

Buckingham Pond Conservancy

1/31/2010 Meeting Notes

Just over 50 people attended the First Annual Meeting of the Buckingham Pond Conservancy at the Bethany Reformed Church on Sunday, January 31, 2010 from 2:00 to 3:30 pm.

During the meeting we

1. Shared our 2009 accomplishments (list attached)
2. Adopted the bylaws (attached)
3. Elected the Board of Directors as follows:
 - President: Anne Savage
 - Vice President: Harry Ermides
 - Secretary: Mark Bechard
 - Treasurer: Paula Martinez
 - At Large: Marsha Nadell Penrose
 - At Large: Felton McLaughlin
 - At Large: Eileen Gerrish

Note that as per the bylaws all members of the board will serve for two years, except Anne Savage and Paula Martinez who, as the first President and Treasurer will serve for three years.

4. Divided in to four working groups by topic

Working Group Breakouts

The bulk of the meeting was spent brainstorming and planning within four Working Groups:

- Water Quality and Pond Ecology Working Group
- Public Spaces and Safety Working Group
- History and Research Working Group
- Outreach and Membership Working Group

The groups met and then reported back to the meeting attendees. On the following pages are the main findings from each of the groups.

Outreach and Membership Working Group

- Ask other neighborhood groups, churches, temples, neighborhood associations to help us publicize meetings, efforts, events
- In the next full membership email, ask for emails/names of friends and neighbors who might like to join
- Have an opt-in option on our website for joining our email list
- Continue to use posters posted around pond to promote events. Seek to have a lockable bulletin board permanently installed (near Jack's shed or next to existing pond sign)
- Publicize in existing media (Metroland, Times Union. etc)
- Block off road around pond to hold a block party (w/media coverage) around Earth Day?
- Hold a children's education day (Ruth Perham lives in area and is a children's musician)
- Skating Party (day or night) w/bonfire, hot chocolate, etc
- Sponsor a hockey scrimmage with two local teams
- Invite famous hockey player for an afternoon skate
- Skate with Santa during the holidays
- Add a Facebook presence for the pond and the Conservancy
- Meeting: Monday, March 1, 7 p.m., Home of Eileen Gerrish

Water Quality and Pond Ecology Working Group

- Initiate Water Testing
- Ensure continuous and proper operation of silting pump
- Suggest that Washington Park Lake be added to city's storm water management. (Paul Swyer made this suggestion believing that it would result in better water quality for BP)
- Monitor and suggest steps to eliminate water runoff(i.e. chemicals)
- Encourage city to patrol and sign the New Scotland side to eliminate dumping of grass and leaves.
- Partner with high school nature/science groups to help cleanups and to ID ecological issues. (Audobon,4-H,etc)

Public Spaces and Safety Working Group

- Litter - clean-ups, coordinating w/ DGS, # and placement of receptacles
- Ice-skating - plowing of snow in skating areas and coordination of safety checks w/ DGS
- Fountains - times of operation, maintenance (1 seems to be broken)
- Signage around park - uniformity of look, more historical info on park, include info on BPC to help recruit more members
- Logs in the water for turtles to rest on (some were removed last summer) - does this belong in ecology/water quality?
- Landscaping - flowers, trees, coordination w/ DGS, should this be a sub-committee headed by someone?
- Lighting along paths
- Invasive species - plant and animal

- Trails - maintenance of existing ones, adding new ones
- Police presence - at night, #'s to call, ongoing relationship w/ Center Station
- Port-o-Let - can it be a more discreet location (near toolshed)?
- Playground - safety from traffic on Berkshire, size of swings, etc.
- Audobon designation - Jack McEneny may spear-head; could lead to add'l funding - could it possibly belong in the Outreach group?
- Fencing - ugliness of metal car railing along Berkshire, fencing around parking lot by playground
- Benches and tables - placement and #, there don't seem to be enough

History and Research Working Group

- Determine and document what legal protection exists for the pond and park and where the gaps are. In particular Ownership? Zoning? State Designation? "Forever Wild"? Wetlands? Understand how secure these protections are.
- Clarify what city, county, state & federal resources could help us understand these issues
- Develop a clear map including the boundary, any utilities
- Document the current physical status of the pond through video or photography. This will give us a baseline to compare to the future
- Oral History project – could WAMC be a resource?
- Research grants available
- Resources to reach out to: WAMC, City Historian
- Resources we need: Municipal/Land Use Attorney, Librarian/Archivist