



Alliance Update

Winter 2003

Newsletter of the Brookline GreenSpace Alliance

GOOD NEWS IN BROOKLINE!

As open space advocates, we know we have much to be grateful for in Brookline—beautiful street trees, beautiful and historic open spaces such as the Emerald Necklace and Larz Anderson Park, exceptional conservation sanctuaries, an excellent, well run town-owned golf course, accessible neighborhood parks and playgrounds and much more! We are grateful for our people—our caring and accomplished open space managers and the Town employees who main-

tain our parks, fields and trees, our citizens who volunteer their time in many ways, including our Conservation Commissioners, the Park and Recreation Commissioners, all the neighborhood activists who lovingly tend their neighborhood open spaces, and our Town Meeting Members who support our green heritage.

And now we have more to be grateful for—the leadership in our Town intends to add a 10-acre park in the Fisher Hill neighborhood by acquiring the “excess” land from the

MDC. The land will be transformed into sorely needed recreational playing fields for our Town’s children. The addition of a 10-acre park in built-up Brookline is a landmark event. And, of equal benefit to our citizens, a commendable plan for the Newton Street Transfer Station property is close to being finalized. Citizen input was critical to the outcome, which will protect the Lost Pond Sanctuary, improve neighborhood quality of life and, at the same time, provide both a DPW service

facility and a new recreational field. Our Town leadership’s “can do” attitude and willingness to listen and work with the community has resulted in what is anticipated to be a Win/Win/Win solution! The Brookline GreenSpace Alliance offers “winter bouquets” all around—to the Town’s leadership and to its citizen activists. The cup is more than half-full in Brookline. Let’s keep the good news flowing.

CHAPTER 40B AND OPEN SPACE: BROOKLINE GREENSPACE POSITION

Chapter 40B of Massachusetts state law provides relief from local zoning code for developers who agree to include affordable units in residential developments. The law by-steps local zoning intentions and protections—including those related to open space and parking—in order to encourage development of needed affordable housing. In Brookline, residential developments at 121 Centre Street and St. Aidan’s church on Freeman Street, are currently being pursued under this law.

The law is complex, both legally and philosophically.

It’s goal, which is to create affordable housing for the many people who are unable to enter into the high priced real estate market in Massachusetts, is critical. Many people, including our teachers and public safety officials, are unable to live in the communities they serve because of the high costs of housing. However, the result of this particular law has often been to sacrifice open space and historic preservation in pursuit of this goal. The Brookline GreenSpace Alliance believes that open space is critical to our physical and mental well-being, and our community

cannot afford to sacrifice what is left of our natural environment. Creative solutions that can balance open space, historic preservation and affordable housing are desperately needed. We urge our local officials, planners, boards and commissions to find solutions that explore adaptive re-use of existing housing stock, and other tools before open space is looked to for housing or other purposes.

To help our readers better understand Chapter 40B as well as Brookline’s housing policy, we have summarized the information below.

Brookline GreenSpace

Alliance does not purport to be an expert in interpreting the law. Our interest is in the real and potential impact on open space, and our vigil extends to all development that has an impact on open space in Brookline. Our objective is to be true to our mission of preserving open space. Where 40B and other development is concerned we wish to educate our members on a matter of current import, and to state that development should not further reduce the open space necessary for our quality of life.

In the view of the Brookline

(continued on page 5)

Brookline GreenSpace Alliance office:
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Brookline Farmers Market
Brookline Soccer Club
Brookline Youth Baseball
Brookline Village Coalition
Campaign to Preserve St. Aidan's
Chestnut Hill Garden Club
Chestnut Hill Village Alliance
Climate Change Action Brookline
Dean Park Playground Association
Eliot Neighborhood Association
Fisher Hill Association
Friends of Boylston Playground
Friends of Brookline Reservoir
Friends of Carlton St. Footbridge
Friends of Clark Park
Friends of Corey Hill Park
Friends of Dane Park
Friends of Emerson Garden
Friends of Griggs Park
Friends of Hall's Pond
Friends of Hoar Sanctuary
Friends of Larz Anderson Park
Friends of Lawrence Park
Friends of Leverett Pond
Friends of Littlefield Park
Friends of Lost Pond
Friends of Monmouth Park
Friends of the Muddy River
Friends of the Old Burying Ground
Friends of Pierce Playground
Friends of Robinson Field
Friends of Sargent Pond
Garden Club of Brookline
Linden Parks Association
Museum of Transportation
North Brookline Neighborhood Association
Putterham Garden Club
Restore Olmsted Waterway Coalition
Salisbury Rd - Corey Farms Association
Washington Square Merchants Association

Newsletter Edited by Frances Shedd Fisher

AWARDS



CHARLES RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

Arlene (at left) and Hugh Mattison received the Charles River Watershed Association (CRWA) Citizen Activist Award, 2002.

Betsy Shure Gross (right) received the CRWA's Anne M. Blackburn Award for Protection of the Charles River, 2002.

Photo by Lauren Mattison



ENVIRONMENTALISTS OF THE YEAR

Isabella Callanan, President of the Friends of the Muddy River (pictured at left) was named Environmentalist of the Year by the Brookline Conservation Commission. Ed Zucker of Chestnut Hill Realty was also named Environmentalist of the Year by the Commission.

Photo by Jean Stringham

Join Us in protecting Brookline's GreenSpace heritage for generations to come.

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

As a member of the Alliance you'll receive our newsletter, periodic e-mail alerts to keep you informed of timely meetings and events affecting open space in Brookline, as well as invitations to educational forums and events on open space issues in our community.

