



Meeting Notes

Community Meeting #1

April 10, 2018

Improvements to Jamaica Pond Park Pathways and Entrances

Project Team in attendance

- Lauren Bryant, Project Manager, BPRD
- Margaret Dyson, Director of Historic Parks, BPRD
- Kyle Zick, Principal, Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture
- Tracy Hudak, Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture

The first public meeting for Jamaica Pond Park Pathway and Entrance improvements was held on April 10, 2018 at the Curtis Hall Community Center. Below is a summary of the issues discussed:

1. Lauren Bryant from BPRD introduced the project team and provided an introduction to the project. She also acknowledged some problems with the announcement of this meeting and noted that the next public meeting will begin with a review of the materials presented at this meeting, in order to bring new attendees up to speed on the project.

She explained the city of Boston recreation priorities and the Department of Parks and Recreation's overall goals. This meeting was being held to introduce the community to the project scope, present a preliminary schedule, and get initial feedback on potential improvements to Jamaica Pond Parks' paths and entrances.

2. Kyle Zick, consulting landscape architect, reviewed the project boundaries and a draft schedule. Two additional public meetings on the project will be held this spring and summer. DCR and BPRD both have projects that will be under construction this spring in or near the park. DCR has an Access Improvement Project at the intersection of Perkins St. and Francis Parkman Drive. BPRD will be conducting rehabilitation of the dock at the Boat House. The project team for the Jamaica Pond Park Pathways and Entrances project are coordinating with the groups working on these adjacent projects.

Given the popularity and heavy use of Jamaica Pond Park, the pathways construction will occur so that some parts of the park remain open at all times. The project will be phased and will require approvals from Boston Landmarks Commission because Jamaica Pond is a historic park, and approvals from the Boston Conservation Commission, which has jurisdiction on projects within 100' of a water body. Phase 1 will focus on the upland portion of the Pinebank area of the park expected to occur in fall 2018. Phase 2 will encompass the remainder of the park pathways and entrances. It is anticipated that construction on Phase 2 will occur in the spring to fall of 2019.

3. Kyle explained the scope of the project, which will focus on the park pathways and entrances, but could include site furnishings, signage and landscape rehabilitation near or adjacent to the paths.
4. Kyle reviewed the history of the park and its role in Frederick Law Olmsted's Emerald Necklace.

5. Kyle presented the existing conditions of the park pathways and entrances through a series of photographs and illustrative sections. The presentation divided the park into five areas, each with a different character: Jamaicaaway, Pinebank, Perkins St., Parkman Drive, and Kelley Circle. He focused on pathway conditions, signage, site furnishings, erosion, and vegetation.
6. The project team then welcomed any questions and asked for comments from the attendees on how they use the park paths, what improvements to the paths/entrances that they would like to see, and any issues they feel need to be addressed. The following topic areas were discussed by meeting attendees:

Pathway condition

Attendees were interested in what options might be available beyond replacing the current asphalt paths with new asphalt paths. The project team will look at the paths' history and consider different options, including asphalt, stone dust paths and porous pavement. Each material has its trade-offs in appearance, longevity, cost and maintenance.

Currently, the broken pieces of asphalt often end up in the pond itself. There was concern about oversized parks vehicles doing damage to pathways. Lauren Bryant suggested that there are ways to make the edges less vulnerable to damage. She also confirmed that the project team will be coordinating with the maintenance personnel about what routes they need to use for their vehicles and what size vehicles need to be accommodated.

Bicycles

There was interest in expanding bike routes in the area of the pond, but attendees also noted that the current signage is inadequate to keep cyclists off the pedestrian paths. One suggested example was the bicycle signage in the Brookline area of Leverett Pond, where signs use arrows to direct pedestrians and cyclists at key path intersections. The project team will investigate options for directing cyclists more effectively.

There was interest in additional bike racks that are easier to find.

There are tentative plans for additional Hubway stations at or near the pond, and attendees were concerned about potential Hubway users not understanding the cycling/pedestrian separation at the park.

User Groups and Path Widths

In particular, the group discussed runners and the worn path they often use adjacent to the paved pedestrian path. At some point in the past, a rubberized surface was installed next to the pedestrian path for runners. Stone dust was also used at some point in the past. However, attendees said the materials did not last long, and were eventually removed or replaced. Some attendees said they used the ad-hoc dirt running path to avoid conflicts with dog walkers or strollers, not necessarily because of the surface.

The number of user groups may tend to push the paths wider, but attendees also expressed interest in limiting path widths to minimize the money spent on path construction and



maintenance, preferring higher quality, more sustainable materials. Toronto was mentioned as one example to look into for precedent. The project team will investigate what other cities have done and what materials might be available.

Vegetation

Lauren Bryant clarified that BPRD considers the pathways to include the experience along the pathway. As a result, while the funding is earmarked for pathways and entrances, the project team will be looking at vegetation adjacent to the pathways, and restoring any vegetation damaged during construction. Attendees are encouraged to let the project team know about areas they feel need particular attention. While the budget may allow additional vegetation restoration, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy has a tree management and planning effort underway currently.

Next Steps

- a. The meeting notes and presentation will be posted on the Boston Parks and Recreation Department project website. <https://www.boston.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/improvements-jamaica-pond-pathways-and-perimeter>
- b. A survey is available online for community members to provide initial feedback on their use of the pathways and what improvements are most needed. The survey link is available from the project website.
- c. Contact Lauren Bryant at lauren.bryant@boston.gov or 617-961-3019 with any questions.
- d. The next public meeting is not scheduled yet. Stay tuned for updates on the project website.