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Recreation Board Minutes  
March 6, 2024.

Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to open the meeting  
Ann Brennan - So moved  
Tyler Stanley - Second  
All in favor - The motion is approved.

Roll Call of Members  
Eric Acton - Present  
Ann Brennan - Present  
Roger Carroll - Present  
Clare Ceballos - Arrived Late  
Aly DeAngelo - Present  
Patrick King - School Board - Present  
Tyler Stanley - Present

Lori Ann Feibel - City Council Rep.

Roger Carroll - Patrick , welcome as representative of the School Board.

Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to approve the February 7, 2024 minutes.  
Ann Brennan - So moved  
Clare Ceballos - Second  
All in favor - The motion is approved.

**Into The Woods Festival Decision Sunday September 29, 2024.**

Mike Price - We had Tim and Joe here to talk about the proposed September 29, 2024 date for the Into The Woods Festival in Jeffrey Park. They are thinking about it differently (a) it is on a Sunday and (b) it is during the day. It is the board's authority to give permission for up to two alcohol events in Jeffrey Park a year. This is the only request we had for this year. It would be helpful if we can take a vote so they can move forward with their planning.

Roger Carroll - I know it was mentioned last meeting but I just want to confirm that this date is good with the Recreation Department and it doesn't cause any problems.

Mike Price - No it doesn't and frankly Sunday is a good day for us.

Roger Carrol - And it won't interfere with any reservation at the Mansion for any weddings.

Mike Price - No. And it also works well with the spacing out of other special events.

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Ann Brennan - I have a comment. I noted that there were some concerns about the noise and too many bands and too late in the evening. It seems as if they addressed all those concerns with the reformatting of this on Sunday in the afternoon. With more acoustic bands and no lights into the woods. Seems they made some of these changes to recognize some of the concerns folks had.

Mike Price - They have addressed the concerns. They had a meeting this morning and they are looking at 11:00am - 5:00 pm or 6:00 pm at the latest. The noise concerns came at 10:30 - 11:00 pm and there is no lighting so that is no longer a concern.

Some of this was dictated because Sunday was the only day available but also some of this is that they want a more family event and change the feel from around the event that it is a family friendly event.

Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to approve the In To The Woods Festival for Sunday, September 29, 2024 from approximately 11:00am to 6:00 pm

Clare Ceballos - So moved.

Tyler Stanley - Second

All in favor - The motion is approved

### **Jeffrey Park - Preservation and Enhancement Plan Presentation**

Mike Price - Thank you to the committee for all of their time working on this plan. Also thank you to OHM and Ashley and Josh for their leadership through this process.

This plan is separate from the Woodland Management plan that is yet to come. This plan received a unanimous vote of support from the committee at the February 28th meeting. We did not have a full committee present. This plan is done at a conceptual level.

Most if not all projects identified in this plan would require further study and design. For example the Four Season Shelter House. As we review the plan I encourage the board to focus on the ideas and not the details. We will address the details when we attack that particular project.

There was a discussion about the pickleball lights in the context of this plan on at least two occasions. There was not a consensus by the committee either for or against, we had some in favor and some against. They felt this wasn't the best avenue for making their determination. Ultimately this is under the purview of the board and will be a board decision. This is something we will discuss further as a board. We will talk here later and hear a plan from those in favor of the lights and how we want to move that forward separate from this plan.

Ann Brennan - Not all the elements in the plan were supported by all the committee. So I am happy to point those out to you if you want.

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Mike Price reviewed the Preservation and Enhancement Plan.

Park Planning Goals

Preserve and Enhance existing habitat and wildlife and minimize impacts to existing trees

Preserve and Enhance visitor interaction with the creek

Preserve and Enhance architectural integrity and history of the park.

Preserve and Enhance park experience for residents of all ages and abilities;camp and preschool kids.

Preserve and Enhance woodland and park amenities for future generations.

Mike Price - Those were our guiding principles for the development of this park plan.

There will be a separate Woodland Management Plan.

Mike Price then reviewed the Park Enhancement

#### *A Woodland Habitat Enhancements*

##### *B Natural Woodland Edge No-Mow Garden*

Mike Price - There are areas in this plan that have adjustments than the general park overall plan .There are different areas of no-mows that are designed to transition from open space to the woodlands and create more of a buffer between open space to woods edge. There are different areas that call for that throughout the park land

##### *C Front Lawn Decorative Ground Cover Plantings*

Mike Price - A lot of discussion about additional improvements in the front lawn in terms of enhancing the trail system. It is in the future as to its exact location and the material it will be made of.

