



May 11, 2020

Re: Boston Parks & Recreation Department, FY 2021 Operating Budget

Dear Boston City Council,

We are writing to say **thank you** to the City of Boston for valuing our public parks – for keeping them open during the ongoing public health emergency and for continuing to fund them at a level where they will remain welcoming spaces to benefit physical & mental health as well as the environment & climate into the future.

We are adding our voice to other park friends groups by supporting several priorities in the FY '21 Operating Budget:

- * Second shift for maintenance: Many people use parks on evenings & weekends, but the maintenance staff has been Monday through Friday daytime. We encourage you to support the proposed 2nd shift, Wed. - Sun.
- * Added staff for tree work: As the City & residents increasingly recognize the multi-faceted value of urban trees, it would be in the City's best interest to have staff available for ongoing pruning, planting etc., rather than relying so heavily on contractors.
- * Park Ranger program – The Boston Park Rangers, established in 1982, are the only regular security in our parks. In addition to providing valuable and much-needed security, they are beloved by residents & visitors. Their numbers were cut after the 2008 recession, but the acres they patrol remain the same. Also, there has been high rate of turnover. By increasing the number of Rangers and their salaries, retention could improve. We are concerned that salaries are listed in the budget, but the operating costs are not. Increased transparency in this area would enable them to plan ahead in a predictable way.
- * Another related priority: The sharps team responsible for picking up needles. Increasing their staff would enable them to respond to the increased presence of needles in the parks. This may be in a different section of the budget (Public Health Commission), but it is an issue that impacts parks.

The Arborway Coalition is a collaboration of JP residents & other interested parties working with City and State agencies & local neighborhood associations to preserve the Arborway as a green multi-use parkway connecting 3 Emerald Necklace parks designed by Frederick Law Olmsted: Jamaica Pond Park, Arnold Arboretum and Franklin Park.

Our goal is to improve access to these parks for all users and to keep the parkway clean & green. Since its inception in 1996, the Arborway Coalition's activities have included public safety (the 3 E's:

education, enforcement & engineering), public health (physical activity promotion) & historic landscape preservation (tree planting, woodlands management at Arborway Hillside, restoration of the historic stone wall across from Jamaica Pond, replacement of the deteriorating chain link fence at the Arboretum crosswalk, preservation of Hellenic Hill & the Casey Arborway Project).



Good morning,

I am writing to you on behalf of the [Boston Park Advocates](#), a city-wide network of volunteers who work in partnership with the city and state to enhance and steward the green infrastructure that our world-class park system provides to all residents of Boston. Our network connects over [120 organizations and 550 Bostonians](#) who work hard for and care deeply about our city's parks and open space across every neighborhood in Boston. Since 2005, our work has been founded on the belief that parks matter, and that a network that informs and engages like-minded individuals is indispensable to a healthy, more equitable, and vibrant Boston. In the face of COVID-19, we believe Olmsted's vision of parks as a bastion of equality and community that reflects our social and environmental commitment and values is more relevant than ever before.

I have attached the letter that we sent in December with our Open Space budget recommendations for the upcoming year and wish to convey our strong support for this important funding. We applaud the inclusion of vital capital projects and the much-needed increase to the operating parks budget, which still represents less than 1% of the City's total proposed operating budget. This proposed budget reflects essential needs for a growing city and the accompanying demands placed on its limited open space. Its passage will ensure the continued safety and accessibility of parks for all, and help the Parks Department continue its important work to increase citywide climate resiliency. We have requested and advocated for particular supports:

-

- A 2nd shift to ensure park safety and maintenance
-
- Expanded forestry staffing and an Urban Forestry plan
-
- Expanded support and staffing for Park Rangers

We recognize that the current crisis will have immense human and economic consequences for Boston as we move into the next fiscal year. However, we urge you to protect the necessary operating and capital funds that ensure that our parks and open spaces remain accessible, safe resources for all, and that our progress towards a more resilient city continues through the benefits they provide. It is so clear that our greenspaces are more important than ever to Boston residents during this time of crisis, for the physical, mental, and emotional health they provide.

Claire Corcoran

CC: Budget Director Justin Sterritt justin.sterritt@boston.gov
Chief of Policy and Planning Joyce Linehan joyce.linehan@boston.gov
Chief of Environment, Energy & Open Space Christopher Cook
christopher.cook@boston.gov
Boston Parks & Recreation Department Commissioner Ryan Woods
ryan.woods@boston.gov
Boston City Councilors

City.council@boston.gov

Kim Janey

Annissa Essaibi George

Michael Flaherty

Julia Mejia

Michelle Wu

Lydia Edwards

Ed Flynn

Frank Baker

Andrea Campbell

Ricardo Arroyo

Matt O'Malley
Kenzie Bok
Liz Breadon



December 19, 2019

Re: FY '21 Boston Park Advocates Budget Requests

Dear Mayor Walsh,

As Boston continues its rapid growth, we recognize your administration's dedication to the city's green spaces, reflected in record capital investments and leadership in the citywide climate resilience and waterfront park planning. Investments in planning (underway and completed) in parks throughout Boston such as Franklin Park, Jamaica Pond, Boston Common, Moakley Park, and Harambee Park are significant and transformative for the host neighborhoods and city overall. In addition, we applaud staffing budget increases to the Boston Parks Department to add capacity for projects funded through the Community Preservation Act, and the work your administration does to make our parks the best they can be.

The Boston Park Advocates network writes to request your prioritization of key funding areas for the Parks and Recreation Department in the City's Fiscal Year 2021 Budget. Our network of over 125 friends groups, community organizations, and nonprofits applauds the work you have done to advance safety and accessibility throughout Boston's parks. We are confident that with your continued support and targeted investment, we can collectively enjoy an even stronger, more vibrant park system for all.

