

January 12, 2021

The meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners was held on Tuesday, January 12, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. This meeting was conducted by Zoom/Teleconference. The public had access to this meeting by calling the following conference line and then entering the conference code:

Dial to join Zoom Meeting by Phone:

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Meeting ID: 982 4503 6931

Passcode: 266492

Mr. Labrador stated that this meeting is being conducted with the authority issued by the Governor of the State of Connecticut and read the following:

Tonight's meeting of the Board of Park Commissioner is the regular monthly meeting for January 12, 2021, and is being conducted by electronic means as authorized by Governor Ned Lamont executive order 7B which was issued on March 14, 2020, and which the Public has electronic access to witness this meeting.

The recording and transcription of this meeting will be posted on the City Clerk's website within 7 days.

Mr. Labrador asked that everyone abide by the Governor's request and directives contained in his various executive orders: 7 through 7J, with additional orders to be forthcoming.

#### OPENING CEREMONY

#### ROLL CALL

Present: President Labrador, Vice President Brideau, Commissioners: Wade, Cotto and Hosier, Clerk Ellen M. Gerrity. Also, in attendance were, Craig A. Nadrizny, Acting Public Facilities Director, Luann Conine, Recreation Superintendent, Luis Burgos, Manager of Roadway and Parks Services, and Lee Nastu, Recreation Coordinator with Angel DePara, Database Administrator, presiding as host of the meeting.

After determining there was a quorum, Mr. Labrador called the meeting to order.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER 8, 2020, PARKS BOARD MEETING

On a motion made by Mr. Brideau, seconded by Mr. Cotto, it was unanimously voted to approve the minutes as presented.

#### PUBLIC SPEAKING FORUM:

\*\*\*Due to the public health emergency, public speaking will be by written testimony only\*\*\*\*\*  
Please submit written testimony to [Ellen.Gerrity@bridgeportct.gov](mailto:Ellen.Gerrity@bridgeportct.gov) by 4:30p.m.on Monday, January 11, 2021.\*\*\*

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1. AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Councilwoman 134<sup>th</sup> District

I am opposed to Sacred Heart University placing a scoreboard at Veteran's Park/ on the fields in 90 Acres.

This commercializes the area, which is not meant to be, and we already have limited resources to maintain, secure etc. the area.

SHU has plenty of land on the FFLD side that they can play on.

SHU is not nor has proven not to be a good partner or neighbor with Bridgeport and the Taxpayers.

I ask that the City, Parks Dept and the Parks Board ~ DENY, this matter.

Second: I am also opposed to the proposed 99-year lease and leases of any sorts on any more areas of and in our parks.

All parks, no matter which location, which district are ALL City-wide parks for all city Taxpayers to have access to enjoy.

If I was not on Council, I would still oppose these matters.

Again, too many obstacles, maintaining, budget start concerns, security/police coverages and lack of uses by the Taxpayers of our City.

We should also rethink the soccer fields and that baseball field -fenced in, to City that was an agreement with then UB.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Tyisha S. Toms, Associate City Attorney, requesting to speak to the Parks Board to update them on the Property Access Agreement at (Elton G. Rogers Park).

On a motion made by Mr. Cotto, seconded by Mr. Hosier, it was unanimously voted to table the request due to lack of representation.

On a motion made by Mr. Hosier, seconded by Mr. Cotto, it was unanimously voted to bring Attorney Toms back to the table.

Ms. Toms said that she has a quick update on the UI substation and Eversource Energy's access agreement, or their easement.

She said that Eversource Energy has decided to go back in house and regroup, so, the City has officially stopped their negotiations with regards to the easement however, they have asked for access to clear the 29 foot pathway to get to the substation.

She said that they want to be able to do maintenance on it now and we are not opposed, because it doesn't give them any rights. It just gives them the opportunity to get to their equipment now because there are branches that are hanging over, and there's some vegetation that needs to be cleared.

Mr. Hosier asked if this would be a 90-day agreement.

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Ms. Toms said that it would be 90 days from commencement upon approval from the Board of Park Commissioners.

She said that tonight she is asking the Parks Board for approval for a 90-day access agreement for Eversource Energy to clear vegetation from the area.

Mr. Hosier said that he would like to see something in black and white before the Parks Board approves Eversource's agreement.

Ms. Toms said that they will come back to the Parks Board with the final agreement.

Mr. Hosier asked if what she'll need from the Board tonight is to approve the actions or inactions agreement for clearing of vegetation and revisit the easement that Eversource is looking at to have?

Ms. Toms said that she'll come back to the Board with Eversource's final draft document, be it an easement or a lease, after we receive an appraisal of the value of what they're requesting.

She said that they initially requested an easement, so she asked them to have that appraised and so far, she has not gotten anything back.

She said that they will be meeting internally before coming back to her.

Mr. Hosier asked exactly what she needed from the Board tonight?

Ms. Tomas said that she needs an approval for Eversource Energy for a 90-day access agreement to clear the property.

She said that they must clear up the vegetation to allow them to get to their tower.

Mr. Nadrizny said just to be clear, Eversource is just asking permission to remove vegetation from the access road.

Ms. Toms said that is correct.

On a motion made by Mr. Hosier, seconded by Mr. Brideau, it was unanimously voted to give Eversource Energy permission to have a 90-day access agreement to clear vegetation from their equipment.

