schafron asked if there were any questions from the Board.

P. Cormier asked if there will be any privacy fencing for the residents' homes. Mr. Allard answered there will be no fencing.

Mr. Schafron asked again if there are any questions or comments from the Board, or Staff.

Mr. Schafron then addressed the Public and explained if anyone from the public who wished to be heard, they will have to put their name and street address into the chat, and will be called on in the ordered received.

***Mr. Schafron, Chairman called thrice for persons wishing to testify in favor of this plan.***

No one from the Public spoke in favor of this project.

***Mr. Schafron, Chairman called thrice for persons wishing to testify in opposition of this plan.***

Mr. Schafron closed the meeting at 7:13 p.m., but then immediately re-opened the public meeting since there was someone from the Public who had requested to be heard prior to the closing.

Steve Macowiak, 244 Leo Drive:

Stated he wanted to understand more about the buffer zone, and how it was decided to be 75 feet? Also, asked why a four foot barrier, as opposed to the original six foot barrier?

T. Beauregard responded the buffer zone increased due to residents' comments from original meetings, and is consistent with plan seen at last meeting. The buffer zone is up to 75 feet to the accessible trail, there is another 5 feet for the trail, and 15-20 feet additional from the west side of the trail to where the proposed field would be, being as close to 100 feet as possible, in order to be able to build a recreation field in the future, if the City decides to. The berm was created to try and alleviate the abutting residents, as well as other residents' concerns. The berm will be between 4-6 feet depending on where it is, as Mr. Allard just mentioned. Depending on what the site line is during construction, if it needs to be raised, and can be, it will be.

Mr. Allard agreed with T. Beauregard, and added regulations call for a 30 foot setback, and they are more than doubling it.

Mr. Macowiak asked how the trail clearing will be completed, and questioned if it will be hand work. Also, what is the media that would be down? Mr. Allard stated he was out at the site last week, and noted some of the trails are overgrown. Also, some trails were quite wide which were used for old logging roads, so the thought was to bring in a "Bobcat", maybe five to six feet wide, up to eight feet clearing. In addition, for the smaller trails, just clearing the overgrowth on the sides. T. Beauregard added it will be mostly hand work on the smaller trails.

Mr. Swartz commented Mr. Macowiak also asked what the media will be used for the base of the trails. The media-base of trails will be natural, by chipping some of the brush to create wood chips to keep as natural as possible.

Steve Rockwood, 310 Pearl Street:

Noticed the area that had previously been looked at as a recreation field is now listed as a clear and grub area, and asked what the purpose is bringing it to that level, and what will be the Phase 1 finish material for that area. Mr. Allard replied the purpose of that is to clean it up since it is a mess back there with logs down all over the place from the previous logging operation, so the thought is to clean up the area, grade it using wood chips just to create a more aesthetic look to it in the interim.

Roxanna Figueroa, 322 Leo Drive:

Stated she is worried about privacy, and if it rains, where all the water will drain. She understands all the things on the plan, but worries about work being done really close to her house, and being affected, especially with her privacy. She realizes it is 75 feet, but it is different from having total privacy to a recreational area. She is very worried about this project and all the changes, especially with losing her privacy.

Mr. Schafron thanked her for her comments.

City Councillor, Elizabeth Kazinskas, 29 Century Way:

Questioned when the work will start. Mr. Schafron said he believes Mr. Allard mentioned it will be completed by the end of September, and asked Mr. Allard if this is correct. Mr. Allard replied yes, but he does not know when it will start. T. Beauregard asked for a guesstimate. Mr. Allard replied as soon as the project is approved, there is someone lined up to start construction, so could be within a week. T. Beauregard confirmed it will start next week.

Inquired if the construction is scheduled to be done by end of September, how long the work will take to complete, and does the work take a whole month to complete? Mr. Allard replied if it starts within the next week or so, it will be done by September, and if it starts in a month, it puts it out another month or so.

T. Beauregard was asked if the total number of parking spaces has changed. The response was approximately 36 parking spaces.

City Councillor, Judy Mack, 28 Chapel Street:

Inquired about the use of gravel for ADA accessible trail, and commented her understanding is gravel has to be pretty firm and treated for it to be considered ADA approved, usually a harder surface like concrete or asphalt is preferable, especially if there is use of a walker or wheelchair. Mr. Allard's response was gravel was the wrong word to use, and said it will be a finer material that will be used, such as stone screening. Also asked whatever they will be using will meet ADA requirements. Mr. Allard replied yes.

Expressed her concern with lack of a privacy fence for the abutters. Does not blame any of the residents for being concerned about their privacy, and believes in any Phase, this one, or moving ahead thinks the concern of the residents privacy should be taken into effect. Ms. Mack said thank you.

**Mr. Schafron asked once again if there are any further questions or comments from the Public about this matter. Hearing none, Mr. Schafron closed the Public Meeting.**

**The Public Meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.**

All documents referenced or used during the meeting are part of the official record and are available in the Department of Community Development and Planning pursuant to the Open Meeting and Public Records Law.