There are key investments that can build on this work, and we request that your FY2021 Budget include:

- **Operations:** The City's support for park operations is significant, yet the pressure on our parks is higher than it has ever been before. With the city's growth, more people are using parks, community gardens, and athletic fields, and relying on them all hours and days of the week. Operational funds are foundational to a healthy park system, and we believe that increased funding is essential to help Boston maintain world-class parks for all. Per the City's FY20 budget, the projected percentage of park maintenance requests completed on time for FY19 was 77%; we would like to see the current target of 80% increased to at least 85% for FY21, with sufficient resources to support that level of service.
 - **Second Shift:** Currently, park maintenance teams work from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. Yet, parks are used week-long and at all hours, particularly during weekends. A second shift to cover 1 p.m. to 9 p.m. maintenance, Wednesday through Sunday will ensure that parks stay safe, clean, and usable for all residents and visitors. Therefore, we advocate for increased funding to fulfill the staffing needs.
 - **City Arborists:** In addition to managing hundreds of properties, the Parks & Recreation Department has responsibility for approximately 35,000 street trees. Currently, one tree

warden works with four arborists to provide all tree inspections and emergency maintenance across Boston. Additional work, including tree plantings and removals, is contracted. The addition of two arborists would allow the City greater oversight of its tree planting program and better maintenance of the city's urban canopy, a critical component of climate resiliency and environmental health, particularly in environmental justice neighborhoods that have below-average tree cover.

- **Park Rangers:** The current compensation for Rangers has negatively impacted staffing, leading to consistently low retention and training inefficiencies. At a time where park safety is an increasing concern across Boston, increasing pay for Rangers will improve retention, and the addition of two FTE staff will help assure that parks remain safe and welcoming.
- **Animal Care & Control:** We ask for direct appropriations for Animal Care & Control to provide more budgetary predictability to support the important work of this program.
- **Sharps Team:** In addition to the above requests for line-items within the Parks & Recreation Department budget, a related program is the Mobile Sharps Team within the Boston Public Health Commission. Many park friends groups regularly report to the City when there are discarded needles. According to the *Boston Globe*, from 2016 through the first half of 2019 there was a more than 45% increase in 311 requests to the City for removing discarded needles. We request an increase to this program to double the size of the Mobile Sharps Team from four to eight. This will better enable requests to be fulfilled in a timely manner and increase the team's ability to be proactive. This increased staffing will help provide safe spaces for active recreation as well as the passive enjoyment of nature.

We thank you for your generous support of the City's park system. Thank you for your consideration of our requests.

Sincerely,
Boston Park Advocates
bostonparkadvocates.org
bostonparkadvocates@gmail.com

cc
Budget Director Justin Sterritt
Chief of Policy and Planning Joyce Linehan
Chief of Environment, Energy & Open Space Christopher Cook
Boston Parks & Recreation Department Commissioner Ryan Woods
Boston City Councilors



Michelle Goldberg (City Council) <michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov>

Melnea Cass Boulevard Redesign Project

1 message

Boston.gov Contact Form <335bdbd6307b@contactform.boston.gov>

Thu, May 14, 2020 at 12:03 PM

To: michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov

-- REPLY ABOVE THIS LINE --

It is baffling to me that the City of Boston has planned and agreed to destroy more than a hundred mature trees along Melnea Cass Boulevard in order to widen the road and build two unsafe bike lanes when there is already one with the argument that some flood prevention and drainage work needs to be done in the area. We need fresh air and less air contamination, not pretty but unsafe bike lanes or more cars!
How can you justify such an affront to intelligence and reason?

This message was sent using the contact form on Boston.gov. It was sent by Yvonne Lalyre, Ed.D. from lalira53@yahoo.com. It was sent from <https://www.boston.gov/public-notices/11565451>.

Boston City Council 1
City Hall Square,
Boston, MA 02201



Re: Dockets #0588, 0596, 0597, 0604, FY21 Budget
Parks, Parkman Fund, Parks Revolving Fund

March 12, 2020

Dear Councilors,

Fenway Civic Association (FCA) is the Fenway's oldest all-volunteer organization, working since 1961 to promote a vital, livable neighborhood.

We write to encourage your support for Mayor Walsh's proposed FY'21 budget for the Boston Parks Department and your endorsement of the important supports provided through its proposals for operating and capital funds. During the current crisis, the need for accessible, safe, resilient spaces for all residents and the protection of these irreplaceable assets is more critical than ever before. The city's work to increase parks access to all neighborhoods, to make sure those places are safe and usable, and to improve climate preparedness has been reflected through the ongoing efforts of this department, whose operating budget represents less than 1% of the city's allocations.

While anticipated budget shortfalls and the incredible impact of COVID-19 on our health, jobs, and futures will leave none of us untouched and all of us working to rebuild, the importance of the environment – what it delivers to all residents and neighborhoods, is irrefutable, and must not be scuttled in either-or thinking. With your hard work, the city will rebuild, and must rebuild following its values to integrate open space and green infrastructure into its work.

Fenway Civic has worked in partnership with stakeholders to improve its open space, and greatly appreciates the dedicated efforts of the Environment and Parks departments. We have worked on a number of initiatives, serving on the past Boston Urban Forest Council, the Boston Park Advocates steering committee, the Muddy River Restoration Oversight Committee, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy's Park Overseers Group, and actively care for neighborhood parks as volunteers on Friends groups and community gardens. We wish to particularly highlight important aspects of this budget and ask for your support:

- **Capital Project Investment:** The pathways in the heavily used Back Bay Fens are in dire need of repairs, having degraded nearly to the point of inaccessibility in key locations, including the War Memorial and Clemente Field. The paths are integral connectors within the park system and between the neighborhoods that are bisected by the Muddy River. As outlined in Boston's Open Space 2015-2021 plan, the Fenway is the second densest community, yet hosts only 3.68 acres of open space per 1,000 residents, far lower than the city average of 7.59. Although the Back Bay Fens is a key component of the Fenway's open space, its relative inaccessibility leaves much of it unusable to residents. By providing repair funds through the Back Bay Fens pathways project, access for all, regardless of mobility and mode, will be assured, helping secure key advances in equity and accessibility.
- **Operations and personnel:** FCA has been a vocal advocate for increased parks maintenance funding and staffing. We have more people using limited open space compared to most neighborhoods and face continued residential, commercial, and institutional growth. We also have borne the brunt of the opioid epidemic which challenges the safe use of limited open space for our

residents. Personnel support, including funding for a dedicated 2nd shift to assure care across the city's parks system, is greatly needed to support staff who are limited to Monday- Friday/ 7 a.m. – 3 p.m. capacity. A 2nd shift to provide support Wednesday through Sunday from 1 p.m. to 9 p.m. will help assure that all parks stay safe for Boston residents and visitors.

