

**MINUTES OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND PUBLIC
PROPERTY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON APRIL 14, 2016**

A City Council/Natural Resources and Public Property Committee meeting was held on Thursday, April 14, 2016 at 7:00P.M. in the City Council office, Room #204, City Hall.

Committee Members present: Committee Chairperson Thomas Sullivan and Councillor LePage. Councillor Barrett also attended.

Absent: Councillor Bevilacqua but agreed to allow the meeting to be held in his absence due to time sensitivity of the survey and plan.

Department Head: Robert Moore, Environmental Health Technician

Attendees: Fred Parker and Peter Carbone – Open Space and Recreation Commission, Larry Olasky-Bradford Rail Trail Committee

The following item was discussed:

- 1) **Doc. # 38-M** – Communication from Councillors Sullivan and LePage requesting a discussion relative to the Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Councilor Sullivan introduced the agenda item relative to a discussion about the status of the Open Space and Recreation Plan, and introduced Rob Moore to provide the attendees with an update.

Rob Moore explained that 552 total responses have been received to the OSR Survey which is more than twice as many received the last time a survey was conducted prior to the finalized OSR Plan adopted in 2007 and expired in late 2015. Rob further explained that the purpose of having an OSR Plan is to remain eligible to apply for various state grants and funds for our open spaces and recreational facilities.

Rob Moore then presented the major highlights of the survey responses, which include:

- Improving overall our parks and recreational facilities
- Improvement of public safety/law enforcement presence in our parks and recreational facilities
- Establishing a plan for routine maintenance of all our parks and recreational facilities, particularly our inner city parks and recreational facilities such as Swayze Field and Portland Street Playground
- Creating a comprehensive marketing plan for all our parks and recreational facilities
- Better branding for the parks and recreational facilities, perhaps adopting standardized brown and white signage which are the traditional colors for park signage
- Exploring more public transportation options for residents to our parks and recreational facilities
- Enhancing our city web site with more extensive parks and recreational facilities information, to include specific attractions or features for each of our parks and recreational facilities, such as where the playgrounds are, where the ball fields are, where the hiking and mountain biking trails are, etc.
- Dealing with trash and vandalism issues
- Adding rest rooms to key parks and recreational facilities such as Winnekenni Park and Riverside Park
- Better lighting at Riverside Park
- Establishing additional tennis courts in our Parks

- Renovating the Veterans Memorial Skating Rink
- Creating a new Skateboard Park
- Ensuring all our parks and recreational facilities are handicapped accessible
- Improved and maintained landscaping at our parks and recreational facilities

Rob Moore concluded his presentation by informing the group that the next step of the OSRC will be to compile survey results and incorporate said results into a new draft OSRC Plan for further vetting and final Plan submission by July 1, 2016 to the state. Rob also mentioned that he is currently having the current survey translated into Spanish for distribution to Latino residents with the assistance of Councilor Vargas and the various neighborhood associations and Community Action, Inc.

Councilors Sullivan and LePage opened the meeting up for questions, and audience members expressed their support of the survey recommendations and a brief discussion took place relative to support for specific items.

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

April 21, 2016

Thomas J. Sullivan, Chairperson
Natural Resources and Public Property Committee
Haverhill City Council

TJS/bsa

c: Mayor James J. Fiorentini
City Councillors