- Acorn (\$25)
- Turfbuilder (\$50)
- Good Apple (\$100)
- Oak (\$250)
- Copper Beech (\$500)
- American Elm (\$1,000)
- Steward (\$2,500)

Mail to BGSA
40 Webster Place
Brookline, MA 02445

Contributions are tax deductible. Neighborhood Associations and Friends groups are invited to join the Alliance as Organizational members. Please call 277-4777 for information

BROOKLINE GREENSPACE ALLIANCE SUPPORTS A NO NET LOSS POLICY FOR PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

Brookline GreenSpace Alliance supports the protection and enhancement of all of Brookline's open spaces. Brookline is a town of slightly over 6 square miles with a population of 58,000, surrounded on three sides by a major city. Brookline's street trees, parks and other open spaces are defining characteristics of our Town—just as much as our excellent services are. The quality of life here is greatly enhanced by neighborhood parks, historic parks, conservation areas, playing fields, and even private open spaces, such as Allandale Farm. While there are many factors that affect the quality of life in any community, we believe the exposure to nature with its physical and emotional health benefits is of utmost importance in an urban/suburban setting. Decisions about public—and private—land use are critical to Brookline's character and its future.

Our town is old and historic, with little remaining opportunity for advantageous development. Needs of the Town for housing and other facilities

should be found in reuse and rehabilitation of existing structures, or in some cases in the replacement of existing buildings. We believe assumptions that lead to conclusions favoring new construction on current public open space derive from flawed assumptions about value. Aside from health and esthetic benefits, studies show that open space actually increases property values and property tax revenue, attracts business, and reduces demand for public services, as well as increases opportunities for community-building experiences.

Brookline GreenSpace Alliance strongly urges that Brookline plan for its future with the intention of conserving the environment and our open spaces. There is a present need in our community for increased playing fields. Additional residential development will only increase this need. Parks and playing fields are a significant benefit that Brookline residents young and old need and expect. Brookline Open Space Plans for 1994 and 2000 recommend the acquisition of open space to meet this and other current needs.

Based on the National Recreation and Park Association municipal benchmark of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 people in urban areas, Brookline in its 1994 Open Space Plan set its goal at 8 acres per 1,000 persons town-wide and 2 acres per 1,000 persons of neighborhood open space. Based on these figures the Open Space Plan listed the available open space at 358.75 acres; the need at 433.42 acres; and the deficiency at 74.67 acres. While it, too, adds to the quality of life in Town, half of the open space in Brookline is privately owned and may be developed. Several parcels have been developed since this Open Space Plan was published. The last major open space acquisition for public use in Brookline was in 1982.

Brookline GreenSpace Alliance supports a no net loss policy for public open space. We are one community. Our interests merge when it comes to basic amenities and services. The Brookline owned, covered reservoir at Fisher Hill, is a publicly owned open space that, as feasible, should be made available to all Brookline

citizens for recreational use. Unless comparable acreage of open space could be created in a denser part of Town, the loss of this open space would be a disadvantage to the health and well-being that trees and natural ground and opportunities for active recreation offer all our citizens. The purchase and development as a park of the MDC reservoir on Fisher Avenue will be a great benefit to Brookline, but cannot be justifiably linked to the loss of other Brookline open space, such as the Town-owned reservoir.

Development on our borders is threatening Brookline's quality of life. Protection of our remaining open space should be a priority for Brookline. The social and economic benefits of open space and the recreational opportunities it offers must be factored into decision-making with regard to development within Brookline. Public open space must not be sold or developed as an income source or to achieve other Town goals. Our appeal as a healthy, attractive, economically viable community depends on it.

Arlene Mattison

DANE PARK: AN ADVOCACY PRIMER

By Abby Coffin

(Editor's Note: In this interesting story of neighborhood commitment and perseverance, Abby Coffin details what it takes to rehabilitate one neglected park in Brookline. The story is ongoing. This format is an effort to show the timeline involved)

For years people have driven by the 17.23 acres that comprise Dane Park without realizing that the land behind that broken fence on the corner of Woodland Road and Hammond Street is a park with a very rich history. (See related story on page 6 "Historical Perspective: Dane Park.")

2000: There seemed to be little information available about Dane Park. Brookline Town Hall did not have the deed on file. A deed from 1953 was located at the Dedham Courthouse, copied and supplied to Town Hall, and thus began an effort to restore Dane Park, and make it open and accessible to everyone.

Late October 2000: Abby Coffin, Gissy Hutton, and Margie Greville went to the Park and Recreation Commission with a memo outlining the concerns and goals of the newly formed Friends of Dane Park. The Friends proposed the following initial steps to make the Park accessible:

- Determine the boundaries of the land.
- Clearly mark access to the Park at two existing gates—on Hammond Street near the corner of Woodland Road (used as an entrance route to Putterham Golf Course during the Ryder Cup), and a gate in a new fence installed near the entrance to the new town garage on Hammond Street.
- Clean the Park. Areas of the Park have been used in the past for dumping; old metal drums in various states of decay and broken glass need to be removed.
- Evaluate possible alternatives to the current drainage system of the adjacent town garage. A storm drain from the garage property empties into the southeast section of the Park.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE: BROOKLINE, ELECTRICITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

by Don Weitzman

Every week, it seems, new evidence emerges of the effects brought about by the Earth's warming: disease vectors creeping north, crop dislocations, more destructive weather events. While we in the Brookline GreenSpace Alliance are most directly involved with open space, we are also concerned with global warming, which ultimately may have profound effects on our environment, including the quality of our tree canopy and local open space.

Our member organization, Climate Change Action Brookline (which we helped found), has been active for the past three years promoting local efforts to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases produced by Brookline. Electrical generation is one of the primary sources of greenhouse gases. At CCAB's initiative, a Moderator's Committee was established to investigate, among other things, ways in which Brookline can support cleaner electricity and more efficient electricity use.

