

City of Keene
New Hampshire

ASHUELOT RIVER PARK ADVISORY BOARD AGENDA

Tuesday, May 10, 2022 at 8:00 AM
Room 22 Upstairs, Recreation Center

- This meeting will be conducted in person and by using the online meeting platform, Zoom. The public may view the meeting online at www.zoom.com and click on “Join A Meeting” enter Meeting ID 816 1971 6338
- To listen to the meeting, please dial (646) 876-9923 and when prompted enter Meeting ID 816 1971 6338
- If you encounter issues accessing this meeting, please call (603) 757-1835 during the meeting

Members:

Arthur Winsor, Chair
Ruzzel Zullo, Vice Chair
Councilor Bettina Chadbourne
Steve Hooper
Paul Bocko
Suzy Krautmann
Dian Mathews

Staff:

Andy Bohannon, PRF Director

Alternate:

Thomas Haynes

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Call to Order
2. Acceptance of April 12, 2022 Minutes
3. Finance Report
4. Report from Friends of Ashuelot River Park Arboretum
5. Park Discussion – Master Plan Implementation
 - a. Educational Signage
 - b. Book Walks
 - c. Public Art
6. New, Other Business
7. Adjourn – Next Meeting Tuesday, June 14, 2022 at 8:00 AM

1 City of Keene
2 New Hampshire

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5 ASHUELOT RIVER PARK ADVISORY BOARD
6 MEETING MINUTES
7

Tuesday, April 12, 2022

8:00 AM

Room 22,
Recreation Center

Members Present:

Arthur Winsor, Chair
Councilor Bettina Chadbourne
Ruzzel Zullo
Paul Bocko
Dian Mathews
Suzy Krautmann

Staff Present:

Andy Bohannon, Director of Parks,
Recreation & Facilities

Members Not Present:

Stephen Hooper
Thomas Haynes, Alternate

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10 **1) Welcome and Call to Order**

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12 Chair Winsor called the meeting to order at 8:04 AM.

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14 **2) Acceptance of March 8, 2022 Minutes**

15
16 Chair Winsor announced a correction under item 4, first paragraph, stating the last line should
17 read "site" instead of "cite."

18
19 Mr. Bocko made a motion to accept the minutes of March 8, 2022 with the aforementioned
20 correction. Ms. Krautmann seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

21
22 **3) Finance Report**

23
24 Mr. Bohannon reported no new updates with the exception of pending expenses for Bartlett Tree
25 and the Prairie Moon Nursery item approved at the previous meeting, both of which are pending
26 but reflected in the budget.

27
28 Ms. Mathews inquired about the use of slack lines in Ashuelot Park Arboretum, commenting that
29 they put weight on the trees, which is bad for them and thus doesn't seem appropriate for the
30 park. Mr. Bohannon stated he has spoken to the individuals who use slack lines many times;

31 however, there are no official rules that prohibit their use. He mentioned that they do a good job
32 of wrapping the trees to protect them but it's still not ideal. Chair Winsor added that they had
33 trouble with this at the college because the slack lines damage the trees, especially if it's a young
34 tree.

35

36 Ms. Mathews added that she'd like to get people out of the beds and make everyone more
37 conscious that it's an arboretum. Mr. Bohannon stated they are in the process of updating City
38 Ordinances and are creating rules along with that, so they can discuss the aforementioned. Ms.
39 Mathews stated she is willing to help with that process. Mr. Bocko mentioned that the Rachel
40 Marshall site is a good place for slack lines.

41

42 **4) Report from Friends of Ashuelot River Park Arboretum**

43

44 Ms. Mathews reported that The Friends will postpone their master gardener presentation for the
45 May meeting, which will consist of a PowerPoint she and Ms. Casey put together and presented
46 to the Master Gardener Club. She stated their first project this season will be laying tarps on the
47 knotweed and they are aiming for May 7th if they can coordinate with volunteers and with Mr.
48 Bohannon for wood chips. She explained that they are covering an area that's approximately 20ft
49 by 150ft where they will lay the tarps over the knotweed and then cover with wood chips, which
50 will remain in place for 4 years. Mr. Bocko asked for clarification on if they'd be pulling the
51 knotweed and Ms. Mathews replied that they will not because the hope is that it is dead at the
52 end of the 4 years, and then plantings can be placed in the area.

53

54 Ms. Mathews next reported that they will be holding work meetings every first Saturday of the
55 month starting at 8am and going until 9:30 or 10am, depending on how hot it is. She stated on
56 Wednesday April 27th at 1:30pm they will be meeting with representatives from the CCCC
57 Opportunity Fund at the park to discuss the rain garden grant. She reminded everyone that they
58 will be receiving more money than requested and stated everyone is invited to the meeting where
59 they will select a spot for the rain garden and discuss appropriate plantings. She added that she
60 will meet with Binee H from CCCC separately to discuss the summer program at the park.