- **Funding for Urban Forestry:** Currently, one tree warden works with limited staff to provide all tree inspections and emergency maintenance across the city. Climate change and city growth has greatly expanded the scope of work for arborists, whether in addressing storm tree damage, navigating removals and plantings, or facilitating contract work, Expanded 311 reports further pressures an already limited staff. While funding for tree plantings has been robust across the years, the ability of a small staff to oversee contracts and assure larger urban forestry goals are met have been historically constrained. The importance of trees in climate resiliency has been at the forefront of many city's planning efforts, yet the funding of an Urban Forestry plan in Boston has only just been proposed. By funding this plan, the Council can assure the department has needed resources to embark on this planning, together with neighborhoods and in alignment with the city's resiliency goals.
- **Funding for Renovated Muddy River Parks:** The Department has shown a solid commitment to ensuring the maintenance of the restored park land along the completed multi-million dollar Muddy River Phase I project. We applaud their dedication of ongoing funding and personnel to protect the public's investment in, and their enjoyment of, this renovated section of Olmsted's Emerald Necklace park system. We ask the Council's recognition of this transformative project and the support needed to maintain it.
- **Parks Rangers:** We appreciate the longstanding support for this important resource and the valuable role the Mounted Rangers play for safety and stewardship in our thousands of acres of historic parks, including the Back Bay Fens. We ask the Council for the funding needed to support to next year's projected expenses, ensuring this highly valuable asset continues to perform its primary role of park security. At a future date, we would like to follow up on suggested short term upgrades to the Franklin Park facilities that could improve the environment for both the horses and the rangers in the decades-old buildings that house the Mounted Unit.

We thank you for this opportunity to comment and offer FCAs ongoing commitment to support Boston's parks and open space initiatives.

Sincerely,



Marie Fukuda and Fredericka Veikley
Fenway Civic Association Parks and Open Space Committee chairs
Fenway Civic Association
P.O. Box 230435, Astor Station
Boston, MA 02123

CC: Ryan Woods, Commissioner Boston Parks and Recreation Department
Christopher Cook, Chief, Energy, Environment, and Open Space Cabinet

Pathway Conditions, Park Drive to War Memorial



Pathway Conditions, Park Drive to Basketball Court and Clemente Field



P. O. Box 170124
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FRIENDS OF COPLEY SQUARE

Dedicated to the Beautification and Preservation of Boston's Art Square

May 8, 2020

Regarding: Parks Department Budget 2020
Line Item: Boston Park Ranger Unit
Line Item: Copley Square Planning and Renovation

Dear Kenzie Bok,

The Friends of Copley Square is the volunteer organization led by Board Members representing a broad cross-section of the Park neighbors, institutions, businesses, non-profit organizations, and residents. We seek to to enhance Copley Square's position as one of Boston's premier parks by keeping it clean, safe, well maintained, and rich with vibrant programming throughout the year. We work in partnership with the City of Boston and the Boston Parks Department to preserve, maintain, and beautify Copley Square.

We believe it is imperative that this operating budget process establishes line items for the annual expenses for the Park Ranger Unit and the capital budget establishes expenses and a schedule for planning and repairing Copley Square.

It is prudent for all of us to be aware about how the funds are allocated and expended throughout the year. It will be much easier for well meaning groups to contribute with the benefit of this information.

We appreciate your efforts to align the needs of all city departments with available funding. Thank you,

Jacquelin S Yessian,
Board Member, Friends of Copley Square
617-480-1145
jyessian@friendsofcopleysquare.org



Michelle Goldberg (City Council) <michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov>

Fwd: Letter of support for Walsh Administration's FY21 Urban forest budget

Michelle Goldberg (City Council) <michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov>
 To: Michelle Goldberg <michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov>

Tue, May 19, 2020 at 2:23 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **David Meshoulam** <david@sfttbos.org>

Date: Wed, May 13, 2020 at 10:25 PM

Subject: Letter of support for Walsh Administration's FY21 Urban forest budget

To: Michelle Wu <michelleforboston@gmail.com>, Anissa Essaibi-George <anissa.essaibi-george@boston.gov>, Ed Flynn <ed.flynn@boston.gov>, Kim Janey <kim.janey@boston.gov>, <JULIA.mejia@boston.gov>, <michael.flaherty@boston.gov>, <lydia.edwards@boston.gov>, <FRANK.BAKER@boston.gov>, Andrea Campbell <Andrea.Campbell@boston.gov>, <ricardo.arroyo@boston.gov>, <matt.omalley@boston.gov>, <kenzie.bok@boston.gov>, <liz.breadon@boston.gov>

Cc: Ryan Woods <ryan.woods@boston.gov>, Christopher Cook <christopher.cook@boston.gov>, Michelle Moon <michelle@civicspacecollaborative.org>, Liz Vizza <liz@friendsofthepublicgarden.org>

Dear City Councilors,

I hope that this email finds you well and healthy. I am writing to share with you a letter of support signed by 25 organizations, listed below, and 68 individuals (and counting!) in support of Mayor Walsh's request for \$500,000 for an urban forestry master plan and \$1,000,000 to increase city tree planting and care. During these unprecedented times, our urban forest serves as a powerful tool to increase urban health and resilience.