On one front, Brookline, along with several other municipalities and nonprofit organizations, signed on as a partner with Mass Energy, a well respected nonprofit, which received a grant to become a provider of clean electricity. After more than a

year's effort, Mass Energy has developed a green electricity product, which they expect to sell to the public at a premium of (just under) three cents per kilowatt-hour. For the typical household customer using 500 kWh per month, this would amount to about \$15 extra per month, or \$180 per year. Individuals who are able and willing to invest in cleaner electricity may finally have a chance to do so.

There is a wrinkle. The source of Mass Energy's grant is the Massachusetts Renewable Energy Trust (MRET), which is funded by a small surcharge on our electricity bills, and was written into the legislation that deregulated electricity in the Bay State. The purpose of MRET, as the name implies, is to encourage the development of renewable energy sources in Massachusetts. Recently, the outgoing Swift administration suggested diverting \$100 million from MRET to help deal with the budget crisis. While there has been an outcry against a raid of this dedicated fund, the outcome is still in question, and one casualty could be Mass Energy's green electricity offering, since they remain dependent on MRET assistance. Members of BGSA should consider contacting their state legislators with a

message that MRET funds should be off limits. If the Mass Energy offering becomes a reality, BGSA may have an important role in making the Brookline community aware of this clean energy option.

On another front, the Moderator's Committee has been exploring the feasibility of Brookline becoming a municipal light plant (MLP). This would mean the Town becoming its own electric utility, taking over from NSTAR the reselling and distribution of electricity. There are 40 MLPs in Massachusetts, although there hasn't been a new one since 1926. Most of the MLPs supply their communities at rates well below what NSTAR and other electric companies charge. And many do a much better job at maintenance, being more responsive to local concerns. It would appear that there are indeed many advantages for a community being its own electric company. The problem is that it is not easy to become one. To do so, a town has to engage in a lengthy and expensive negotiation process, with no guarantee of success. The Committee is evaluating this process, and also supporting state legislation to make the negotiating process easier for the Town. If Brookline does decide to move in this direction, BGSA and CCAB

will want to advocate for a significant green electricity component, and a strong energy efficiency program.

Finally, CCAB has also been influential in encouraging the Town of Brookline to consider a green electricity component in the new municipal contract that is now being negotiated. The current contract, which the Town negotiated five years ago with very favorable terms, expires in March of this year. A few months ago, Brookline put out a Request for Proposals for a successor contract, which includes a criterion that 5% of our electricity should be from renewable sources. Two deadlines, or "pricing days," have come and gone, and still there is no contract. CCAB will continue to encourage the administration to honor this important environmental goal.

If you would like more information, or would like to get involved, please contact Don Weitzman or Deirdre Buckley, Co-Chairs of CCAB, and members of the BGSA Board.

[Don Weitzman, a former Selectman and current member of the BGSA Board, chairs the referenced Moderator's Committee. Deirdre Buckley, Secretary of BGSA and Co-Chair of CCAB, is an Environmental Analyst with the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Office, which is part of EOEa.]

Early November 2000: Father James W. Skehan, professor emeritus from the Department of Geology and Geophysics at Boston College (who has published several books about the area—*The Geology of Newton and Puddingstone, Drumlins, and Ancient Volcanoes*), spent the morning with members of the Friends group and Erin Chute, Director of Parks and Open Space. Father Skehan pointed out the unique geological attributes of the Park—lava blocks, pillow lava, lava flows, volcanic ash rock, and the volcano dome. The visit also afforded Erin Chute the opportunity to view years of neglect—the old dump site and the storm drain from the Town Garage.

August 2001: A Dane Park sign at the Woodland Road and Hammond Street entrance is installed.

October 2001: The Friends of Dane Park joined the Brookline GreenSpace Alliance as an organizational member.

Late October 2001: Members of the Friends of Dane Park, Erin Chute, and members of the Park and Recreation Commission met at the Park. It was almost dusk by the time the group set out with maps and a brief history of the Park. They saw debris, significant impediments to passage, and evidence of the polluting storm drain from the town garage, and they considered the location of entrances to the Park.

October 2001: Roberta Schnoor, of the Conservation Commission, was contacted about the possibility of delineating Dane Park as a wetland area. Within a few days Tom Brady, Conservation Administrator for the Town, agreed to contact a botanist to look at Dane Park.

November 2001: I met with the Board of Selectmen at the invitation of Donna Kalkow.

November 27: At the Selectmen's Hearing on the park the Friends



CHAPTER 40B AND OPEN SPACE (continued from page 1)

Brookline GreenSpace Alert: soon you will be able to save money AND the environment, all from the comfort of home. Climate Change Action Brookline and the Brookline GreenSpace Alliance are designing an option to permit environmentalists to click a button on the BGSA web site, www.brookline-greenspace.org, and order compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) for delivery right to your door.

The most effective way to reduce the production of greenhouse gases is to reduce electricity use by using electricity more efficiently. One of the easiest ways to do this is to switch light bulbs, from incandescents to CFLs. The new generation of CFLs use one-fourth the electricity for the same amount of light, and last eight times as long as their incandescent counterparts. The higher initial cost of the CFL bulb is recovered in a few months, and the savings are dramatic. Now you can help reduce the threat of global warming, and do your pocket-book a favor at the same time. And, since BGSA will get 15% of the sales proceeds, you'll be helping Brookline GreenSpace as well. Watch for this new feature on the BGSA website.