Ann Brennan - This was an area where there was not 100% agreement.

Mike Price - I want to say this will not impact our open green space on the front lawn and we would not lose programmable space.

Ann Brennan - It is a major new element.

Mike Price - It is a different feel.

##### *D Natural Permeable Trail*

##### *E Wayfinding and Signage Improvements*

Mike Price - We are actively in the process of looking at templates for signs and looking at different interactions throughout the park. So it is happening . This plan recognizes that signage needs to be addressed

##### *F ADA Trail Connection*

Mike Price - The plan wants to create a path that gives access into the woodlands for people with mobility issues, right now the mulch path really doesn't do that. At the creek there is a proposed overlook so there is a destination point .It allows the user an out and back.

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*G Infrastructure Maintenance (Boardwalk, Bridges, Fencing)*

Mike Price - This covers regular maintenance including redoing the boardwalk and other things along the creek, ongoing maintenance that needs to occur. This is in the budget.

*H Overlook*

Mike Price - A new overlook, south of the existing boardwalk. This would be at a much higher elevation. One overlook you are at creek level this one you are experiencing the creek from a much higher elevation. Again it provides accessibility.

*I Furnishing Improvements*

Mike Price - The plan calls for additional seating along the way, especially in the woodlands.

*J Stepping Stone Water Access*

Mike Price - Another area that maybe didn't have full consensus within the group was proposed additional stepping stones to water access to the far north end. Today it's an area that is a beaten path where animals and or people are engaging with the water. It is much closer to the water table level. The discussion was to more formalize that. Right now people are just running through mud to try to get into the creek or have some interaction with the creek

*K Entry Improvements*

Mike Price - Entry improvements off Clifton Ave. Path lighting from the tennis courts to the Mansion. This is really needed considering it's used as overflow parking for Mansion events so you have people walking through there with very little lighting. That would be a nice improvement.

*L Path Lighting (Minimize light pollution)*

*M Terrance Wall Maintenance*

Mike Price - This is just an ongoing maintenance process reflecting the fact that this is a hundred and ten year old wall. We will have to spend some additional funds and what that looks like.

Just to bring the board up to date on what we did. We had one section of that fail about 15 years ago, off the south parking lot so that whole section was redone. It's likely others will fail in the future. We need to do preventative maintenance and also what we need to do if it gets to that point it has to be replaced.

*N Mansion Landscape Integration and Uplighting*

Mike Price - Includes uplighting on the Mansion especially on the back side. The back side doesn't have the same sort of lighting as the front. Having some lighting on the back would be a nice improvement to the Mansion.

We want to continue to expand our irrigation to make management of plant material more successful

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### *O Tree ID Signage Improvements*

Mike Price - This is somewhat part of the signage package.

Mike Price - This is the overview. Does anyone have any questions?

Patrick King - You mention the stepping stone access, and I am concerned with the water access.

Ann Brennan - I was the one who brought that up. I was worried about it from a safety feature standpoint. I just wonder if it would attract kids to it to the point where it might be a determinant. They may use it as a jumping up point. I don't want it to flow over the water level that naturally flows over the banks. I don't know if it's necessary if there is a safety factor involved.

### *Inspirational Images*

Mike Price - The next couple of pages are Inspirational Images. Just give some suggestions about what they may look like.

Clare Ceballos - At one point I was part of a group loosely associated with Bexley Recreation that talked about benches, chairs having consistency throughout the whole city.

Mike Price - Was that the naming rights? That ultimately focused more on bigger stuff.

This is smaller like "In Memory Of" No this did not dive into that at all.

Clare Ceballos - There is not a standard we are following

Mike Price - Not in the context of this plan.

Clare Ceballos - Not a standard we are adhering to

Mike Price - We do have a standard in that we have teak benches but this did not dive into that sort of detail.

### *West Meadow*

Mike Price - This is down by the pool lot. The Camp Jeffrey Park site. There are some new trails that connect along the southern portion of the meadow that connect to existing trails along the pool lot. Pool lot trails create a much more natural look and reduce the environmental impacts by catching some of the runoff water into some gardens before it ends up in the creek. The aesthetic is much nicer than what is there now. They are projecting the loss of 4 or 5 parking spots. It also calls for permeable pavement pavers.