2. Viceroy Cricket Club requesting to speak to the Parks Board regarding developing a Cricket Field at Seaside Park and a 99-year lease agreement, Alfredo Castillo, Councilman, 136th District, Jorge Cruz, Councilman 131<sup>st</sup> District, Christy Duffy, Shelly Nichani, and Lakshman Bennabattula.

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Ms. Gerrity said that the Viceroy Cricket Club will not be attending the Parks Board meeting until February.

On a motion made by Mr. Cotto, seconded by Ms. Wade, it was unanimously voted to table the request.

## NEW BUSINESS

1. Lynn Haig, Director, Planning Department & Bill Coleman Deputy Director, Office of Planning & Economic Development; Shante Hanks, Deputy Commissioner & Hermia (Mia) Delaire, Grants Program Manager, CT Department of Housing; Michael Calabrese, Principal Engineer & Andy Fesenmeyer, Supervising Engineer, Division of Highway Design, CT Department of Transportation; Brett Stark, Liaison Program Manager & Celtruda Dominick Liaison Project Engineer, BL Companies; Robert Yirigian, Project Manager & Richard Pettinelli, Technical Lead, WSP, Inc. Design Team.

The Resilient Bridgeport Project Team is requesting to update the Board of Park Commissioners on the State (DOT, DOH, DEEP) continuing work to advance its flood control project in the South End.

Lynn Haig, Director, Planning Department said that she is the city representative in support of the resilient Bridgeport Project.

She said that the Parks Board should be familiar with the effort that's going on around the south end.

She said that the team is here tonight to make another presentation to update the Board with plans that are more progressed and to give the Board more of an understanding of what's going on and of what will occur at Seaside Park.

Ms. Haig introduced Shante Hanks, Deputy Commissioner, CT Department of Housing.

Ms. Hanks thanked the Parks Board for allowing them another opportunity to present their Resilient Bridgeport projects as Ms. Haig stated, her name is Shante Hanks Deputy Commissioner for the Department of Housing and now serving as the Project Manager for this City of Bridgeport project.

She said that tonight they will update the Board on the behind the scenes work that has been done and reintroduce them to the members of their team and introduce the new essential members of their team.

Ms. Hanks shared a presentation of their plan overview to the Park Commissioners.

She said that The Resilient Bridgeport Projects are to improve the conditions in Bridgeport's south end neighborhood, both on the east side of the park and the west side of the park.

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She said that the State of Connecticut was awarded federal funding through HUD grants for these projects.

She said that there are two: 1. Rebuild by Design, RBD for short, which is on the western side of Seaside Park, where the old marina and the new windward project is located, and 2. The Flood Risk Reduction Project, you'll hear from now on FRRP for short, which is on the eastern side of Seaside Park near Main and Broad Streets.

She said that the general components of these projects consist of flood barriers, pump stations, elevated roadways, and stormwater channel.

She said that you'll hear such terms as earth and berm, which may not be as familiar as the term that most people casually refer to as a flood wall, but from this point forward we are going to call it an earth and berm.

Ms. Hanks went over the following presentation.

## PROGRAM

### Program Overview

- Improve Conditions in Bridgeport's South End Neighborhood
- Federal Grant Funding through HUD
- Two Projects:
- Rebuild by Design (RBD - State Project No. 15-383) – Western side of Seaside Park
- Flood Risk Reduction Project (FRRP - State Project No. 15-384) – Eastern side of Seaside Park
- General Components: Flood Barriers, Pump Station, Elevated Roadways, Stormwater Channel

She said that both are HUD projects.

### Rebuild by Design - \$10M – RBD Project

...pilot project must reduce risk to public housing in the City's South End..."

- Stormwater management
- Elevated street for dry egress

National Disaster Resilience - \$46M – FRRP Project - Eastern side of which is near Main and Broad Streets and where the new Bassick High School will be.

- Coastal Flood Defense System
- Resilience Center
- Energy Study
- Floodplain Design Guidelines

Mr. Hanks listed the Program Team.

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#### Program Team

- CT Department of Housing Grant Recipient and Owner/Program Manager
- CT Department of Transportation Design Administration and ROW Activities
- CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Infrastructure Ownership and Maintenance (15-384)
- WSP USA Inc. Prime Design Consultant

She also said that they have also been working collaboratively with Lynn Haig, Planning Director as well as Jon Urquidi, City Engineer that have been a part of their project team meetings.

Ms. Hanks introduced Richard Pettinelli, Technical Lead, WSP, Inc. Design Team who will update the commissioners.

He said that he will briefly touch upon the designs for the project.

#### Program Status

- NEPA (EIS/ROD) & Preliminary Design are Complete
- Final Design Initiated for Both Projects
- Programmatic Agreement with SHPO (15-384)
- Documentation/ Mitigation of Seaside Park Impacts
- Federal Grant Expenditure Deadline: September 30, 2023.

Mr. Pettinelli said that he is the lead technical on the project and just to update the commissioners to where the project stands, since they last met with the Parks Board, they did complete the NEPA process so they did receive a record of decision.

He said that they have initiated the final design on both projects, the RBD and the FRRP.

He said that with the FRRP they concluded a programmatic agreement with State Historical Preservation Office SHPO, that includes documentation and mitigation for Seaside Park impacts.

He said that the project is working towards a federal expenditure deadline of September 30, 2023.

#### RBD Stormwater Park

He said that this is the RBD project, it is a little less advanced than the FRRP at this point in time and this is the old site of Marina Village, which has currently been demolished.

He said that the project will consist of constructing the Johnson Street extension as an elevated roadway and will serve as a dry egress for the area during the 100-year flood event.

