



Board of Park Commissioners

Regular Meeting

~ Meeting Minutes ~

Tuesday, January 29, 2019

9:00 A.M.

RWP Dalrymple Boathouse

This meeting was called to order at 9:07 a.m.

PRESENT: Commissioner Marilyn Cepeda-Andujar; Commissioner Sara McConnell; Commissioner Elli Panichas; Commissioner Nicholas Narducci; Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin- 5.

ABSENT: Commissioner John J. Igliazzi- 1.

LATE ARRIVAL: Chairman Jorge O. Elorza- 1.

Also present were Wendy Nilsson, Parks Superintendent; Brian Byrnes, Deputy Superintendent; Katherine Berroa, Assistant to the Superintendent; Karen Gomez, Fiscal Advisor; Brant Gawrys, City Center Manager; Michael Calise, Senior Assistant Solicitor and Rick Simone, President of EGN Consulting, also representing the Federal Hill Commerce Association.

In the absence of Chairman Elorza, the meeting was chaired by Commissioner McConnell.

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 1, 2018 MEETING MINUTES

Chairwoman McConnell entertained a motion to approve the Nov 1, 2018 meeting minutes. On motion by Commissioner Gordon-Martin and seconded by Commissioner Narducci; motion passes.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Commissioner Gordon-Martin
SECONDER:	Commissioner Narducci
AYES:	Chairwoman McConnell, Commissioner Narducci, Commissioner Cepeda-Andujar, Commissioner Panichas and Commissioner Gordon-Martin – 5.
TARDY:	Chairman Elorza – 1.
ABSENT:	Commissioner Igliazzi – 1

Chairwoman McConnell requested to move agenda items out of order beginning with agenda item number VI.

AUTHORIZATION TO DEVELOP ROGER WILLIAMS PARK BROAD STREET GATEWAY AT 1197-1207 BROAD STREET, PLAT-53, LOTS 511, 515, 525. Bonnie Nickerson, Director of Planning/Executive Director of Providence Redevelopment & *Wendy Nilsson, Superintendent. Discussion and vote.*

Director Nickerson was unable to attend. Superintendent Nilsson addressed the board to discuss the plans to develop the RWP Broad Street Gateway. She explained that The Roger Williams

Park Broad Street Gateway project is being led by the Providence Redevelopment Agency (PRA) in close partnership with the Department of Parks, and has the enthusiastic support of numerous community partners and neighborhood organizations. The proposed project will promote the ongoing redevelopment of Broad street by transforming three prominent blighted Broad Street lots adjacent to Roger Williams Park in Providence's Washington Park neighborhood into a modern, green and energy efficient, multi-purpose center to welcome visitors to both the Park and the Washington Park neighborhood/Broad Street Corridor. The Welcome Center will become a gateway from Broad Street to the Park's many recreational opportunities and will greatly improve the lens through which park visitors see the Broad Street Neighborhood, and how neighbors view their connection to the park. The Gateway seeks to improve the livability of the Washington Park neighborhood as it leverages significant public and private investments made by the City of Providence, Rhode Island Housing, the Rhode Island Foundation, and others both along Broad Street and in Roger Williams Park.

The PRA, in partnership with project team, submitted a grant application to the RI Housing Authority in the summer of 2018 to partially fund this project [Exhibit-A]. Other funds have been identified through the PRA. Ultimately, the application was not successful because of the absence of site control. However, since site control has since been established via eminent domain, the application will be re-submitted in February 2019. If the application is approved, the PRA and project team, including Parks, will move forward with Community meetings to better define the concept.

Commissioner Gordon-Martin asked who would staff the center and Superintendent Nilsson commented that staffing will need to be explored, but generally, the project team was thinking about a cohort of trained volunteer docents/interns from local universities like Johnson and Wales and Roger Williams University.

Upon arrival of Chairman Elorza at 9:15 a.m., Commissioner McConnell relinquishes the chair.

With no further questions or comments Chairman Elorza entertains a motion to authorize the development of the Broad Street Gateway. On motion by Commissioner Narducci and seconded by Commissioner Gordon-Martin. Motion passes.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Commissioner Narducci
SECONDER:	Commissioner Gordon-Martin
AYES:	Chairman Elorza, Commissioner McConnell, Commissioner Narducci, Commissioner Cepeda-Andujar, Commissioner Panichas and Commissioner Gordon-Martin – 6.
ABSENT:	Commissioner Igliazzi – 1.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No public comments were made.

AUTHORIZATION TO MOVE VERRAZANO MONUMENT FROM MEMORIAL SQUARE TO ST. JOHN'S PARK. *Wendy Nilsson, Superintendent and Rick Simone President of EGN Consulting. Discussion and vote.*

Superintendent Nilsson re-introduced this item to the Board and highlighted the key points previously discussed during the November 1st, 2018 Board meeting where authorization to move the Verrazano Monument [Exhibit-B] from Memorial Square to St. John's Park was tabled for 30-days in order for the public to be properly notified during a 30 day period.

