



PARKS COMMISSION AGENDA

September 7, 2021, 5:30 PM

Onsite: STEPHEN DECATUR PARK PAVILION

This meeting will NOT be live streamed on Facebook.

1. Approval of Minutes of July 6, 2021
2. Old Business
 - a) Program Open Space Community Parks and Playgrounds FY23 Grant
3. New Business
 - a) WCHD Walking Initiative
 - i) Walk Maryland Day & Scavenger Hunt, Wednesday, October 6, 2021
 - ii) Just Walk Dates:
 - a) Saturday, November 5, 2021 – Glow Walk(?)
 - b) Saturday, May 7, 2022-Color Walk(?)
 - b) Site Visit – Stephen Decatur Park
4. Berlin Youth Program Update
5. Other

Upcoming Meeting Schedule:

Tuesday, October 5, 2021 – Site Visit at Henry Park

Tuesday, November 2, 2021

Tuesday, January 4, 2022

MINUTES – PARKS COMMISSION
July 6, 2021

The meeting of the Parks Commission for Tuesday, July 6, 2021, was called to order at 5:30 PM. Parks Commission members present were Chair Mike Wiley, Patricia Dufendach, Sarah Hooper, and Laura Stearns, as well as Deputy Town Administrator Mary Bohlen. Also present was Works Superintendent Jimmy Charles. Bruce Hyder had notified Ms. Bohlen that he would not be present.

This meeting was also broadcast live via Facebook.

Ms. Dufendach moved to approve the Minutes of May 4, 2021, Ms. Hooper seconded, and approval was unanimous.

Ms. Bohlen provided an explanation of the Community Parks and Playgrounds grant program. She indicated that there was an application currently outstanding for the Stephen Decatur Park Restroom project, which appeared likely to be awarded; that application had been submitted in August 2020 and notification of whether or not it would be approved was expected at any time. Ms. Bohlen also explained the Program Open Space Development Program form which was included in the meeting packet and noted that, while Worcester County had not requested this form be submitted for several years, it remained a useful tool for planning purposes.

In response to questions from Ms. Stearns, Ms. Bohlen explained that, once awarded grant funds had to be used for the purposes indicated when applying – repurposing the funds was not impossible but was not recommended. She also indicated that, in previous years, the Town had applied for more than one project in a given year but had never been successful in receiving funding for multiple locations.

Ms. Bohlen recommended making application for FY 23 for the Henry Park Basketball Courts Lighting Project in the upcoming round and updating the Development Program for future projects.

Mr. Wiley noted that he had spoken to Mayor Tyndall regarding inclusive playgrounds and discussion followed. General discussion regarding whether to look at new pieces, replacement pieces or just the Tot-Lot in Stephen Decatur Park. Discussion regarding the overall age and condition of many of the existing pieces, as well as inclusive features that were already incorporated into some of the existing equipment.

Discussion regarding items to include in the development list followed. Having a study done to assess potential locations for a skate park, rather than proceeding directly to trying to fund an actual facility, was discussed. In the course of discussion, the need for improvements/repairs to the rubberized path in Stephen Decatur Park and overall grants' processes followed.

Ms. Bohlen reminded the Commission that the Mayor and Council may have other projects that they wish to see included, or they may re-order the list during their discussion at the Monday, July 12, 2021 meeting.

In the course of discussion, it was noted that annual inspections of the equipment were conducted by a certified contractor and the Public Works department was able to affect most minor repairs and maintenance. The need to meet on site to look at the equipment and further review the bigger issues was discussed. Ms. Bohlen indicated that on-site meetings for the fall could be planned.

Ms. Bohlen also asked for a motion for development of a grant application for the current funding round of Community Parks and Playgrounds for the Basketball Court Lighting. Ms. Hooper moved to go forward with the

application, Ms. Stearns seconded, and approval was unanimous. Ms. Bohlen noted that this would be presented to the Mayor and Council for approval at their July 28, 2021 or August 9, 2021 Meeting.

Ms. Bohlen asked for a motion for the Development Program. Ms. Stearns moved, and Ms. Dufendach seconded, the items and their order to be recommended to the Mayor and Council were:

1. Henry Park Basketball Court Lighting
2. Burbage Park Ping Pong Tables
3. Skate Park Study
4. Inclusive Playground

Ms. Bohlen asked the Commission if they wished to participate in National Night Out scheduled for Tuesday, August 3, 2021. Following brief discussion, but without formal motion or vote, consensus was to participate. Ms. Bohlen indicated that she would follow up with details.

Discussion regarding the rubberized path in Stephen Decatur Park followed. Ms. Bohlen reminded the Commission that the pathway was approximately \$400,000 when it was installed and would likely be in excess of \$500,00 to replace at this point and grant funding was unlikely to be available as this would be considered a maintenance issue.

Ms. Bohlen noted that the Parks Commission was invited to attend the Mayor and Council Meeting on July 12th. In addition to the Development Program, she would also be presenting the Commemorative Program for Mayor and Council approval.

She brought the Commissions attention to the report and materials provided by Worcester Youth and Family regarding their summer programming.

Lengthy discussion about clean-up, particularly in Stephen Decatur Park, followed. It was noted that the annual Clean-Up Day had not been held for two years due to the pandemic. Mr. Charles noted that the Public Works Department had been working on the flower beds and general maintenance at the parks and Ms. Bohlen reminded all that the parks were not intended to emulate a golf course or manicured lawn and also that the Town was having the same difficulties in filling jobs as other industries and Public Works was having to prioritize other tasks over things like weeding flower beds. Discussion about volunteer opportunities followed and Mr. Charles noted that if a volunteer could spend even a short period of time pulling weeds and just leave them in a pile, Public Works would be happy to dispose of them. Discussion of holding a fall clean-up day followed. Discussion continued. Ms. Dufendach noted that she would be available to assist volunteers with weeding.

Mike Wiley congratulated Ms. Bohlen on her recent 30-year anniversary with the Town and the rest of the Commission echoed his comments.

With no further items for discussion, Ms. Dufendach moved to adjourn the meeting at approximately 6:35 PM. Ms. Stearns seconded, and approval was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,



Mary T. Bohlen
Deputy Town Administrator
Liaison to the Parks Commission

2021-22 Just Walk Worcester

Fun Walk Schedule

The health department and community partners encourage you to visit one of our local parks and take a walk with your family, friends and neighbors.



OCTOBER 6, 2021

Walk Maryland Day & Scavenger Hunt
Cypress Park, Byrd Park, Stephen Decatur Park (self-directed)

NOVEMBER 5, 2021

Berlin Fall Glow Walk
Stephen Decatur Park 5pm

DECEMBER 6-17, 2021

12 Days of Just Walk
Newtown Park, Byrd Park, Herring Creek Nature Park (self-directed)

FEBRUARY 19-20, 2022

Go Red Scavenger Hunt
Cypress Park, Byrd Park, Stephen Decatur Park (self-directed)

APRIL 9, 2022

Tortoise & Hare Dare
Shad Landing 9am

MAY 7, 2022

Berlin Spring Walk
Stephen Decatur Park 9am

JUNE 11, 2022

Pocomoke Summer Walk
Newtown Park (Time TBD)

For more information contact:

Worcester County Health Department

410-632-1100 Ext. 1108

To sign-up for *Just Walk* visit justwalkworchester.org