GreenSpace Alliance, it is not ultimately in the best interests of current and future residents of our community to sacrifice what is left of our natural environment and breathing room to other worthy public and private goals. It is up to all of us to work toward housing solutions that provide current and future generations with the open space that is necessary for health and well being. We urge our elected officials, planners and local boards and commissions to protect our open space.

AN OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER 40B

In nearly every community in Massachusetts there is a need for affordable housing. The Massachusetts Comprehensive Permit Law (Chapter 40B, §§ 20-23 of the General Laws, enacted 1969) encourages the construction of affordable housing by permitting local Zoning Boards to override local requirements if environmental and planning concerns have been addressed. For instance, the ZBA may permit construction of housing at a density greater than that allowed by local zoning, or local height and setback restrictions may be overridden. State requirements may not be overridden. In exchange for the looser

zoning the developer is required to include at least 25% affordable units (as defined).

If less than 10% of the community's housing stock is subsidized housing—Brookline currently has less than 8%—a developer who is denied a comprehensive permit may appeal the ZBA decision to the state Housing Appeals Committee. If the dispute cannot be otherwise resolved the Committee conducts a new hearing to consider the impact of the proposed housing on local concerns—environmental, health, safety, design, open space, planning, traffic, etc. The statute requires that a comprehensive permit be granted when it is “consistent with local needs.”

Looser zoning requirements effectively incentivize developers, but, as with all development, negotiation determines the parameters of 40B developments.

BROOKLINE'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING POLICY

(Provided by Department of Planning and Community Development)

The Town seeks to use affordable housing initiatives and programs to help re-establish and maintain the historic status of Brookline as a mixed income community and to make use of opportunities—

funding, property, expertise, regulatory tools—to accomplish this. Specifically, the Town seeks to:

- Work with owners of “expiring use” properties;
- Welcome developers who bring expertise and additional sources of funding;
- Use Town-controlled funding to leverage additional resources;
- Use regulatory tools such as “inclusionary zoning” or “friendly” 40B's (those with appropriate density and good design);
- Assure resources expended guarantee affordability for the longest period possible;
- Serve, to the extent possible and appropriate, range of incomes currently excluded from Brookline housing market;
- Give preference for affordable housing, to the extent permitted by law, to Brookline residents and those with ties to Brookline, such as Town employees.

In conjunction with Town staff the Housing Advisory Board, which oversees the Housing Trust fund, advises the Board of Selectmen on housing policies; the Housing Opportunities Task Force seeks opportunities for mixed-income development.

requested that Dane Park be included in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the coming year.

November 29, 2001: after many phone calls and inquiries, the obsolete telephone poles and wires that ran across the Park were removed at the instigation of the Town. This was the first visible sign of improvement for Dane Park.

November 30, 2001: a group from BSC conducted a field investigation to delineate the wetlands in Dane Park. One ILSF (Isolated Land Subject to Flooding) and one isolated wetland were flagged that day. The group recommended returning to the site in early spring for verification of a vernal pool.

A second wetland site was, unfortunately, no longer in a clean state. With the building of the Town Garage, shrubs had been removed, wood chips had been dumped, and two culverts drain to this site. This section of the Park continues to be used by the Town Garage for drainage. The vernal pool has not yet been formally verified.

February 6, 2002: Stressing the critical nature of the environmental clean up, the Friends send a letter to the Capital Sub-Committee of the Advisory Board, requesting that Dane Park be placed on the CIP.

February 19, 2002: A park clean up scheduled for Earth Day, April 20, 2002, was cancelled. Questions about the nature of the pollution, made it impossible to plan a safe cleanup with wide community involvement. The cancellation was a serious setback for the Park, as the Civic Improvement Committee of the Chestnut Hill Garden Club had committed volunteers and support for the clean up; the students of Beaver Country Day School also hoped to participate.

Spring 2002: Erin Chute and members of the Friends of Dane Park met and agreed to apply to

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: DANE PARK

Dane Park's recorded history can be traced back to the 1880's when the greater area was known as Brookline Woodlands. This area encompassed 200 acres of land covering what are now Putterham Golf Club, The Country Club, Pine Manor College, and land across Hammond Street including Beaver Country Day School. (Putterham Golf Club, formerly Putterham Meadows, was swamp, marsh and peat bog.)

In 1884 Woodland Road appears on Brookline maps, and in 1888 the Cox family built a home which they named Roughwood. In 1904, the Dane family bought Roughwood with 100 acres of surrounding land. The farm property, where chickens and cows were kept as well as horses, was on Woodland Road. There were bridle paths in what is now part of The Country Club. Roughwood was reported to be a truly lovely spot.

In 1953 Edward Dane sold a parcel of land at the corner of Woodland Road and Hammond Street to the Town of Brookline, and gave an adjoining lot to the Town of Brookline for a public park. The two lots together, whose intended purpose was recreational or educational, make up the 17.23 acres of Dane park. The original estate, Roughwood, is now the main building of Pine Manor College.

In the 1960's, the Town of

Brookline published a brochure for Dane Park. The brochure encouraged the use of the stone grills still visible in the Park. Many early park users describe a playground and swing sets, though the equipment was later removed because of vandalism. Since that time, Dane Park has been sadly neglected, dumped on, and used as an entrance to Putterham Golf Course. In spite of its state of neglect, Boston College geology students have for years visited Dane Park to study its geological formations, unique within Brookline.

In 1999, when the Ryder Cup was held at the Country Club, Dane Park was used for access to the Putterham Gate. Although it was agreed that any facility used for the Tournament would be restored to its original state, or better, Dane Park was again neglected. The little gate previously



used at a pedestrian entrance was pulled out, and the cement posts were left lying on the ground. A large opening was created so that numerous trucks could drive through the Park. Maintenance trucks regularly used this entrance at this time. The construction of the Town's Hammond Street Garage facility, created drainage and pollution problems in the Park.