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He said that they will build a new road extension and will build a storm water park, which will operate as a detention base during wet events but will be able to be utilized by the public during dry events.

He said to drain this park they will do some pipe work up to a proposed pump station at the corner of Iranistan Avenue and South Avenue which will pump out to Cedar Creek to an existing outfall.

He said that they are just starting the final design in this and will be proceeding along with the final 6% in the spring.

## DESIGN

### 15-384 - FRRP Alignment

#### Major Components

- Coastal Flood Defense System
- Pump Station
- Force Main
- Resiliency Center
- Open Channel Discharge

#### FRRP East/West Alignment

Berm over buried sheetpile wall

#### FRRP North/South Alignment

Above Grade T – Wall

### 15-384 FRRP

#### Broad Street

- Ramp Broad Street to intersection with University Avenue at elevation = 15.5 Feet NGVD 89
- 5% maximum grade

#### Main Street

- Terminate southbound vehicular traffic at Main Street north of University Avenue
- Ramp south end of Main Street to intersection with University Avenue at elevation = 9.5 feet above grade (15.5 feet above sea level)

#### Preliminary Staging Plan

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1. Construct Berm west of Broad Street
  - Broad and Main Street remain open to traffic
2. Close Broad Street and University Ave between Broad and Main Streets to traffic
3. Construct elevated Broad Street and University Avenue
  - Main Street open to traffic
4. Open Broad Street to traffic
5. Close Main Street to traffic
6. Construct Main Street and Pocket Park
7. Open University Avenue and Main Street south.

Mr. Pettinelli said that the 15-384 – FRRP Alignment or NDR project as it was formerly known is a much more extensive project in south Bridgeport, and consists of flood control, a pump station, an outlet channel through Seaside Park, and a Resiliency Center.

He said that the coastal flood defense system consists of two major components. 1. An earthen berm that stretches across the east west alignment and across the 60 Main Street site, an earthen berm surrounding a sheetpile wall which is the actual flood defense structure.

He said that once they get over into the more industrialized area near harbor unit five and the concentric PSEG plants, they will translate into a concrete T-wall that progresses, up through the industrial area and ties back into the railroad tracks on the north end, completing the protective circle.

He said that road work is required to do this, so Broad Street, Main Street and University Avenue are impacted with minor impacts, they will put gates at the initial entrance to the maintain access.

He said that the second type FRRP East/West Alignment is a cross section of the earthen berm, and the sheet pile wall is the actual flood defense which allows them to work closer to it than a dyke system which the berm is part of actual control. This ranges up to about nine and a half feet high at its tallest point with a sheetpile cut off all extending down 25 to 40 feet depending on the geology.

He said that when they work with the road sections on Broad Street, Main Street and University Avenue between Broad and Main Streets, the coastal flood defense system will probably be located off the travel way, and their intent is to replace the road, pretty much in-kind in terms of number of lanes parking configuration and sidewalk configuration.

He said they will be elevating them to accommodate the flood control, and the flood control is going up to elevation, 14, and NGVD 88, so that is about 10 feet above high tide and includes the hundred-year storm elevation.

He said that the FRRP North/South Alignment, section goes through the PSEG property. The entire structure is a concrete T-wall.



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He said that it is seated on H-piles for a foundation and then there will be a sheetpile wall about 15 feet deep underneath it and that serves as a cut off for seepage under the wall during flood events.

Head of Seaside Park

He said that earthen dyke portion of this project is the concrete portion of the pump station and is located on Henry Street, a force main coming down and discharging into the area that they call Head of Park, so it is the circular area at the north end of Seaside Park.

He said that this will be elevated to match the elevation of University Avenue, which is about 15 and a half in that portion, and NGVD.

He said that the pump station will discharge through a series of openings into an open channel which will be in the northern portion of Seaside Park.

He said when he talks about Head of Park, he is talking about the area between Main Street and Broad Street.

He said that from Broad Street west, University Avenue will become, an earthen berm in preparation for the Bassick High School project coming in. It will be an earthen berm with the sheetpile in.

He said that Broad Street itself, University Avenue, and Main Street south are going to be elevated, Broad Street will be elevated to go up and over the dike or the flood control, so at its high point it's about 15 and a half feet, NGVD, it'll be a 5% slope, up and down, that is ADA and the Bridgeport Fire Department's requirement.

He said that University Avenue is level across this section, and then turns into Main Street south for project terms and that comes back down at a 5% grade.

He said that Main Street is terminated as a through street, as part of the project. They cannot do a ramp similar to the Broad Street configuration because of the four structures, three on the east side and one on the south side, south of Henry Street, and the elevations of the ramp as you run it down on a 5% slope you would be basically driving by peoples second story window here, so it just doesn't work, they cannot keep the houses and the ramp.

He said that it was agreed upon that we will put a pocket park in this area. Pedestrians will be able to pass, but vehicles will not be able to go north or south on Main Street.

He said that they understand from our last meeting that access to the park is a primary consideration for the City of Bridgeport, and they are working on a staging plan, and how they would maintain access to Seaside Park at this eastern end of it while they build this.

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He said that their preliminary stage plan would call for them to build University Avenue west of Broad Street first, so, University Avenue would be shut down and they would build the embankment and drive the sheeting.

He said that during this stage of construction, both Broad and Main Street would be open to traffic.

He said that once that section is complete they then start some traffic impacts; they will close Broad Street and University Avenue between Broad and Main Streets to traffic, so, access to the park will be down Main Street, which will be as it is today.