61

62 Ms. Mathews reported that Barry LeClair recruited some help and has charted every cobblestone
63 and is currently working on creating a new spreadsheet with over 33 names.

64

65 Lastly, Ms. Mathews stated they now have 10 master gardeners associated with the park, one of
66 them is a consulting master gardener and one will help out when needed. She added that they
67 started a Gmail account so they can send out communications.

68

69 Councilor Chadbourne arrived at 8:18am.

70

71 **5) Park Discussion – Master Plan Implementation**

72 **A) Educational Signage** – Mr. Bohannon introduced Kyle Bradford from Antioch
73 University. He reminded everyone that he, Mr. Bradford and Ms. Mathews have been
74 meeting regularly since February to work on educational park signage and noted that he
75 thinks the group will be very pleased with what Mr. Bradford delivered. Mr. Bohannon
76 mentioned that he feels Mr. Bradford’s work will help transform the park the way they
77 had envisioned it and welcomed him to present.

78
79 Mr. Bradford thanked everyone for having him and announced that it has been a pleasure
80 working with them and he is grateful for the opportunity. He began by showing an
81 example of signage similar to what they will use. He described it as a pedestal with an
82 18x24 angled sign, with 32 inches to the lowest part of the sign at a 30 to 45 degree angle
83 on a wooden post. He noted that these are standard sign measurements. Mr. Bradford
84 stated they have been talking with Mr. Poanessa from Keene Sign Worx to obtain a quote
85 for the signs and he told them to expect \$90 to \$200 for the sign panel only, with the
86 price range depending on how vandal proof they want the sign panels.

87
88 Chair Winsor asked if every sign has a QR code and Mr. Bradford answered that they all
89 do and will direct users to a website related to the sign theme, and then there are three
90 signs that will have a picture of the actual arboretum specimen QR code.

91
92 Mr. Bradford next showed a map of the park Master Plan and noted that the signs are for
93 the arboretum. He went on to share the locations and details of each sign, starting with
94 the conifer bed in the entrance from the bank. He explained that this sign will highlight
95 White Fir with a distribution map, information about the habitat and natural history, and
96 two ID tips for people to identify between firs and spruce. The QR code brings users to a
97 White Fir page on the ArborScope website. He explained the next location as the bed
98 near where there’s been work creating a pollinator garden. There they will highlight
99 information on why pollinators are important, what folks can do in their own yard with
100 regards to pollinators, and a focus on some less charismatic pollinating species.
101 Additionally, they will ask people to look out for the metallic green bee because it’s fairly
102 common in suburban gardens. The QR code will connect folks to a nonprofit website that
103 works on pollinator issues. Mr. Bohannon noted that Mr. Bradford took all the photos
104 pictured, which is impressive.

105
106 The next location Mr. Bradford covered is on the other side of the pollinator bed
107 highlighting another arboretum specimen, American Hornbeam. He stated the sign will
108 again show a distribution map, information about the habit and natural history, and the
109 QR code to learn more. Mr. Bohannon pointed out that you can see with this sign
110 information that NH is clearly not in the green on the map and it introduces why it’s
111 important that the species grows well here. There was short discussion on other locations
112 where Mr. Bradford found more American Hornbeam. He stated the tree can be found
113 along floodplains and he let people know to look out for them when walking north on the
114 Jonathan Daniels trail.

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Mr. Bradford then pointed out the next sign location along the bank where they are having the Japanese Knotweed issues and stated there the sign will focus on invasive species. It will highlight what invasive species are, why we care, what people can do in the community and at home, and it will have a focus on knotweed and what is being done at the park to control it. The QR code will take users to the UNH extension website for more information.

The next sign is located in the southern beds where the theme is to connect plants and how they impact animal life, and to encourage thinking about how we can increase biodiversity through increasing plant diversity. The sign will have a food web and the QR code will take users to a homegrown national park website which aims to restore biodiversity and ecosystem function by planting native plants at your own home.

The last location highlights the two mature River Birch with the distribution map and information about the habitat and natural history. He stated they could move the food web sign and the invasive species sign to different locations if they wanted.

Chair Winsor commented that the work Mr. Bradford did is impressive and inquired about a timeline from Mr. Poanessa. Mr. Bohannon stated it's dependent on the material and noted that Mr. Poanessa is very busy this time of year; however, he suggested once he builds them they could install them.

Ms. Krautmann asked if the sign would be welded to metal or wood posts. Mr. Bohannon stated they will be wood posts and Mr. Poanessa will try to make them durable and cost effective. He added that they need to consider potential damage and replacement costs, so potentially an aluminum based sign mounted to the wood post.