Friends of Dane Park group



Above: Stone grill at Dane Park
Left: View of the road through Dane Park.

formed in October 2000 (a member of the Brookline GreenSpace Alliance), and the negligence of the past is beginning to be addressed. Progress is being made toward restoring this wooded setting to a safe and attractive state. (See related story starting on page 3 by Abby Coffin, which details the events of the years since the Ryder Cup.)

TOWN ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT HYBRID VEHICLES

The Town is rapidly building on the hybrid vehicle initiative sponsored in fall 2000 by BGSA organizational member, Climate Change Action Brookline. Hybrid vehicles (gasoline/electric combos, like Brookline has purchased) produce lower environmentally damaging emissions and provide better mileage (use less gasoline) than autos that rely exclusively on gasoline-fired internal combustion engines.

The Town now owns five hybrids and plans to buy three more later this year, including a van. According to Deputy Town Administrator Stephen Cirillo, "The vehicles have been so successful that the Town expects to extend and enhance the program in future years. Additional hybrids to replace non-safety (police or fire) vehicles are definitely included in our long term budget planning." Steve added, "My wife, who works at the New England Wildflower Society, is pressing me to buy one for our personal car!"



the Massachusetts Historic Landscape Preservation Grant Program for a \$15,000 matching grant to undertake a thorough topographical and horticultural/botanical survey of the Park, an important step in preparation for 2005 and 2006 when Dane Park is scheduled for unspecified capital improvements.

Late March 2002: The Friends began fundraising to raise matching funds for the grant. A letter was sent to members of Friends of Dane Park and to area residents. The fundraising effort yielded approximately \$6,250 and the Town committed \$10,000 to the cause. The stated purpose of the grant application was to complete a Natural Resources Inventory.

June 2002: the grant application was accepted for funding.

September 23, 2002: the Director of the Bureau of Project Planning, Patrice Kish of the Department of Environmental Management (DEM), wrote Erin Chute "due to the constraints of DEM's FY2003

budget, decisions regarding grant awards have been deferred." Currently the matching funds raised by the Friends of Dane Park are being held by the Brookline GreenSpace Alliance (a 501c3 organization); there have been no further notifications from the Historic Landscape Preservation Grant Program.

October 22, 2002: Erin Chute wrote (in a letter to the Friends) "Wetlands delineation is supposed to be surveyed by Engineering once the leaves fall (the site visit already occurred)." It is the continued hope of the Friends of Dane Park that the survey and vernal pool certification will be completed in the year 2003.

Over the past year, The Friends of Dane Park, in conjunction with Father James Skehan, the Park and Recreation Commission and the Chestnut Hill Garden Club, have created geological signs for the Park. Erin Chute has agreed to

GREEN DOG POLICY: DOGS IN THE PARKS

The Brookline Park and Recreation Commission is currently working on a proposed pilot program to adjust Brookline's existing dog leash law. The Commission has held three public hearings in recent months to discuss accountability and cooperation of dog owners for the privilege of letting their dogs off leash in designated parks at limited off-peak hours.

The proposal would help dog owners and the public to share Brookline's parks and open spaces for the benefit of all. The pilot program would focus on education and eti-

quette for dog owners to help enhance respect for the general park user population, and the significant public investment in the Town's parks and open spaces.

For an additional fee beyond the traditional dog license, the proposed self-supporting "Green Dog" pass program would issue special green dog tags that allow the dog owner to have their dog off-leash at certain limited times and locations. Obtaining a green dog pass would require the owner to read an educational brochure explaining by-laws, park policies and etiquette.

The plan also calls for the appointment of a dog control contact person at the police department to work with the Park Ranger program to report violations and talk with dog-owners.

The goal of the program is also to develop self-policing citizen volunteers made up of responsible dog owners who would help educate all dog owners.

"There are responsible dog owners who have stepped forward and want to see this pilot program work. From what we have heard, The "Green Dog" Pass program

would provide a much needed incentive for cooperation and compliance," said Mary Dewart, Park and Recreation Commissioner.

Policies for the program are still being developed. The Commission may submit a warrant article for the Spring Town Meeting that would allow relaxing the leash laws for this pilot program. A copy of the initial draft report may be found on-line at <http://www.townof-brooklinemass.com/Recreation/>. Those who have questions or comments may also call the Park and Recreation Commission at 617-730-2069.

RALLY AT ST. AIDAN'S



Diana Spiegel, Chair of the Campaign to Preserve St. Aidan's, talking with the media at a Rally on January 11. Around 200 preservationists and open space advocates turned out on a bitterly cold day to support the neighborhood's efforts to save the heritage trees and assure a housing development that is in scale with the neighborhood. The Archdiocese is working with the neighbors toward a compromise. As Alliance Update goes to press, the 40B case is before the Zoning Board of Appeals, and a decision is expected mid-February.

Photo by Jean Stringham.

have the Town install the signs, creating a special geological walk. The Friends have not reached its goals as set out when we met with the Park and Recreation Commission. The survey has not been completed; the storm drains have not been removed; the debris has only been partially cleaned up; signage is yet to be installed. It is still not a safe area in which to plan a volunteer cleanup day. What has been accomplished?

- One sign has been installed
- A partial clean up has occurred
- Obsolete telephone poles and wires have been removed
- The wetlands have been delineated
- A partial survey has been completed
- Geological markers have been made but not yet installed

The Friends of Dane Park believe we have achieved major steps forward with the assistance of the Town. We now patiently await the completion of these projects in the hope that we can move forward to achieve our mission of making Dane Park an accessible open space for everyone to enjoy.