Want to move the trash receptacle from the west end of the parking lot, it gets moved to the side between Clifton and the parking lot. With the idea that there is a really good opportunity to engage with the creek at that point and we really weren't using that space the way it should be used based on the layout of the park.

That calls for an overlook there looking into the creek including the kayak launch. The idea is there is a better way to use that space than what we currently have which are trash receptacles. You will see at the shelter some finishing improvements to the shelter. Some stone around the posts. Some hardscape around the shelter that connects to the basketball court.

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Roger Carroll - Wasn't there some discussion about getting rid of the dumpsters ?  
Is that still ongoing ?

Mike Price - No. We just can't find a way to get it out of the park.

Roger Carroll - The kayak launch , are they even being used ?

Mike Price - The launch is not being used. The kayaks get used from time to time. We do not rent them out. We have done some programming around them.

Ann Brennan - We need to point out that this is true through all the new construction, once the engineers look at everything then they could recommend changes where to put things.

Mike Price - Yes I expect a decent number of consultants. Larger specific projects will go through their own design process with the board having final say over it.

Mike Price - There are some additional changes to the north path and how it connects. There is an additional path there. The parking lot is a big transformative adjustment. We need to think of all the ways the parking lot is used. We need to continue to think strategically on how things fit in spaces as they change.

Eric Acton - What can you share with us about the Historical Society and its use, how often is it used. What kind of discussions have you had about that footprint?

Mike Price - there is money in the capital improvements for that building. We have been working with the Historical Society and there have already been some improvements. There will be a new roof, new painting . new windows.

We have had ongoing conversions and the Historical Society like the space and want to continue in the space. They want to continue to improve their recognition in the community and improve access into the space. The intent is for the Historical Society to continue to use it and improve the building. They want to maintain the architectural integrity of the building.

Eric Action - Does that kind of money come from your budget?

Mike Price - No the money comes from the capital budget

Eric Acton - When you look at the service area and we keep replacing green space and that might be an opportunity to reclaim green space.

Mike Price - Over the last 6 or 8 years we talked about an addition to that building. Could it become a Senior Center with an addition on it. We talked about whether the building should go away. At this point the Historical Society is really vested in that building

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Aly DeAngelo - Is it an historical building?

Mike Price - Yes it is historical

Roger Carroll - How do they use the space? Do they have archives?

Mike Price - They meet there and have exhibits there. They have archives.

The building was the caretaker's cottage for the Jeffrey's. The predecessor to Ron Gould actually lived in that building and paid rent to the city.

There used to be a staircase that went to the basement and a storm staircase that also went to the basement. They improved the storm access so they can get things in and out.

Mike Price - The South end of the meadow is where the Pickleball and Tennis courts and parking lot.

The access point for the ADA trail may tie into the Four Season Shelter . Need to improve on bike racks.

There is a proposed one way in and one way out to the park. The normal Clifton would be an entrance. You would exit by way of a new curb cut and drive on the west side of the Pickleball Courts. Between the Pickleball Courts and the pool. It would drastically help the traffic flow in the park. Especially pick up and drop off for camp.

We will create pedestrian access on the east side of the tennis courts.

Mike Price - The Four Season Shelter House will be more toward the woods side rather than out near the open space . It would encompass the restroom footprint. It will be angled to run parallel to the woods edge.

Ann Brennan - There will still be a buffer though even if it will be angled between the shelter and the woodlands?

Mike Price - It won't be setting up against the woods

Mike Price - We had a discussion about the pickleball lights. We plan to have a public hearing at the April Rec. Board meeting where we invite residents to come and speak specifically about pickleball lights.

Roger Carroll - It is good to hear from the community and what their thoughts are. I think it is important to hear from people.

Clare Ceballos - Is there a time line to make a decision?

Roger Carroll - No. After we hear the input we will discuss and then decide.

Patrick King- Are the tennis courts lights separate from the Pickleball lights?

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Mike Price - If we move forward with the Pickleball lights we would do the tennis courts lights at the same time. The tennis court lights are not efficient.