Councilor Chadbourne asked about the signs being vandal proof and stated her biggest concern is graffiti. She imagined something protective over them that could be removed if damaged. Mr. Bohannon stated Mr. Poanessa will have a varnish over it and they have cleaner that will remove graffiti to a certain degree; however, it's likely inevitable.

Mr. Bohannon stated Mr. Bradford was able to capture the message of seeing something in the park and then learning how to bring it home, which meets the mission of the board. Chair Winsor agreed and stated every trail that people walk could use interpretive signage and noted that Mr. Bradford did a great job. He thanked Mr. Bocko for finding Mr. Bradford to do the work. Everyone thanked Mr. Bradford for his great work.

Ms. Mathews made a motion to accept the educational signage presented by Mr. Bradford. Ms. Krautmann seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Bohannon stated he will get the finalized details over to Mr. Poanessa.

158
159 **B) Book Walks** – Mr. Bohannon stated the components are in and he has to pick
160 them up at the library but they will have to buy the posts, which will be wood and the
161 same height as the ones in Mr. Bradford’s presentation. He added that he hadn’t yet
162 discussed the project with his maintenance crew. Mr. Bohannon stated he is unsure of the
163 size of the signs but there are 20 in total. Ms. Krautmann stated the library will supply the
164 frame and maintain it but the board has to install them.

165
166 Mr. Bocko asked if the book walk is intended to be permanent and Mr. Bohannon stated
167 it is.

168
169 Chair Winsor asked if the walk will go over to the Rachel Marshall area and Mr.
170 Bohannon stated they can take it anywhere they’d like. Councilor Chadbourne
171 commented that they don’t want the park to get too busy and crowded and there was
172 general agreement. Ms. Krautmann suggested the Jonathan Daniels trail or RMOLL. Mr.
173 Bohannon stated he thinks they can put some in RMOLL or even bring them up and
174 around the park. He suggested they take a walk through and think about placement and
175 there was general agreement.

176
177 **C) Public Art** – Mr. Bohannon referenced pictures of the sculptures in their packet
178 and suggested the sculptures should be highlighted in the West Street beds, towards the
179 front so they are visible, and possibly next to a light. Ms. Krautmann reminded them that
180 they will be installed as sets of three. She reported that the pieces are still being made and
181 then all pieces will be fired and will then be transferred to Brattleboro, VT, where they
182 will be stained, glazed and fired for a final time. The estimated timeframe for installation
183 is mid to late June because the Brattleboro location only fires once per month. Ms.
184 Krautmann added that they will need to purchase rebar and quick concrete and help with
185 installation of the sculptures.

186
187 There was short discussion about the classes who created the sculptures taking a walking
188 field trip to the park and doing a celebration/unveiling of the art. Ms. Mathews suggested
189 doing the celebration on June 21st when the Conservation Commission and Harris Center
190 will be in the park and Mr. Bohannon stated the kids will be out of school by then. Mr.
191 Bocko stated an intentional celebration is important for the kids and both the school and
192 the community in general. Mr. Bohannon suggested they set the rebar and concrete ahead
193 of time and then possibly have a live event from the park with some of the kids, and then
194 have the rest of the school join in remotely. There was general agreement with Mr.
195 Bohannon’s idea. Ms. Krautmann also mentioned publicizing the event to show good
196 things happening in schools and Mr. Bohannon stated they could do it all at once
197 unveiling Mr. Poanessa’s signs as well, or stagger all the upcoming Ashuelot Park
198 happenings/installations and keep it in the news over time.

199

200 Councilor Chadbourne asked if they were to walk around and decide it's too busy in the
201 park for the book walk, could they choose not to do it. There was general agreement that
202 they need to move forward with the book walk but should be careful about placement.
203 They decided to try and walk through the park on Wednesday, April 27th around 2pm.
204

205 There was short discussion and agreement on putting the tiny door idea on hold for the
206 time being since there's so much else going on.
207

208 **6) New, Other Business**

209 Chair Winsor stated there is a new Horticulture teacher at the Career Center at Keene High
210 School who he heard is doing great things. He plans to connect with her about the park and
211 perhaps make a connection. Ms. Mathews suggested they could help with the pollinator garden
212 as well.
213

214 **7) Adjournment – Next Meeting Tuesday, May 10, 2022 at 8:00 AM**

215
216 There being no further business, Chair Winsor adjourned the meeting at 8:59 AM.
217

218
219 Respectfully submitted by,
220 Nicole Cullinane, Minute Taker
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222 Reviewed and edited by,
223 Andy Bohannon, Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director