Catch up with our field trips and other events.

Check out our website
www.brooklinegreenspace.org
Click on the link to Current Events & Updates or the link to Programs.

For further information you can reach us at
bsa@world.std.com or
call 617.277.4777



Brookline GreenSpace comment: While Dane Park is not yet the accessible open space citizens desire and deserve, much has been accomplished through the diligent, consistent and courteous advocacy of the citizens who formed the Friends of Dane Park, and through the response of the Town to that advocacy. Much remains to be done.

Brookline GreenSpace urges the Town to move to complete the necessary work—our Town cannot afford to sacrifice vital open space, nor can government afford to be inattentive to citizen interests.

BICYCLE PARKING AND ZONING

by Andrew Fischer and Anita Johnson

Where do I park my bike? And where do I park my car? Brookline has a traffic congestion problem, a parking problem, and a noise problem, associated with overuse of automobiles. If people used bicycles for small errands in Town, these problems would probably be reduced by 40%. This is the figure Jane Holtz Kay uses in *Asphalt Nation* for the number of automobile trips that

If people used bicycles for small errands in Town, [car trips] would probably be reduced by 40%.

bicycle use, there must be places to park the bicycles.

In Cambridge, once racks were installed, bicycle use increased greatly. In fact, the more bicycle racks Cambridge installs, the more they are used. The same phenomena is starting to occur here in Brookline, where bike racks installed by the T at Washington Square, Cleveland Circle and St. Mary's, as part

of the T station renovations, are already attracting bikes on a regular basis, as are the racks that have been installed by the town along Harvard Street.

This is part of a national trend. One hundred seventy-four

municipalities around the country now have bicycle parking included in zoning requirements.

Racks encourage bicycling and do not compete with parking spaces because they can be placed in areas that are unsuitable for car parking.

Indeed, bicycling

frees up parking spaces; every bicycle being used is one less car needing parking.

We proposed a Town Meeting warrant article (Article 11) at last fall's Town Meeting that will help with both of these problems. The article proposes that bicycle parking, like motor vehicle parking, be required in reasonable numbers as part of the zoning bylaws. This would create bicycle parking throughout the town, in the form of bicycle racks in commercial areas and secure bicycle parking in office buildings, work-sites, apartments and other Brookline locations. The cost of bicycle racks is minimal. In fact, when racks, hanging hooks in underground garages or other space is allocated for bicycle parking, it adds virtually nothing to the cost of the building. And bicycle racks take up much less space than automobile parking. Nobody really opposes bicycle racks. It's just a question of reminding people to pay attention to the need, which our warrant article seeks to do.

Article 11 has stimulated a healthy debate not about whether we should require bicycle parking, but about how many bicycle parking spaces should be required for any given use. Should there be a higher ratio of bicycle racks in commercial areas? Should a bicycle parking space be provided for each apartment, or more than one? When should bicycle parking be indoors or covered for security and weather reasons? Should special provi-

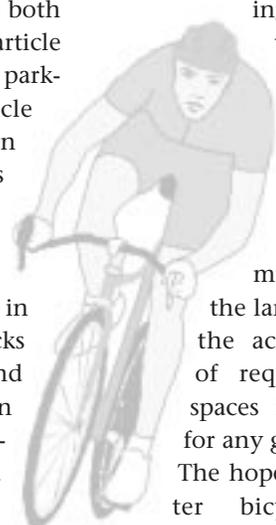
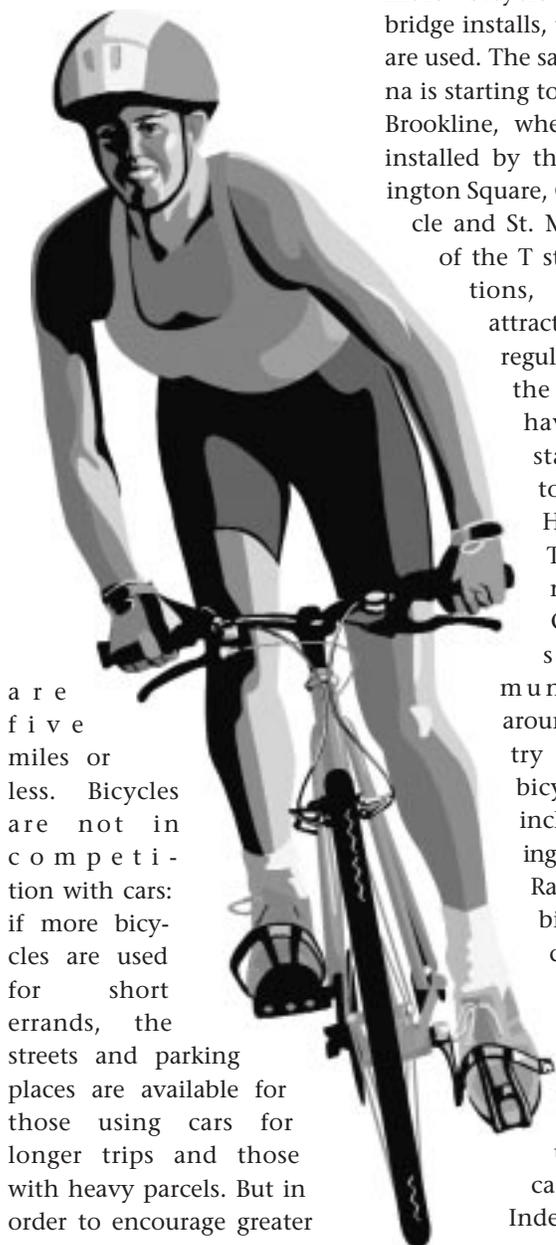
sions be made at T stops? What exactly are the requirements imposed in other communities? To resolve these questions, we have agreed to refer the bicycle parking zoning

language to the Comprehensive Plan Zoning By-law Subcommittee, and to work with the committee to revise

the language so that the actual numbers of required bicycle spaces is appropriate for any given land use.