Mike Price - At the north end of the park, as we discussed, the playground has seen its life expectancy. We have money in the budget for a playground redo. The plan does not get into specific components of the playground. The design around this playground is that you have the standard play equipment but then as you move out toward the woodlands you create a more natural area on the edge of the woodland then it moves into the woodland. The experience is you go from a standard playground to a natural playground area.

They added a connective trail that would connect these different nodes on the edge of the woodlands.

We are going to begin conversations regarding designing that area. We have a budget for it and we also have some residents that have shown an interest in supporting this through fundraising. We want to get the process started in the next couple months. It's going to take some time. That will be one of the first of the bigger projects besides the four season shelter house that has funding for it. Just a reminder Four Season Shelter does not have funding to build only funding for design work.

Roger Carroll - What age group is the present playground geared to and would it be the same?

Mike Price - Right now it is 5 to 12 years old. We also have a Tot Lot for toddlers. It is in good condition and I don't expect to replace it. I expect a similar replacement of 5 - 12 years old. We Will need to balance the Preschool needs and wants with what the community wants.

Roger Carroll - Is the outdoor classroom used very much?

Mike Price - It is not.

Roger Carroll - So is it something that can be a valuable tool.

Mike Price - It could be valuable from a preschool perspective. Also from a rental perspective, you could hold an outdoor wedding there. It is an underutilized space but with the right enhancement it can be of value to the park.

Mike Price - From a process standpoint, and it doesn't need to be today since we are just digesting the plan today. But at some point it would be good for the board to vote on this plan. And that can also include taking some components out , it doesn't have to be all or nothing. There may be a part you want more information on.

From my perspective I think this plan does a really good job in areas where the park could use some TLC and opportunities for enhancements without changing the natural experience of the park.

Ann Brennan - The committee is going to continue to work on The Woodlands Management Plan and vote on that as well.

Eric Acton - Did the Bexley Bloomers have input in the plan.



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Ann Brennan - Mary McMunn was involved in the committee and she is active in that group and has been very helpful.

Clare Ceballos - The paving in the park in general is not changing is it , it doesn't look like there is significant changes.

Ann Brennan - The only thing that may be taking more green space is the Four Season Shelter.

Mike Price - From the plan "The improvements shown on the following pages reduce approximately 8,000 square feet total of vehicular pavement and structure footprints in the park."

Aly DeAngelo - Will the ADA paths be paved?

Mike Price - We don't expect them to be paved, we were talking more of crushed limestone.

Roger Carroll - Ann, thank you for all your hard work on this committee, it is very much appreciated.

### **Director's Report**

Mike Price - The State of the City has been postponed to Monday, April 15 at 6:30 pm at St Charles.

### **Year of the Parks**

#### **Skate Park**

Mike Price - We have a Skate Park committee on March 11 at 4:00 pm.

The public workshop where the final design will be revealed is March 27 at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall.

#### **Commonwealth Park**

Mike Price - City Council had a public hearing as part of the second reading on Resolution 01-24 supporting the unification of Commonwealth East and West. The Recreation Board supported the unification of Commonwealth East and West. We presented a similar presentation that the Mayor made to the board at the February 7th meeting. There was not any public comment for or against the resolution. The support from council seemed positive. Expect a vote from Council at the next meeting on March 12, 2024.

#### **Egg Dash**

Mike Price The Egg Dash will take place on Saturday, March 30 at 12 noon at Jeffrey Park.

#### **Jeffrey Woods Festival**

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Mike Price - We had a great turnout. Special thank you to Scout Troop 166 for their time and support. A huge thank you to Ron Gould and Grant Archer and their teams for all their hard work. We had a good turn out and produced over 150 bottles of Kelveden Maple Syrup which I believe it is our highest yield to date. We had the classic activities, the wood chop shop which had a long wait list. Unfortunately the portable sawmill was down so we were not able to use it. We did the maple syrup boil and we had activities for kids, pinewood derby cars, a wall of rope designed to teach them how to do different knots and the Scouts helped with that. We had the largest yield of making syrup in the eleven years we have been doing this. Around 155 bottles. We had 42 registered to make syrup so they will all receive them, and some will end up at the Bexley Emporium for sale around Arbor Day.

**Pickleball Lights Hearing - April Board Meeting**

Mike Price - There will be a Pickleball Lights hearing and that will be part of the April Recreation Board meeting.

Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to adjourn.

Ann Brennan - So moved

Aly DeAngelo - Second

All in favor - The motion is approved.