I look forward to sharing with you more at tomorrow's meeting.

Sincerely,

David

Organizations who have signed the attached letter include:

Fairmount Greenway Task Force

The Trustees of Reservations

Arborway Coalition

Friends of Geneva Cliffs

Speak for the Trees, Boston

Emerald Necklace Conservancy

350 Mass (Boston node)

TREE Eastie

Friends of the Mary Ellen Welch Greenway

Eastie Farm

HERO Nurturing Center Inc

Southwest Boston CDC

Franklin Park Coalition

OASIS On Ballou Avenue Urban Farm c/o CSNDC

Old South Church in Boston

Joan Pasquale, The Parents & Community Build Group, Inc./Ringer Park Partnership Group

Roslindale Green & Clean

Boston Food Forest Coalition

Friends of Allandale

Empower East Boston

GreenRoots

350Mass Allston-Brighton Node

ArborwayMatters

Roslindale Wetlands Task Force

Sierra Club Massachusetts Chapter

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5/19/2020

City of Boston Mail - Fwd: Letter of support for Walsh Administration's FY21 Urban forest budget




David Meshoulam, PhD
Executive Director & Co-Founder, Speak for the Trees, Boston
617-398-7409 | david@sfttbos.org | sfttbos.org
50 Milk Street, 15th floor, Boston MA 02109



Now is the Time for Trees.



Please join us in growing Boston's urban forest.

 **Letter of Support for Walsh FY21 Urban Forest Budget (1).pdf**
34K

13 May 2020

Dear City Councilors,

During these challenging times, we recognize the importance of green spaces in Boston as mental and physical health and respite. The research is clear: trees are a critical part of a city's infrastructure, providing economic, social, and environmental benefits such as reducing summer temperatures, protecting neighborhoods from local flooding, relieving stress, slowing traffic and decreasing pedestrian and bicycle accidents, and reducing violence. We thank Councilors for their long-standing interest and support for the protection and improvement of Boston's trees.

That's why we are grateful that the Walsh Administration FY21 budget request includes:

- \$1,000,000 increase in annual street tree planting and care, and
- \$500,000 to develop an urban forestry master plan to create a comprehensive and long-term approach for preserving, protecting, and growing the city's forest.

These funds are in addition to the \$1,000,000 designated in the 2018 state Environmental Bond for tree planting in South Boston, Dorchester, Mattapan and Hyde Park.

Together these measures would greatly improve Boston's current and future tree canopy.

In order to improve the urban forest in a sustainable and equitable way, we believe that a master plan is needed now more than ever. As we watch inequities playing out in the daily lives of Boston's residents during this pandemic, we see how gaps in our tree canopy carry grave health implications. We view a master plan as a critical piece in expanding tree coverage in ways that provide benefits of trees in a more equitable way. We ask that you support the Administration's recommendation for a community-informed and data-driven plan that can provide a blueprint in building a healthier and more resilient urban forest, especially in lower-canopied neighborhoods of Boston such as East Boston, South Boston, and areas of Dorchester, Mattapan, and Roxbury.

The Mayor's request is following the lead of other cities across the region and country. Urban centers such as Pittsburgh, Charlotte, and Cambridge, are producing urban forestry master plans that take a holistic approach, engaging stakeholders in an analysis that allows them to critically assess gaps and meet needs due to historical issues, current development, and climate change. While we all support more trees in our city, we recognize that the process of growing our urban forest needs to be guided by a master plan. We see such a plan as providing guidance, metrics, and benchmarks that allow city agencies, developers, NGOs, and residents, to work in tandem for planning and building a more resilient, healthier, and greener Boston for the future.

Additionally, we strongly encourage the City to connect tree protection and expansion with youth education, job creation and outdoor experience, in partnership with local schools and community-based organizations, such as the Arnold Arboretum, The Emerald Necklace Conservancy, and Speak for the Trees, Boston.

In closing, we, the undersigned, see our urban forest as a city-wide asset that requires careful planning and care. We hope you approve the Mayor's request for \$500,000 for the master plan as well as his request for a \$1 million increase in capital projects to increase tree plantings and care.



Connecting People and Parks and Conserving the Emerald Necklace

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Karen Mauney-Brodek, *President*

May 6, 2020

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Fenway CDC
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Zoo New England
Friends of Jamaica Pond
Friends of Leverett Pond
Friends of the Muddy River
Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum
Jamaica Hills Association
Jamaica Pond Association
MASCO
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Re: FY 2021 Boston Parks Department Budget

Dear Mayor Walsh,

As Boston continues to grow, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy wants to recognize your administration's commitment to the city's green spaces, as reflected in record capital investments, support of the department's budget and leadership in the citywide climate resilience and waterfront park planning. Your management of the very challenging situation with the overgrowth in the Back Bay Fens is only one recent notable example of your leadership within challenging circumstances.

Recent record Investments in improvements in the Necklace's parks, including Franklin Park, Jamaica Pond and Olmsted Park are significant and impact not just those neighborhoods but serve the city overall. The Necklace connects more than 14 neighborhoods in Boston and our neighbors in Brookline and can do more if we continue to invest in it. Moreover, we applaud your proposed staffing budget increases to the Boston Parks Department to add capacity for projects funded through the Community Preservation Act, and the work your administration does to make our parks the best they can be.

We at the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, along with our network of friends groups, community organizations and nonprofits, are writing to request your continuing commitment to the parks and prioritization of key funding areas for the Parks and Recreation Department in the City's Fiscal Year 2021 Budget.

At this challenging time, your investments in parks and our open spaces are more important than ever. The work your team has done and can continue to do is supporting our city and communities now in a way we had never planned. Our parks are needed more than ever, and thanks to your leadership, they can be part of our solace.