The hope is that a better bicycle zoning requirement will be completed in time for the Fall 2003 Town Meeting. In the meantime, we are pleased at the discussion Article 11 has provoked, and at the support for bicycle parking it has generated. The Town Transportation Board, for example, has responded to Article 11 by recognizing that other steps are necessary to create more bicycle parking in commercial areas like Coolidge Corner. The Board has proposed a bicycle parking study for commercial areas, suggesting that street improvement funds can be used for bicycle racks where needed.

[The writers are respectively Chair and Co-Chair of the Brookline Bicycle Advisory Committee, which advises the Transportation Board on bicycle issues. Article 11 was a citizen petition.]



are five miles or less. Bicycles are not in competition with cars: if more bicycles are used for short errands, the streets and parking places are available for those using cars for longer trips and those with heavy parcels. But in order to encourage greater

WEATHER AND TREES – WHAT TO EXPECT

Tom Brady, the Town's Tree Warden and Conservation Administrator, answers some basic questions about trees—the why's and wherefore's of fall color, spring bloom, and more.

Frances Shedd-Fisher: What was going on with the shade trees last fall, Tom? Fall was late and then the leaves hung on a long time, but the color wasn't as intense as most years.

Tom Brady: To answer that question we have to go back to the prior spring. We had a warm spell very early in the spring of 2002, followed by a cold snap. A full bud set occurred during the warm spell, and then we got a frost that burned that entire bud set off. The trees had to start from scratch, which put them on their second bud set. Then about five weeks later, about the second week in March, a similar circumstance occurred. So, for April through the fall the trees were on their third bud set and their third set of leaves. So, the trees were inherently under stress; the third bud set was the final emergency opportunity for the trees to create the nutrients and sugars they need to grow. The necessary sugars were produced and carried through the summer and into the fall, but because the trees were under stress and had less time to develop, they had less storage capacity for the nutrient matter that has to get from the leaves to the roots for storage for the winter.

Without getting into all the chemistry, that transfer of sugars is the process by which we

see those brilliant colors. Then, what triggers that final push is a real cold snap that says to the trees it's time to get ready for winter. That's when you get the brilliant fall color. This past fall we just didn't have that. It was a temperate fall all the way into the second week of December. Then it

changed quickly. The leaves hung on, but never turned the bright colors we are used to.

Frances: So how is the winter weather affecting the trees, and what do you forecast for spring?

Tom: As we went into the winter, we got snow before we got a hard freeze, and so as the snow melted we got some infiltration into the root zone; that's a good thing. We've gotten some fairly significant snow fall since then followed by a real cold period. That's very effective for the trees, like having a blanket over the root zones. The snow cover keeps the roots warm while they are resting during the winter. So the root system looks good for spring.

The challenge we will have is because we went through three cycles of leaf drop during the previous year, the trees will continue to carry stress from that situation, and from the several previous years of drought.

In the spring I would expect to see less vibrancy of leaf color—not as dark a green, and thinner canopy. With the buds and blooms, we'll see more than we would typically because trees and shrubs push buds and blooms in reaction to stress. It's nature's way of assuring survival.

Frances: Thanks for the insight, Tom. At least we can expect more spring flowers. That's a cheering thought as we survive this bitter winter weather!



Tom Brady, Brookline Tree Warden, sizing up an oak on a recent Brookline GreenSpace field trip that looked at some Brookline's special trees.

DON'T MISS TOM'S NEXT FIELD TRIP FOR THE ALLIANCE

**HOW TREES FUNCTION
SUNDAY, MAY 18, 2003.**

**PLEASE CONTACT US FOR
MEETING TIMES AND LOCATIONS
AT BGSA@WORLD.STD.COM OR
CALL 617.277.4777**

The Brookline GreenSpace Alliance recently asked its members to share their thoughts on why open space is so important to their lives. The article below was submitted by Ed DeAngelo as part of this project. If you would like to submit an article, photograph, poem or picture of your artwork, we will post your piece on our web site for others to enjoy. Please email your submission to bgsa@world.std.com.

WINTER MONOLOGUE

On the day of the first snow in December, I sat inside our house, resentfully calculating just how perfect the conditions were for cross country skiing. The snow was thick and powdery; the sun bright; the wind low. And all of this had occurred on a weekend. There was only one impediment; with two young children and a host of pre-Christmas jobs to do, my wife and I were unable to travel to a trail. And so my skis stood in the shed, as I looked out the window of our house at Leverett Pond across the street. The view is always beautiful, but especially so in

the snow, the bare trees revealing the patches of ice on the pond, the ducks and geese paddling in the diminishing pools of unfrozen water, the trails that are usually busy with bicyclists and dog walkers now empty, smooth, and glistening.

And then I realized that I didn't need a car in order to ski; I just needed an hour's break from my jobs at home so I could cross the street and head out. Within moments, I had skied past the ball field, traveled along the east side of Willow Pond, and was circling Ward's Pond. Moving slowly through the untouched snow,

I could hear nothing but the creaks of branches weighted down by snow or the sudden, startling call of geese overhead. The pond always feels like an oasis in the city, but on a snowy weekend day, without even the distraction of traffic noise from the Jamaica way, it could have been wilderness. I was completely alone except for squirrels scratching hungrily in the trees, or sparrows rustling in the bushes. I worked my way around the pond, experiencing the freedom of making a path where none is visible; my only impediments were fallen branches, or the spot where

the trail ends and you have to ford a tiny stream to head north. My escape was over in an hour. I headed home, and resumed my duties, but without any sense of deprivation. I could look out the window now with satisfaction, instead of resentment, seeing the trail I had made in the snow, just steps from the warmth and comfort of home.