He said that they will then construct Broad Street, as an up and over system and will elevate University Avenue and start building the Belvedere.

He said that when Broad Street is complete and open to traffic, they will open that up.

He said that they will close traffic at University Avenue because it is a dead end at this point in time, and they will close Main Street at Henry Street and then construct Main Street south, complete the construction of University Avenue, and do the bulk of the work in the park.

He said that they will have to put a couple culverts underneath Soundview Drive to a level spreader which will be done during this stage so that access to the park will be via Main Street and through Broad Street and through a couple roads there.

He said that the concept for the open channel is as agreed upon in the programmatic agreement and is to bring some green infrastructure into the project and to promote some infiltration and remediation of water so they'll do an open channel because Soundview Drive becomes a redundant street to an elevated section here.

He said that the open channel and a couple of concepts of this; they will discuss the idea of this open channel as it is going to mimic a natural stream flow to the maximum extent possible.

He said that the idea is that this pump station does not operate every time it rains, but it come on to help alleviate the nuisance flooding that plagues the south end of Bridgeport, so they are anticipating it coming on roughly a half a dozen times a year.

He said that during a small rain event such as a typical thunderstorm, or something like that in the summer, water will be confined to a low flow channel, much like a normal stream, and the idea is that they will do a natural stream bed for the vast majority of this length, and we have a low flow channel.

He said that when we get a larger storm, such as a nor'easter or hurricane not associated with a title flood or tidal surge and a rather significant rain event, then the low flow channel will be designed to overflow, much like a natural stream does and there will be a floodplain

designed to operate so that will keep the water within the park, but it will be more than the low flow that is going to be designed, they do not want this channel to dominate this area, they want it to be part of the natural landscape.

He said that with the next major coastal event, their intent is to allow the park to operate as a storage area, the coastal protection is north on University Avenue so this area will still be subject to a title surge that it already is.

#### Programmatic Agreement

Mr. Pettinelli said that he touched upon that there was a programmatic agreement, as far as the park is concerned, a tree study and planting diagram is required, which they are working on.

He said that they will explore opportunities for the national flood remediation, which they believe they've done with the open channel, and they will address all the impacted trees and will replace them or put new ones in place of the ones that were impacted at Seaside Park.

- Finding of Adverse Effect to Seaside Park by SHPO - March 2019
- Programmatic Agreement developed with SHPO and DOH to resolve adverse effect through mitigation measures – August 2019.

#### >Preservation and Management Plan for Seaside Park

- √Remaining 19th century engineering components and water management systems.
- √Structures and features determined to be significant within the nomination and not in direct APE, including Bath House, Stables, Memorial Archway, and Lighthouse and keeper's house foundations.
- √A tree study and planting diagram created by a licensed arborist, having prior experience with historic landscapes. The resulting portion of the plan is to include a financial allowance of \$50,000 for long-term maintenance and planting schema that includes reestablishment of historic tree canopy.
- √Opportunities for natural flood remediation shall be incorporated into the plan, including opportunities for reintroducing permeable paths and surfaces

#### >Replacing all impacted trees in Seaside Park

#### Hydrology

Mr. Pettinelli introduced Beka Sturges with their sub consultant Reed Hilderbrand who is a landscape architect and working on the Head of Park area for them and who will discuss some of the concepts they have for what they are doing in this area.

Ms. Sturges said that she is Principal at Reed Hilderbrand Landscape Architects, and they are enjoying the privilege of working on the Seaside Park project.

Ms. Sturges said that Seaside Park is a major treasure in Connecticut, and it's a very important part of the work that they have inherited from Frederick Law Olmsted who was a great parks designer and they wanted to start by understanding the way hydrology is operating and one of the important things that is very strange about the way water is moving in the head of the Seaside Park right now is that instead of the water moving out to the ocean the way you would expect, it is actually moving north up toward University Avenue, and so, there is flooding at the lowest point right where we need to be preventing inundation and right where the berm, that is going to create a much safer place is going.

#### Tree Analysis

She said that when they went to look at the trees, and having a tree canopy in the park is very important for having healthy trees, to create shade, make it feel delightful and it is important, it wasn't a surprise to them to discover that the trees were suffering because of this repeated flooding and the degree of wetness that they're living with, because of those low elevations and the way water is moving.

#### Olmsted Plan

She said that this part of the park is typically dark, and dank, because of routine flooding and she thinks as we look at how to make this open channel work with the existing conditions, and if we go on to look at the historic plan from Olmsted's time, you can see that in the original plan for the park there was a really strong idea in Olmsted's plan of having a kind of wooded edge so as people entered the park they would move through the woods, there would be a vista and they would see the ocean, and there were matters right up along the ocean and it was very important that there be great access, but there would be these kinds of multiple circuits and different ecologies that people got to enjoy.

She said that one of the things that as they started to develop some of the concepts for how to be consistent with everything that everyone loves about Seaside Park, is how do we make it so they can plant trees, right at the head of the park again, even as we're raising these elevations.

#### Head of Park

Mr. Pettinelli said that the reason they are looking at retaining walls and such is that the roads that bracket the Head of the Park will start ramping up and get up to about nine feet above grade, as they get to the intersection of University Avenue and Broad Street and University Avenue and Main Street and University Avenue crosses nine and a half feet above the existing grade, so we need to treat the elevation difference and they have explored a couple different options that they want to present and review with the Parks Board.

#### Existing Section

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Ms. Sturges said that the existing section of the park, before the adjacent conditions get raised is basically almost entirely level, which makes it a great place for ponding right now.