We believe that there are focused investments, many included in your proposed budget, that will build on past success:

- **Operations:** The City's support for park operations is significant, but with the city's growth, an increasing number of people are using parks, community gardens and athletic fields. Operational funds are the foundation of a healthy park system, and we believe that increased funding is essential to help Boston maintain world-class parks for all. Per the City's FY20 budget, the projected percentage of park maintenance requests completed on time for FY19 was 77%; we would like to see the current target of 80% increased to 85% for FY21, with sufficient resources to support that level of service.
 - **Second Shift:** Currently, park maintenance teams work from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. Yet, parks are used week-long and at all hours, particularly during weekends. A second shift to cover 1 p.m. to 9 p.m. maintenance,

Wednesday through Sunday, will ensure that parks stay safe, clean, and usable for all residents and visitors. Therefore, we advocate for increased funding to fulfill these staffing needs.

- **City Arborists:** In addition to managing hundreds of properties, the Parks & Recreation Department has responsibility for approximately 35,000 street trees. Currently, one tree warden works with four staff to provide all tree inspections and emergency maintenance across Boston. Additional work, including tree plantings and removals, is contracted. We would advocate for the addition of two certified arborists, which would allow the City greater oversight of its tree planting program and better maintenance of the city's urban canopy, a critical component of climate resiliency and environmental health, particularly in environmental justice neighborhoods that have below-average tree cover.
- **Park Rangers:** The current compensation for Rangers has negatively impacted staffing, leading to consistently low retention and training inefficiencies. At a critical time, where park safety is an increasing concern across Boston, increasing pay for Rangers will improve retention, and the addition of two FTE staff will help assure that parks remain safe and welcoming. An increase in salary will also ease the financial burden the Rangers face regarding increasing housing costs, as they are required to live within the city.

Additionally, the operating budget for the Rangers has been hard to determine for several years. In the past, \$225,000 has been spent on the Rangers. However, the lack of specification has made it unclear how programs, staff time, and other expenses are funded. We request that the already existing \$225,000 be included as a clearly defined line item for the Rangers operational budget. We would also like to suggest that a 2% inflation factor be added annually to these funds. Including a clear and transparent line item for the Rangers operational budget will allow for more effective long-term planning and thus increase the safety of our parks.

- **Muddy River Phase 1 Maintenance:** The ongoing Muddy River Restoration Project has been vital to the health of the Necklace and has been a success in many ways. As we move forward with the 2nd phase of the project, it is essential that Liff Park and other areas completed in Phase 1 are properly maintained and managed. We are glad the Parks department has put in place a contract to provide maintenance and an allowance to fund plant replacements. We would like to know that additional funds could be budgeted for additional costs that might be needed to take care of this critical area.

- **Capital Projects**

- **Back Bay Fens Pathway Repair:** We commend the proposed budget for allocating capital funds for much-needed pathway repairs in the heavily used Back Bay Fens.



Connecting People and Parks and Conserving the Emerald Necklace

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We request that the planning process begin as soon as possible in the upcoming FY21 fiscal year in order to bid out the project and start construction as soon as possible.

- **Sharps Team:** In addition to the above requests for line-items within the Parks & Recreation Department budget, a related program is the Mobile Sharps Team within the Boston Public Health Commission. Our volunteer groups regularly find discarded needles, and the number is still increasing – for example, last year we found 370 sharps during our clean-up activities, a significant increase from the prior year’s count of 201. We request a funding increase to this program to double the size of the Mobile Sharps Team from four to eight. This will better protect our volunteers, support the Parks department staff and increase the numbers of needles removed by those who are trained to do so. This increased staffing will help provide safe spaces for active recreation as well as the passive enjoyment of nature.

Thank you for your generous support of the City’s park system. The Conservancy will continue to support the City and all our partners as we can. Thank you for your consideration of our requests.

Sincerely,

Karen Mauney-Brodek
President
Emerald Necklace Conservancy

cc
Chief Financial Officer, Emme Handy
Budget Director, Justin Sterritt
Chief of Environment, Energy & Open Space Christopher Cook
Boston Parks & Recreation Department Commissioner Ryan Woods
Boston City Councilors

14 May 2020

Dear City Councilors,

My name is David Meshoulam and I am Executive Director and Co-Founder of Speak for the Trees, Boston. I thank you for the opportunity to share some thoughts with you today. First, I wanted to begin by commending Commissioner Woods and his staff for the hard work into ensuring that our parks and urban forest are a world class asset. Over the past 2 months they have made sure that our park system remains safe, clean, and accessible.

In addition to my comments below, I have submitted to you a letter of support signed by 25 organizations and over 70 individuals asking that you approve the administration's request for \$500,000 for a forestry master plan as well as \$1,000,000 for increased street tree planting and care.

I'd like to make a few brief remarks on the importance of our urban forest as well as four criteria that Speak for the Trees believes the urban master plan should include.

First, trees are vitally important to build healthy and resilient communities, especially in the face of the twin challenges of climate change and COVID. By sequestering pollutants, cooling the air, filtering stormwater, and providing mental respite, our urban trees do so much in ensuring the economic, social, mental, and environmental health of Boston's residents. Even as we sit here today, we see how inequities in our urban infrastructure are playing out and how gaps in our tree canopy can carry grave health implications. For example, residents who live in areas with higher amounts of air pollution are at increased health risks from COVID19. Our climate crisis has exposed similar risks, as certain neighborhoods face the burden of hotter summers and increased flooding.

Which brings me to my second point. At SFTT we believe that Boston's urban forestry master plan should be guided by the principles of Tree Equity, which I had the pleasure of speaking to the City Council about two years ago. Tree Equity is the idea that there are disparities in tree canopy coverage that often track along economic, racial, and social lines. Low-income neighborhoods tend to have less tree canopy than more affluent ones.