[Ed DeAngelo is an attorney and author of "The Lies That Bind," published by William Morrow, 2001. He is a Brookline GreenSpace member who lives near Leverett Pond and Olmsted Park with his wife and young sons.]



BEYOND OUR BORDERS—NEIGHBORHOOD VIEW

CHESTNUT HILL WATERWORKS REDEVELOPMENT



Editor's note: This letter to the Brookline GreenSpace Alliance (edited for length) expresses the concerns of some Brookline and Brighton neighbors of the Chestnut Hill Waterworks about redevelopment of the site. Letters expressing alternate points of view, if offered, will be considered for the May edition of Alliance Update.

Since receiving Roger Blood's letter Brookline GreenSpace has learned that Boston College announced on January 30 that they will be submitting an acquisition offer for the entire Waterworks site. In addition, we understand that the Waterworks Advisory Committee (the entity that drafted the RFP and devised the new zoning) will add two new community seats—one from Brighton, and one from Brookline, and will permit Brookline to make a replacement appointment to the existing committee. Paul Saner will represent the Town of Brookline; Judith Selwyn, a highly regarded preservation professional and resident of Chestnut Hill, will hold the Brookline community seat.

January 21, 2003

The Chestnut Hill Waterworks site is a historical and visual treasure; it is also a substantial part of the neighborhood's open space resources. The amount of development that is permitted under the new zoning—currently under appeal filed by some neighbors—is more than the neighborhoods consider acceptable. We favor a project that puts emphasis on redevelopment of the existing buildings, with as little new development in the Pipe Yard site as possible.

We think that the new Development Area, including landscaped courtyards, should not exceed the paved area that was originally occupied by the Pipe Yard buildings (1 acre). This would allow the development to maintain the original 200 ft. set-back and preserve both the open feel of the landscape and visual alignment with the existing historic buildings. Both Brookline and Brighton neighbors wish to

preserve all mature trees.

New development should be of the highest caliber esthetically, and should echo the architecture of the Pumping Stations in order to preserve the existing architectural character of the site.

The new zoning allows a structure on Beacon Street to be from 60 - 75 feet in height, depending on set back. However, the maximum height allowed under the Zoning Code in Allston-Brighton is 35 feet, with 55 feet allowed on institutional campuses and along Commonwealth Avenue, as well as Beacon Street in Brookline. That is the logical range we would like the new development to adhere to.

We believe we should have an opportunity to see a 3-dimensional model showing the proposed maximum build-out in relationship to the historic buildings, the adjoining Cassidy Playground, and the abutting properties in order to evaluate impacts in terms of

view corridors, shadows, alignment with the existing landscape, etc.

Under the new zoning 143 units are allowed, plus space will be set aside for non-residential uses. This would introduce a level of density and traffic that is highly undesirable in this parkland setting. The Task Force believes that no more than 80 housing units should be created on the entire Waterworks site.

If adequate parking is not provided at the design stage, green open space may fall victim to surface parking in the future. Any parking should be out of sight, behind buildings, permanently screened, or underground. We consider the FAR of 0.74—as allowed by the new zoning—too high. While our financial analysis indicates that the Waterworks site is developable with an FAR of 0.4, an FAR of 0.5 would be acceptable to most people if it can be demonstrated that it makes for a better development.

In addition, we desire uses that allow and encourage public access, and could become a part of our lives as residents—such as a high-quality health club, restaurant, exhibit hall, etc. Additionally, it is extremely important that free, readily available, and appropriately sized meeting space is set aside for community use.

While we support the restoration and adaptive re-use of the Waterworks buildings, we believe that the developers must challenge themselves to accomplish that without a massive, overbearing new development on the site. Our recent meetings with developers have been encouraging, and we are hopeful our efforts will support an outcome that will serve all interests.

*Roger Blood
Co-Chair, Chestnut Hill Waterworks Community Task Force
617-232-0995*

UPCOMING OLMSTED NHS EVENTS

April 10, 7:00PM: Panel Discussion at Brookline Main Library entitled "The Theme of Nature in the Thought of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Frederick Law Olmsted."

April 26, 10:00AM (Rain Date, May 3): Walk of Franklin Park Entitled "Emerson's First Country Home and Olmsted's Last Country Park." (Taking place on the weekend that is the anniversary of Olmsted's birth and of Emerson's death.)

May 4, 7:00AM: Muddy River Bird Walk. Walk is co-sponsored and co-led by the Brookline Bird Club.

May 10, 10:00AM (Rain Date, May 17): "The Art of Landscape at the Olmsted Site: A workshop for Children and Parents."

For additional information call (617) 566-1689.

PHOTO CREDITS: masthead photo (Rally at St. Aidan's) Jean Stringham. All uncredited photos are by Marian Lazar.

GET CONNECTED!

Visit our new website at www.brooklinegreenspace.org and find updated information on hot topics, events and other information about open space issues in Brookline. You'll also find an open space map, directions to sanctuaries, and contact information for all the Park Friends Groups in Brookline.

Join our email list serve and you'll receive important updates and information on events, meetings, and other time-sensitive information pertinent to open space in Brookline. Just send us an email at bgsa@world.std.com to let us know you want to join.

THANKS TO SOFTWARE TOOL AND DIE FOR HOSTING THE BROOKLINE GREENSPACE WEBSITE - WWW.BROOKLINEGREENSPACE.ORG
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