She said that something else that is clear as well, is that Soundview Drive works from a vehicular point of view and there is not a lot of great access to the water or paths here so there is an opportunity to make this a much more engaging moment and excellent entrance for the park which really isn't even though it was intended originally to be that.

#### Alternative Approaches

She said that just looking at some of the strategies that they have begun testing for how they cannot just have a giant retaining wall, but how they can use urban forms and sort of typical strategies from park design to get down to the open channel, but make it a pretty enjoyable recreational space that works for ecology for the flood management, and for people.

#### Low Wall

She said that they looked at using some low walls and a couple of places with embankment and planting.

#### Embankment

She said that they have also looked at a strategy of just having urban embankment and they think one of the things that's actually greatest is that they have tested the experience of being up high at the top of these environments and the views out to the sound are spectacular.

She said that they think that there is potentially a kind of new offering that the park will be able to give people with this change.

#### Terracing

She said that it is also possible that they will be able to incorporate some seating through using terracing to manage the elevation changes.

#### Channel Options

Ms. Hanks said that the next phase of this that we want to discuss is the channel options, so this is the part where we're hoping to get feedback from the Park Commissioners.

#### Channel Profile

Mr. Pettinelli said that he is going to talk a little about the channel options they have looked at.

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He said that the idea of the channel is that it will pump into a cistern underneath the belvedere at the head of park and that will drain down through some natural channels through a culvert system underneath Soundview Drive at the south end and then into a stone basin a level spreader, and discharge into the sound.

#### Option 1

Mr. Pettinelli said that Option I is what they presented last time they were before the Parks Board but a little more refined, this is replacing the paved section of Soundview Drive with an open channel, again, it becomes redundant as it goes to an elevated structure on the north end.

He said that it reflects the homestead vision as an axial use of the park, they can get some of the pedestrian uses on the inside, there's less opportunity with this to create some public spaces and too many other ones and we might impact a significant number of the better trees in the area.

He said that the cross-section shows the three hydraulic conditions and they will have a low flow that handles routine storms, and during a slightly larger event rainstorm as opposed to a shower, the flood way would be used which is a reflection of a natural condition, And then when the next tidal surge comes along this entire area will probably be flooded.

He said that these are some of precedents for Option1, an open channel, areas to sit and something like this is reflective of what we're talking about with a low flow and a flood way constructed and ready to receive a heavier flow.

#### Option 2

He said in Option 2, they took a look at two discharge channels., with little meandering we are able to bring the pedestrians into the center area and that is away from the more urban environment that crowds this area of the park.

He said that with these channels we will probably designate one of these as the low flow channel, so, the small storms would go through one of these because there is not enough water to get both of them hydraulically active, and the second one would be would come in with its partner during a bigger storm event.

He said that these would also have the flood and, the low flow channels, they would gather again at the south and traverse through the culverts and out into the harbor.

He said that this diverges a bit from Olmstead's vision in that it does not have the central axial way.

He said that it will look like a meandering grass channel similar to what is in Central Park that does have something like this with the ramble, and the idea is that it matches some braided rivers like that are natural events here.

### Option 3

Mr. Pettinelli said that Option 3 is a variation of Option 1, where it would go back to a central channel, which is almost consistent with Olmsted's vision, they vary a little bit off the current path of Soundview Drive, and that gives them the opportunity to create elevated areas on either side which serves two functions. 1. It gets the tree roots out of the low area and allows them to bring tree roots above what they anticipate to be sea level rise impacts, and 2. it allows them to make areas for public gatherings so it has some nice public gathering spaces at park which it currently does not have.

Ms. Hanks wanted to refresh the Board's memory that Option 1, was previously discussed and why it wasn't favorable.

Mr. Pettinelli said that Option 1, has a lot of hardscape, that would be associated with the paths and with the channel so that was one of the reasons it was not one of the favorite ones, we could make these to be pervious paths, but that would be a maintenance issue especially if we are designing it to flood and it still has a lot of pathway in there and it was one of the areas that wasn't highly favorable last time we met with the Board.

Ms. Sturges said that she thinks that as we were looking at this, one of the things that people love most in parks is having the sense of being a part of the park and if we are turning Soundview Drive into part of the park and in the interior, even though this is very narrow section, it's actually the best place to be if you want to feel like you're in the park.

She said that they thought given that there is an opportunity to bring the park further into the neighborhood in some ways, allowing people to occupy more, the center seemed wise, given the amount of change.

Ms. Hanks asked that the team explains why Option 3 was favored more.

Ms. Sturges said that that one of the reasons that Option 3 is favored is that it seems more dynamic while still quite consistent with Olmsted's values of creating a connection to the water providing better public health through recreation, but they just thought that making larger places for people to occupy, and for trees to grow and flourish seem better, and there are a couple of moments where you have spectacular views out to the water.

She said that the multiple places where people can spend time are really about that orientation towards the water and in great views. So, this is much more about trying to the neighborhood and time to the water, and still getting all the engineering to work.

She said that even though it's not axial, and that was a very important part, this is very aligned with the best urban design thinking today, and Olmstead was very forward thinking in incorporating the best thoughts, so their feeling is that there is a remnants of some axial thought here but it isn't strictly Bores art form, and that seemed okay given what they know about the cultural history of this park.

Ms. Hanks stated that after listening to the presentation, she would like the Commissioners to weigh in as to which Option they prefer, Option 1, Option 2, or Option 3.