In order meet the call of Tree Equity, and to ensure the success of the administration's urban forestry master plan, we believe that at the following four core values should guide the city's master plan:

- Holistic, or rather "seeing the forest for the trees." Instead of just being made up of a collection of trees, our forest needs to be thought of as a system that works together and supports wildlife, provides ecological and environmental benefits, and brings people together. Trees rely on each other and on us for mutual support.
- Comprehensive: any plan needs to take into account the range of spaces and organizations and needs to bring them together to explore their role in this work. This includes private and public organizations, state, city, and federal agencies,

schools, and residents. Any plan should take into account more than just city-owned trees.

- Community driven: urban trees carry the largest health benefits in the areas where they are rooted. The work of the plan needs to meet people in the spaces where they live and breathe. As such, it must acknowledge and respond to differences of geography, class, race, and experience and welcome a variety of opinions and voices.
- Data rich. Boston is a city filled with brain and computing power. The plan should work closely with leading researchers in this field to create a plan that is guided by the best data and science available.

The Mayor's request is critical to building a long-term vibrant urban forest. But in order to fully succeed it needs to be holistic and comprehensive, community-driven and data rich. We ask that you support the administration's plan to provide guidance, metrics, and benchmarks that allow city agencies, developers, NGOs, and residents, to work together for planning and building an urban forest for the future.

We at Speak for the Trees, Boston, look forward to working together with BPRD to develop a long-term plan that ensures the preservation and growth of our urban forest. Our trees - all of them - are an invaluable asset.

Sincerely,
David Meshoulam



Michelle Goldberg (City Council) <michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov>

Letter I sent to Council members re: Muddy Water Initiative a few days ago

Jacqueline Royce <jackie.s.royce@gmail.com>

Mon, May 11, 2020 at 6:47 PM

To: "Michelle Goldberg (City Council)" <michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov>, Candace Morales <candace.morales@boston.gov>

Cc: Caroline Reeves <caroline.b.reeves@icloud.com>

For your Information, the email I sent to Council members last Friday is below.

From: Jacqueline Royce <jackie.s.royce@gmail.com>

Date: May 9, 2020 at 5:07:55 PM EDT

To: Ayanna.Pressley@boston.gov, Kenzie Bok <p.mackenzie.bok@gmail.com>, Michelle Wu <michelle.wu@boston.gov>, Matt O'Malley <matt.omalley@boston.gov>, Allyn <mayor@boston.gov>, Ed Flynn <ed.flynn@boston.gov>, Lydia.Edwards@boston.gov

Cc: emilyforw2o@gmail.com, Emily Brown <emily.brown@boston.gov>, melanie.alba@boston.gov, Jessica Morris <jessica.morris@boston.gov>, Joel Wool <joelwool@gmail.com>, Sophia Wang <sophia.wang@boston.gov>

Subject: Request for funding FY21 Environment and Parks "Muddy Water Initiative Phase II Pilot"

Dear Council Members -

We know you are in the midst of FY21 Budget decision making in category of Environment and Parks with many important and worthwhile projects in the Public Realm Improvement efforts.

Our Project "Muddy Water Initiative Phase II: Muddy River WaterGoat Stewardship and BiocharNow Water Filtration Pilot" is located in DCR park near Ipswich Street.

The WaterGoat project (Phase I) was approved by ConCom recently. "WaterGoat" boom and buoy debris collection system was purchased and installation is anticipated late this summer (or Fall).

We are submitting a proposal for \$30,000 to fund two exciting and innovative projects: 1) to hire a part-time person who reflects Boston's diverse population to oversee our Volunteer Stewardship program to empty debris from WaterGoat, and 2) to design, purchase, build, permit, deploy and test an innovative new system to filter phosphorus, hydrocarbons, nitrogen, and e.coli out of the River and turn the filter and toxins into beneficial compost, while gathering data to determine effectiveness of this innovative new boom system.

The Muddy Water Initiative is a grassroots environmental advocacy and action group committed to building community partnerships and serving as a clearinghouse for best practices to clean up the Muddy River. Our fiscal sponsor is New England Grassroots Environment Fund (NEGEF) and our major partners are Charles River Watershed Association, Colleges of the Fenway, DCR, Greater Boston Trout Unlimited, Green Committee of Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB), and Emerald Necklace Conservancy.

Proposal is attached below.

Sincere thank you for your consideration.

Caroline Reeves, PhD ([439 Marlborough St., Boston, MA 02115](#); 617-448-2388;
creeves@post.harvard.edu)

and Jacqueline Royce, PhD ([780 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02199](#); 617-266-3608;
jackie.s.royce@gmail.com)

Muddy Water Initiative

www.muddywaterinitiative.org

**Muddy Water Initiative Phase II:
Muddy River WATERGOAT™ Stewardship and BiocharNow Water Filtration Pilot**

Contact: Caroline Reeves, co-Founder, Muddy Water Initiative,
creeves@post.harvard.edu, 617-448-2388

Fiscal Sponsor: New England Grassroots Environment Fund Julia@grassrootsfund.org

Major Partners: Bootstrap Compost, Charles River Watershed Association (CRWA), Emerald Necklace Conservancy, Colleges of the Fenway (COF) Sustainability Forum, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Diller Teen Leadership Program, Fenway Community Center, Green Committee Neighborhood Association of Back Bay (NABB), Greater Boston Trout Unlimited, Keep America Beautiful.

Abstract: The Muddy Water Initiative is a grassroots environmental advocacy and action group committed to building community partnerships and serving as a clearinghouse for best practices to clean up the Muddy River. Our first project, the WATERGOAT™ Pilot Project targeted the surface trash disfiguring our river at Charlesgate; our second project dives deeper to focus on cleaning up the Muddy water itself.

