

# Minutes of the Mine Falls Park Advisory Committee

## September 13, 2021

### In Attendance:

Jeff Hannigan, chair  
Paula Lochhead  
Pam Anderson  
Trish Mullin  
Doug Gagne

for the City of Nashua:

Jason Puopolo, Superintendent  
Julie Chizmas, Transportation Analyst and Long Range Planner

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Minutes from the August 2021 meeting were approved as written.

Ms. Chizmas was on hand to update the Committee on the dog park proposed at a site adjacent to the Millyard entrance to Mine Falls Park (MFP.) A consultant is performing a feasibility study to determine if the location is adequate, come up with a maintenance plan, budget, etc. Although the lot is not presently owned by the City, it intends to complete the purchase to protect this area from future development, regardless of whether the dog park is sited there. The plan shows separate areas for large and small dogs, with amenities such as shade trees, kiosks, seasonally-available drinking water for humans and dogs, etc. No rest rooms will be provided apart from the Porta Potty by the MFP entrance. Parking for 12 vehicles will be provided. The park will be lit by LED lighting. The intent is that a non-profit organization will be set up to fund the construction and handle the future maintenance of the dog park.

The initial draft report is due Oct. 1, 2021 for comment, with the final study expected later in the month. One of its key aspects will be the handling of dog waste.

Ms. Chizmas also discussed the issue of electric scooters and bicycles (so-called "E-bikes"), and their use in MFP. We expressed the Committee's consensus from the August meeting that E-bikes present a safety problem due to potentially excessive speed on our trails, problems with vandalism of these vehicles when left in the Park, as well as possible increased erosion when new unauthorized trails are created down our side slopes. She informed us that the State of NH considers the users of Class I and II vehicles as having the same rights as pedalled bicycles, but leaves it up to local government whether to restrict their use. The City has a draft ordinance to keep them off public sidewalks, but there are no bikes lanes in Nashua. As of August 18, 2021, rental E-bikes may be ridden through MFP but not allowed to be dropped off there. It's possible to have rental E-bikes be remotely speed-limited throughout the Park, but this wouldn't apply to private vehicles. To be clear, it's not the intent of the MFPAC to disallow

the use of mobility scooters within MFP, as they are allowed by ADA statutes. Ms. Chizmas suggests implementing speed limits within the Park until the end of the rental season, and considering policy changes before next Spring.

Imagine Nashua: Ms. Chizmas said there is a draft plan online at [Imagine.NashuaNH.gov](http://Imagine.NashuaNH.gov). The team plans to have this revision to the City's Master Plan finalized sometime next month, and then sent to the Planning Board, Aldermen, appropriate committees, etc. for final review.

#### Superintendent's report:

Financial: Jason passed around copies of the current financial statement for the MFP cell tower trust funds. The present balance is \$642,491.41. He also handed out copies of the "Invoice Distribution History" for this account, covering the period from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2021. Due to its level of detail, it was agreed that Committee members would review the report before the October meeting. It will be useful to determine future spending priorities.

Repairs list: Nothing has been done recently to correct outstanding items needing attention. It has been a challenging year, due to COVID, the extraordinary amount of rainfall to date, etc. Jason stated that the test of surface treatments for the Boardwalk should be set up soon for evaluation next year.

Mill Pond/Canal study: Still no update as to its status, although the study has reportedly been done. Trish will act as liaison with Deb Chisholm to obtain whatever information we can get.

Gatehouse roof repairs: There are line items in the Invoice Distribution History which may help to answer the question of who performed the work. Finding the original invoices will be helpful to see exactly what was done, and if there is any stated or implied warranty in the work. Jason will track this down.

Bridge inspection: we await word from the City Engineering department on the extent of damage to our bridges, including rot, before we can determine how to prioritize and budget for repairs.

Canoe/kayak launch at Ledge Street: Trish asked again about this ramp which has been shown to be too steep and needs to be made longer and safer.

September Trail Day: Most of the cleanup around the "triangle" was done, but there remains a deep layer of accumulated organic matter which is clogging up the side inlets on the large drainage structure. This will need to be cleaned out by jetting and vacuuming. Jason and Jeff will visit the site and Jason will then contact the State Highway department to see if they are responsible for doing this work. Many of the missing location markers have been replaced, with the Blue, Yellow, Orange and Purple Trails remaining to be finished.

It was agreed to work on control of Japanese Knotweed surrounding the sign and kiosk at the Millyard entrance early next spring -- no later than the April trail day, and perhaps earlier depending upon when the ground is workable.

October Trail Day:

Trish will again clean up the canal, along with her kayaking cohorts.

Dick expressed an interest in working on the steps leading from the Canal level to the River level, as much erosion has happened.

Paula can lead a manageable group of volunteers to do graffiti paintover at the path beneath the overpass.

The Seventh St. bridge needs some gravel to fill in a gap at the beginning of the bridge.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Gagne