## CHANNEL OPTIONS

### Channel Profile

#### Option 1

- Reflects Olmsted's vision
- Clear Connection to the Sound
- Less opportunity to create places to gather
- Impacts many quality trees

#### Option 2

- Preserves many quality trees
- Creates gathering places between channels
- Follows existing low points
- Diverges from original Olmsted vision

#### Option 3

- Creates multiple places to gather
- Reflects Olmsted's vision
- Clear Connection to the Sound
- Impacts many quality trees

Mr. Brideau said after listening to the presentation he agrees with the team's selection of Option 3.

He said that he thinks it is a great idea and would love to see the plan come to fruition.

Mr. Nadrizny asked if there will be a structure or barrier to prevent kids from falling in the stream.

Mr. Pettinelli said that this is one of the things they are evaluating as they determine the frequency of significant flows and coupled with the pump station.



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He said that they are trying to strike the balance, they want it to be open, but they don't want to create situation like an LA drainage channel with the fencing and barriers; they want the park experience, but they recognize that there are times that there is going to be some significant water flowing through there.

He said that they are still evaluating the situation.

Mr. Pettinelli displayed the schedule that they are currently working towards, so they are in a semifinal design and will be completing it a little later this spring and will take out permit applications following that.

He said that the final design will be completed in winter of this year, permits should be issued early next spring on the timeline or early next year. And they are anticipating construction starting with the 2022 construction season so they will be breaking ground around April.

Mr. Labrador said that he would like to get a timetable of the park construction and how long the park will be tied up so they can make their adjustments for the coming season and that the Parks Department knows what they are going to tell the public.

Robert Yirigian, Project Manager WSP, Inc. Design Team said that part of their charge is to produce the design to go to construction and a component of that is to develop a schedule for construction.

He said that they are going to lay out how the project will unfold in construction, so that when the contractor comes in to perform the work, he knows what those constraints are, so they will be developing their first cut of the construction schedule at 60% of the design next month, or early March, and they can meet with the Parks Department and Parks Board to go over any constraints that the Board may have for the seasonal activities, or anything they have concern about.

He said that they will hold a public meeting at 90% of the design to inform the general public about what's going to happen and the terms of construction, so there will be a number of touch points between now and the time a shovel gets into the ground where you'll, have access to that information.

Mr. Labrador asked that they be able to meet at the site to do a walk through when the weather breaks; he said that pictures are nice to look at, but until you actually walk the area you cannot get a full picture of what will take place.

He said that he believes the majority of the Parks Board feels the same way.

Ms. Hanks said that they would like to invite the commissioners to the park in the spring or early summer to go on a walking tour.

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Mr. Labrador said that he would appreciate if we can do that.

Ms. Hanks said that she appreciates that the Board members cannot visualize the area based on only slides.

Mr. Hosier said that he thinks this will improve the park and make it more beautiful than it is, but he would also like to visit the site, so he can answer questions from the community.

Ms. Hanks mentioned that if the Commissioners may recall, we do have a deadline, this is HUD federal fund that we were granted, and it has a deadline and if we don't spend it, we lose it.

Ms. Hanks asked the Board for approval to move forward on this project.

They will take the Commissioners on a tour of the area whenever they are ready to go.

Mr. Nadrizny asked for clarification as to whom will be maintaining the swales, he said that he understands that DEEP will be maintaining them.

Ms. Hanks said that yes, on the FRRP side, and on the RBD side it may be The Department of Transportation who has State funds to subsidize the cost.

She said that they have been in conversation with Tom Gill, Lynn Haig and Bill Holman from the Department of Planning and Economic Development, but they have not gotten that far in talks yet.

She said that the Department of Housing does have state funds that will subsidize the cost of some of that so we can talk about as they have more meetings.

Mr. Nadrizny said that he would like to know for maintenance reasons.

Mr. Nadrizny stated that Option 3 would be less of an impact on the park with maintenance.

On a motion made by Mr. Brideau, seconded by Mr. Cotto, it was unanimously voted to select Option 3 for Bridgeport Resilient's Flood Control Project at Seaside Park.

2. Charles Dowd, Deputy Director of Athletics, External Operations and Bobby Valentine, Executive Director of Athletics, Sacred Heart University, requesting to speak to the Board regarding putting up a scoreboard at Veteran's Memorial Park baseball field.

Mr. Dowd introduced himself and requested to speak to the board, regarding putting up a scoreboard at the Veterans Memorial Park baseball field.

He said they also want to beautify another beautiful park in Bridgeport.

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He said that Sacred Heart University has played its varsity baseball games there for the past two seasons after being asked to leave Harbor Yard in 2017 and playing as nomads in 2018, they have found a home at Veteran's Memorial Park, and the site is a place that our players, staff and the institution really enjoys playing.

He said that they have invested a lot of money on the ball fields' playing surface in order to make it a Division I playing facility and they would like to take the next step, partnering with the Park Department in installing a scoreboard.

Mr. Dowd shared the rendering of the scoreboard that was provided by NEVCO Inc. and internally has been looked at with great favor.

He said that they would install the scoreboard at either one of two sites at the ballpark either over the right field or left field corner, and part of it will be based upon the installation, and part of it will be based on the bringing power to the scoreboard itself.

He said that they have secured some figures on the cost, but he is still trying to come to terms with total cost because it's a multipurpose project that they would have to purchase and install the scoreboard and then bring power to it.

He said that there is power at the site so it would only be the process of bringing the power to the score board.