We are applying for \$30,000 to fund the two projects: first, for the WATERGOAT™ to hire a part-time summer intern to oversee our Volunteer Stewardship program to empty the trash out of the WATERGOAT™ and second, to design, purchase, build, permit, deploy and test an innovative new system to filter phosphorus, hydrocarbons, nitrogen and e.coli out of the Muddy River and turn the filter and toxins into beneficial compost, while gathering data to determine the effectiveness of this innovative new boom system.

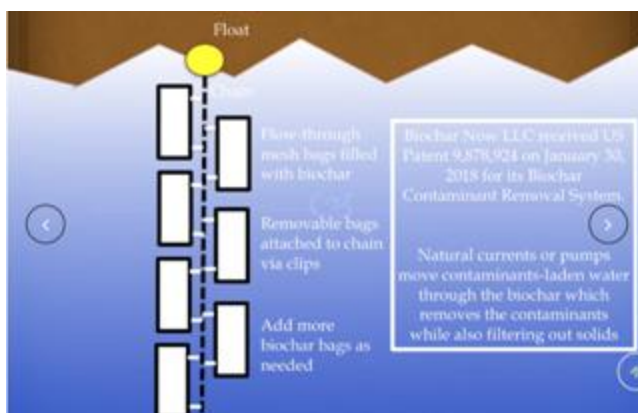
1) Muddy River WATERGOAT™ Stewardship Project: In 2019-2020, with the help of a state earmark, the Muddy Water Initiative researched, designed, and permitted a device called the WATERGOAT™, a stormwater trash and debris boom to be deployed across the Muddy River at Ipswich Street in Boston. With community buy-in, the WATERGOAT™ has become a much anticipated device that when deployed, will stop trash from floating down the Muddy River into the Charles. The trash will then be removed from the WATERGOAT™ boom nets and bagged by volunteers on a weekly basis. The trash will be hauled away by a private hauling company. We are now interested in hiring a part-time summer intern to organize the volunteers from Greater Boston Trout Unlimited, Keep Massachusetts Beautiful, and the Diller Teen Leadership Program, as well as others solicited from the community. The intern will organize the schedule of the weekly volunteer opportunities, provide safety training for each group as well as oversee the volunteers' emptying of the WATERGOAT™ and the successful removal of the bagged trash. The volunteers will be engaged on a weekly basis through the summer season (June-September/October). The intern will ensure the smooth deployment of the WATERGOAT™s first and second seasons as it gobbles trash from the surface of the Muddy River and vastly improves this current eyesore. Our hiring for the intern will reflect the diversity of Boston's communities, particularly underserved neighborhoods.

2) Muddy River BiocharNow Water Filtration Pilot Project: To continue our cleanup of the Muddy River, the Muddy River Initiative has investigated a new use of biochar, an activated charcoal product, to filter pollutants out of waterways. We have designed an innovative new boom system to deploy this technology in a low-cost, minimally invasive way with no toxic byproducts to clean the Muddy River. The boom can be thought to resemble the charcoal water filter in a goldfish aquarium, but on a different scale and with more sophisticated inputs.

The BioCharNow Boom will stretch across the Muddy River and filter major pollutants including phosphorus, e.coli, nitrogen, and hydrocarbons out of the river water. We will accompany the deployment of the Boom with a water testing program both before and after deployment to measure the system's efficacy. The used BioCharNow filters will then be composted, both to render the collected toxins inert and to use the filtered and filtering materials to enrich soils. Testing of the final product—compost—will also be undertaken to make sure the toxins have been rendered inert. This pilot project would provide water cleanup data and act as a pilot for other water cleanup projects along the Muddy River and beyond.

The BioCharNow Boom will be placed across the Muddy River at Ipswich Street, where the WaterGoat Trash Collection Boom will also be located (see our website for this first project). This location is selected because 1) there are no culverts in the area complicating the testing equation, 2) access to the area is good and we work well with the landowner (the DCR), and 3) we already have initial engineering plans within these limits.

There would be 12-16 socks filled with BioCharNow strung across the 32 foot span of the river. The socks, weighted at the bottom, would hang vertically at two-foot intervals, suspended to a cable, allowing aquatic fauna to pass unimpeded. The socks would not touch the bottom of the river (the socks are two feet long and we would adjust the pods accordingly). These kinds of BiocharNow socks are currently being deployed in lakes and ponds in Colorado with excellent results, such as removing 99% of phosphorus from waterways.



We will test for four major pollutants of the Muddy River before and after the deployment of the BiocharNow Boom: Phosphorus, Nitrogen, hydrocarbons and E. Coli. The Charles River Watershed Association, whose Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) designation from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) assures the highest reliability of data, will test the water in the deployment area weekly for four weeks prior to deployment of the Boom and for two weeks post-deployment under the direction of Dr. Lisa Kumpf, CRWA's aquatic scientist and Muddy Water Initiative's Advisory Group member. This data will be used to ascertain the BiocharNow Boom's effectiveness in filtering pollutants out of the river.

The used BiocharNow socks will be taken away by a local Compost company, Bootstrap Compost, and composted. The resulting soils will be tested for toxicity by Cornell Laboratories under the direction of Bootstrap. The data from CRWA and from Bootstrap will be compiled in a white paper and analyzed with the help of Professor of Chemistry Michael Berger, PhD at Simmons College, a member of the COF Sustainability Forum.

Start/End Dates:

WATERGOAT™ Stewardship Program: September 2020, June-September 2021
BiocharNow Water Filtration Pilot: Design, Permitting: September 2020-June 2021;
 Water testing June 2021-September 2021; BiocharNow Boom Deployment June-September 2021; Composting and soil testing: September-October 2021.