Superintendent Nilsson explained that relocating the memorial from Memorial Square to St. John's Park will have the additional benefit of providing more space for visitors to appreciate the individual memorials in the square. Commissioner McConnell and Commissioner Narducci both asked if the public made any negative comments about this request. Superintendent Nilsson added that she has not received any negative or positive feedback as a result of the 30 Day Public Notice posting. Superintendent Nilsson acknowledged Mr. Rick Simone from the Federal Hill Commerce Association. Mr. Simone added that all of the societies with whom he discussed the relocation, were in full support.

Chairman Elorza entertained a motion authorizing the move of the Verrazano monument from Memorial Square to St. John's Park, on motion by Commissioner Narducci, seconded by Commissioner McConnell. Motion is approved.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Commissioner Narducci
SECONDER:	Commissioner McConnell
AYES:	Chairman Elorza, Commissioner McConnell, Commissioner Narducci, Commissioner Cepeda-Andujar, Commissioner Panichas and Commissioner Gordon-Martin – 6.
ABSENT:	Commissioner Iglizzi – 1.

AUTHORIZATION TO NAME WALDO STREET TOT LOT, THE CHERYL M. FISHER-ALLEN TOT LOT. *Wendy Nilsson, Superintendent. Discussion and vote.*

Superintendent Nilsson addressed the board as she introduced this item on behalf of Councilman Taylor, who was unable to attend the meeting today. She explained that the Waldo Street Tot Lot is a very small tot lot that is outdated and in need of renovations. The Parks Department plans to renovate the park in spring/summer 2019. Councilman Taylor requested that the Waldo Street Tot Lot be renamed the Cheryl Fisher-Allen Tot Lot. Cheryl Fisher-Allen was a community advocate and a dedicated school teacher at Gilbert Stuart. Commissioner Narducci also spoke on behalf of Councilman Taylor as he explained that Councilman Taylor would be very appreciative if this cause is supported by the Commission. He added that former Councilman Jennings was also an advocate of this naming the park after Cheryl Fisher-Allen. [Exhibit-C].

Chairman Elorza asked if there is a policy regarding setting standards for the process of renaming the Parks since there has been an influx of similar requests made to the commission in recent years. Superintendent Nilsson explained that essentially, a person would have to be deceased and would have made major contributions to the community. There is a policy established by the BOPC that details the exact process. She further indicated that letters of support should also be submitted to the commission to show support for the name change from the community. Chairman Elorza asked for a review of the formal process for renaming parks.

With no further questions or comments Chairman Elorza entertains a motion to name Waldo Street Tot Lot, The Cheryl M. Fisher-Allen Tot Lot, on motion by Commissioner Narducci and seconded by Commissioner Gordon-Martin. Motion passes.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Commissioner Narducci
SECONDER:	Commissioner Gordon-Martin
AYES:	Chairman Elorza, Commissioner McConnell, Commissioner Narducci, Commissioner Cepeda-Andujar, Commissioner Panichas and Commissioner Gordon-Martin – 6.
ABSENT:	Commissioner Igliazzi – 1.

AUTHORIZATION TO NAME THE NEW PLAYGROUND AT PRETE-METCALF FIELD, VALENTINO “VAL” INNOCENTE PLAYGROUND. *Wendy Nilsson, Superintendent. Discussion and vote.*

Superintendent Nilsson deferred the discussion to Commissioner Narducci after emphasizing that the naming is for the new playground at Prete-Metcalf, not the park itself. Commissioner Narducci addressed the commission and explained his support for naming the playground after Coach Valentino Innocente. Commissioner Narducci discussed that Coach Valentino [Exhibit-D] was his coach when he was a student at LaSalle High School. He shared his connection to the coach and the coach’s connection to the youth in the community. He further explained that Coach Valentino cared for his parents and his disabled brother, and as such never had a family of his own. Instead, he dedicated his life to mentoring the community youth. He also served on the democratic committee and coached Little Leagues at Prete-Metcalf field as well as Bishop Hendricken High School teams. Later in his career, he became a well-admired coach at Roger Williams University. Coach Valentino also motivated college students to assist with the Little Leagues at the field. Commissioner Narducci added that Coach Valentino was so well revered in the community that the community planted a tree in his memory at Prete-Metcalf field.

Commissioner McConnell asked if any constituents would be offended by this request and Commissioner Narducci said no.

Chairman Elorza entertained a motion to name the new playground at Prete-Metcalf field, Valentino “Val” Innocente Playground, on motion by Commissioner Gordon-Martin and seconded by Commissioner Cepeda-Andujar. Motion passes.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Commissioner Gordon-Martin
SECONDER:	Commissioner Cepeda-Andujar
AYES:	Chairman Elorza, Commissioner McConnell, Commissioner Narducci, Commissioner Cepeda-Andujar, Commissioner Panichas and Commissioner Gordon-Martin – 6.
ABSENT:	Commissioner Igliazzi – 1.

PRESENTATION OF 2019 PARKS DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT. *Wendy Nilsson, Superintendent. Discussion.*

Superintendent Nilsson presented the Parks Department Annual Report for 2018 to the Board of Parks Commissioners. A copy of the presentation is attached with these meeting minutes [Exhibit – E].

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner McConnell to adjourn. Motion seconded by Commissioner Narducci.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:06 a.m.