He said that he has spoken to Craig on a few occasions, so he has a deeper understanding of the situation.

Mr. Dowd said that their goal to upgrade the facility by fixing the infield and outfield to the point where it is a showcase facility was not just for Sacred Heart University, but for the Legion and youth baseball in Bridgeport.

He said that though they understand that they're not the exclusive users and nor would they expect to be exclusive users of this scoreboard albeit they would do so in a way that would protect both of their investments.

He said that their usage is pretty much from March 1<sup>st</sup> through May 15th each year, and then from late August until mid-October.

He said that they would love to be able to get the scoreboard for this playing season and give their athletes a better feel of home.

He said that they are about to embark on getting on the field with one of the better races in the northeast conferences.

He said that they have brought on for the past two years one of his former groundskeepers from not only the Bridgeport Bluefish but also from the New Haven Ravens, and he was

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always proud of the field presentation that they gave them so that is something that they have brought to this facility and working with the parks crews I think we have really elevated last year and have made some improvements to the dugouts, built bullpens, and we did some tactical things to the playing surface.

Mr. Dowd said that not only has it made the field better to play on, but it has made it easier to maintain with play and purpose, so essentially, they are looking to install the scoreboard and are asking the Parks Board to consider partnering with them and do the electrical part of the project where the connection is brought to the power source.

He said that they enjoy playing there and they would we'd like to be there for quite some time.

Mr. Labrador asked if Mr. Nadrizny has been in contact with Mr. Dowd on the scoreboard?

Mr. Nadrizny said that he has spoken with Mr. Dowd on a few occasions.

Mr. Labrador asked Mr. Nadrizny if he was able to get the quotes on the getting the electricity over to the scoreboard.

Mr. Labrador also said that we would also need the cost of running the electrical from either the left field side of the field which is left field, or the right field side, whichever is more cost-effective method to run power to this board.

Mr. Labrador also said they should look into placing the scoreboard in the least noticeable area which will least affect the surrounding area.

Mr. Labrador said he would be in favor of making this happen if it's going to enhance the park.

Mr. Nadrizny said he will speak with Mr. Dowd and probably put an agreement together, but it will need to be presented to the city attorney for review due to the City paying putting in the electrical line and the basic electricity.

Mr. Labrador asked Mr. Dowd if there is a deadline they are looking at?

Mr. Dowd said that weather permitting they would like to start play mid to the end of March.

Mr. Dowd said that he would get in touch with Craig Nadrizny tomorrow on this.

Mr. Brideau made mention of Councilwoman AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia's letter opposing the placing of a scoreboard at Veteran's Memorial Park, commercializing the area, which is not meant to be, and that the City already has limited resources to maintain and secure area.

Mr. Labrador said that he has read her letter and has taken it into effect.

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Mr. Brideau asked how high behind the fence would the scoreboard be?

Mr. Dowd said that the height above the 8 ft. fence would be 15 feet high and would be between 20' 23' as apex.

Ms. Wade said she is fine with the scoreboard, but she is looking at the other side also, regarding the cost of the installation of the line and the scoreboard's overall use of electricity.

Mr. Dowd that that once the scoreboard is installed it effectively belongs to the City.

Mr. Cotto said that he noticed that the example of the scoreboard that they provided, is showing says SHU in Fairfield, CT, and he would like the City of Bridgeport to be placed on the sign.

Mr. Dowd said he would look into it.

Mr. Hosier asked that the item be tabled until we get an answer from the City Attorney's Office.

Mr. Labrador also asked that he get three quotes on the cost of running the electrical line to the scoreboard.

Mr. Nadrizny said that he will work with Mr. Dowd on it.

On a motion made by Mr. Hosier, seconded by Mr. Cotto, it was unanimously voted to table the request until they can get an opinion from the City Attorney's Office.

## REPORTS

### COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

- Police Department

Lieutenant, Simpson represented the Bridgeport Police Department.

Mr. Labrador said that he asked the police department to be at tonight's meeting to request more police coverage at the parks on weekdays and weekends.

He said that the parks fall short on police coverage especially during the weekdays at the latter part of the day when the checkpoint booths are open and for selling of the park stickers.

He said that he would like to see Michael Bouchard, Special Officer, who used to be a part of the Parks and Recreation Department to be reassigned back to the parks to be a presence in the parks.

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Mr. Labrador said that Officer Bourchard's union still considers him to be a Park Policeman.

He said that there is a small shadow of coverage at the park weekdays and would like Officer Bouchard in the parks during those hours.

Lieutenant Simpson said that he can speak from the patrol standpoint especially on the C shift between the shift hours of 3:00 p.m. and 12:00 a.m., for park coverage they are very limited in personnel and the Police Chief is aware of this and is doing a manpower study.

He said that he knows that in the summer months, that we usually run a parks detail, which is usually effective, how long and how many officers get assigned to that detail is up to the city.

He said that he will look into this for the Board and will check out the Special Officer in question and have him meet with Mr. Labrador or let you know what his actual shift is.

He said that he will let the Police Chief know that the Board is questioning the coverage they have at the parks.

He said that Blue 11 is the watch that is the post officer assigned to lock up the park when it closes at dusk.

He said that as for an actual detail, we would have to hire overtime for that to cover down with any sort of patrol presence from patrol standpoint.

Mr. Labrador said that his other concern would be coverage at other outside parks such as Beardsley, Went Field, Veteran's Memorial, and other parks that are heavily used in season. He said he knows that it is a manpower and overtime money issue and he does know that the Parks Department has some money to cover the cost.

He said that in the past they have had a problem with four-wheelers in parks and there was nothing the Parks Department could do to stop them as far as a police presence.

He said that he would like to see a police coverage in parks for a time during the weekdays to be a presence so that people that are out there either playing soccer or baseball can at least know that at any given time someone can be up there or drive through.

He said that we've left our parks vulnerable and he knows it is due to manpower.

Mr. Hosier asked Lieutenant Simpson to please inform the Police Chief to consider increasing Park police in the parks during the week and that they need more than one.

Lieutenant Simpson said that it is not a budget issue now, it is a manpower issue especially on C Shift, and he will let the Chief know.

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Mr. Cotto said that in the past, the police officers would go in and out of the parks during the weekdays and wanted to know if this was still the case?

Lieutenant Simpson said that they encourage post cars do their reports in the parks, but the dayshift is very busy also during the day and a lot of times they are called away, although he does think in season a full time presence is needed there.

Mr. Cotto said that we do need the help and knows it is a manpower issue but whatever the Police Department can do to help would be very appreciated.

Lieutenant Simpson said that he also is aware of the motorcycle problem and how they can paralyze the park, especially at Seaside Park and knows that by just have an officer at the entrance to park can really discourage this from happening.

He also said that they can only do so much in the park about this problem since the state mandates that the police cars cannot pursue motorcycles.

Mr. Labrador also said that they have run into the problem of the police officers shutting down ball games when the field lights are on and they are in the middle of a game.

He said that if the lights are off, he could understand why they would chase people out, but not when little league games are going on.

Lieutenant Simpson said that he thinks that there is communication problem because no police officer would want to shut a baseball game down unless they have to.

He said that he will give all his notes to the Chief, so she is made aware of the Park Boards request.

The Board thanked Lieutenant Simpson for his time.

#### REPORTS – CRAIG A. NADRIZNY, ACTING PUBLIC FACILITIES DIRECTOR

Mr. Nadrizny gave the following report:

- Wayne Street Park – They are reviewing the two bids came in for Wayne Street Park and they were both over budget, so we will have to follow up on this.
- Perry Memorial Arches – An assessment was done on the Perry Memorial Arches and we should be receiving that assessment this Friday the 15th to review them further and see what it will cost to repair the arches and we will be looking at grants to pay for the repairs as well as using City money.

Mr. Nadrizny had no further business.

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## COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

On a motion made by Mr. Hosier, seconded by Mr. Brideau, it was unanimously voted to add the request that a memorial Bench with a plaque be dedicated to Gene O'Neill, who was a devoted City of Bridgeport employee for numerous years.

The Parks Department is requesting that the City purchase the bench and plaque and install it at Seaside Park on the sidewalk next to the PT Barnum Statue.

Mr. Labrador said that Gene O'Neill was a, police officer in the City of Bridgeport for many years.

He said that he led the police coverage in Bridgeport's downtown area for many years, after his retirement he became head of the Bridgeport public school security and after that he worked for the Parks and Recreation Department.

He was a true gentleman, a man that was good on his word, a man who loved Bridgeport, and a man who loved Seaside Park.

He said that for those who have had the opportunity to walk in the morning with him at Seaside Park faithfully and listen to his knowledge of Bridgeport and what he saw for its future were to lucky to have that experience.

He said that his own experience working in the Board of Education with Gene were the best in his young years of being a security officer for the school system.

He said that he learned so much from him on how to deal young students, irate parents, and even staff.

He said that he gives his 200% approval and wishes he was still alive so he could see this bench being dedicated to him.

Mr. Labrador said that he misses him dearly.

Luann Conine said that Gene O'Neill would always say, don't worry about it, I'll get it done, and no matter what it was he always got it done with a smile on his face.

Ms. Conine asked that Ms. Gerrity read the wording on the plaque.

Ms. Gerrity said that the bench will be located at Seaside Park on the sidewalk in front of the PT Barnum Statue.

The plaque will have the following wording:



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“No One Spread more Love in One Lifetime Than Gene O’Neill – 8-24-1933 – 11-20-2020, Who Always Had a Smile and a Helping Hand for Everyone.”

Mr. Cotto said that he worked with Gene O’Neill for close to 40 years, the latter 20 years of which was in the traffic division that Gene oversaw.

He said was a true gentleman and he would like to see this happen, and that the location by the PT Barnum statue is very important.

He said let’s make this happen for our beloved Gene O’Neill.

Mr. Labrador said let’s make it the best bench ever.

Mr. Nastu said that he agrees with all the great things mentioned about Gene O’Neill and said that not only was Gene the King of Bridgeport his whole life, but in later years he became King of Seaside Park.

He said that there wasn’t anyone he saw more at Seaside Park than Gene O’Neil; he loved Bridgeport and loved Seaside Park.

Mr. Labrador said that Gene O’Neill was our own PT Barnum, and nothing would fit better than having a memorial bench and plaque dedicated to him in front of the PT Barnum statue.

On a motion made by Mr. Cotto, seconded by Mr. Brideau, it was unanimously voted to approve the request.

Mr. Labrador requested that for the future Park Board meetings, he would like to receive typed Director’s report to be submitted for next month’s meeting with information that includes the revenue that we bring in for the golf course and park stickers.

On a motion made by Mr. Cotto, seconded by Mr. Brideau, it was unanimously voted to approve the request.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Mr. Hosier, seconded by Mr. Brideau, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Ellen M. Gerrity*

Ellen M. Gerrity  
Clerk