Budget:

WATERGOAT™ hire:

Intern: 9 months, March-November average 8 hours/week. \$ 4000

BiocharNow Water Filtration Pilot:

BiocharNow Socks: \$55 dollars per sock, 24 socks total:	\$1320
Boom Installation and Installation materials:	\$1000
Boston Conservation Commission and DEP Permitting and required studies:	\$6000
Abutter Notification:	\$700
Water Testing done by CRWA:	\$12,500
Removal of used BiocharNow Socks, testing, composting and testing soil by BootStrap Compost:	\$2500
Whitepaper and analysis by Dr. Berger, Honorarium:	<u>\$2000</u>

TOTAL FOR MUDDY WATER INITIATIVE PHASE II: \$30,020



www.muddywaterinitiative.org
Twitter @MuddyWaterInit
Facebook @MuddyWaterInitiative

info@MuddyWaterInitiative.org

P.O. Box 990906
Boston, MA 02199

May 14, 2020

Kenzie Bok, Chair
Committee on Ways and Means
1 City Hall Square, Suite 500
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Chair Bok and Members of the City Council:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of our request for funding for FY21 from the Environment and Parks Budget for the “Muddy Water Initiative Phase II Pilot Project.” Our project concentrates on water restoration and debris removal for the Muddy River—one of Boston’s most important historic urban waterways. **The Muddy River is the sapphire string on which Frederick Law Olmsted’s Emerald Necklace is strung. We need to start treating it like the treasure it is for our city of Boston.**

Background: The Muddy Water Initiative (MWI) is a grassroots environmental advocacy and action group committed to building community partnerships and serving as a clearinghouse for best practices to clean up Boston’s Muddy River. Our first pilot, the WaterGoat Pilot Project 2019-2020 **targeted the surface trash** disfiguring our river in the Fenway and Back Bay. Our second project dives deeper, to focus on **cleaning the Muddy water itself and preserving this important riverine and wetland area.**

Both projects are pilots in the sense that we are testing and promoting low-cost, cost-effective, accessible, volunteer-driven solutions to common urban problems that once validated, can be replicated by communities of diverse financial resources across our neighborhoods. Our projects take sound science as their basis and draw on our community to involve volunteers of all ages in stewardship and research roles. We focus particularly on **bringing youth into our work through community action, environmental education, and leadership training activities**, and have had good success in bringing diverse and underserved populations into our project. We look forward to partnering with the City of Boston to provide opportunities for engagement and employment for youth in Boston’s parks, especially in the summer months. COVID-19 allowing, we have a plethora of meaningful hands-on outdoors employment experiences awaiting Boston’s young people, enjoying and repairing our important green and blue spaces.

Over the past year, we have **fulfilled our commitment to our mission with enthusiasm** and neighborhood support. For example, in October we held a Muddy Water Forum attended by elected State and City officials as well as groups and individuals interested in the future of the Muddy River to share our findings and foster dialogue among our community members. We also sponsored a walk

along the Muddy with the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, bringing Boston's citizens outdoors to learn about the river and its history. Later in 2019, we hosted the Diller Teen Leadership Program, 20+ teens who learned about our urban waterway and its challenges and cleaned up the banks of the Muddy. More recently, the Colleges of the Fenway Sustainability Forum offered two Muddy Water Initiative service learning projects, one of which won a top spot in the competition for the best project. This summer, COVID-19 permitting, we will deploy the WaterGoat and start skimming trash off our river's surface with the help of our neighbors and friends.

We are respectfully applying to the City Council to be included in the FY2021 Budget. We are requesting \$30,000 to fund two pilot projects: first, for the WaterGoat Pilot Project Part II, to hire a part-time summer intern to oversee our Volunteer Stewardship program to empty the trash out of the WaterGoat and to supervise youth clean-ups and research work on the river; and second, for the BiocharNow Water Filtration Pilot, to design, permit, deploy and test an innovative new boom system to filter phosphorus, hydrocarbons, nitrogen, and E.coli out of the Muddy River and turn the filter and toxins into beneficial compost, while gathering data to determine the efficacy of this potentially game-changing boom system.

The Muddy Water Initiative is bringing attention to our sadly neglected urban waterway and engaging a new group of community members, organizations, and youth in protecting and improving Boston's water resources, as well as **enhancing the city's health and wellness in neighborhoods from JP to Fenway to the Back Bay**. The Muddy River has long been known as the second most polluted tributary of the Charles River (CRWA data). Despite current efforts to improve the flood resiliency of the Muddy River with the US Army Corps of Engineers, **no efforts at all have been or are planned to be taken** to actually clean the Muddy Water. It is time this oversight is remediated. Please help us clean that dirty water—Boston, you're our home.

With gratitude for all our city's workers do for us always and particularly now in these troubled times,



and Jackie Royce

Caroline Reeves and Jackie Royce
Co-Founders, The Muddy Water Initiative

See letters of support from principal partners, sent under separate covers

Enc: Proposal

**Muddy Water Initiative Phase II:
Muddy River WaterGoat Stewardship and BiocharNow Water Filtration Pilot
PROPOSAL**

1) Muddy River WaterGoat Stewardship Project: In 2019-2020, with the help of a state earmark, the Muddy Water Initiative researched, designed, and permitted a device called the WaterGoat, a stormwater trash and debris boom to be deployed across the Muddy River at Ipswich Street in Boston. With community buy-in, the WaterGoat has become a much anticipated device that when deployed, will stop trash from floating down the Muddy River into the Charles. The trash will then be removed from the WaterGoat boom nets and bagged by volunteers on a weekly basis. The trash will be hauled away by a private hauling company. We are now interested in **hiring a part-time summer intern to organize the volunteers** from Greater Boston Trout Unlimited, Keep Massachusetts Beautiful, and the Diller Teen Leadership Program, as well as others solicited from the community. The intern will organize the schedule of the weekly volunteer opportunities, provide safety training for each group as well as oversee the volunteers' emptying of the WaterGoat and the successful removal of the bagged trash. The volunteers will be engaged on a weekly basis through the summer season (June-September/October). The intern will ensure the smooth deployment of the WaterGoat's first and second seasons as it gobbles trash from the surface of the Muddy River and vastly improves this current eyesore. Our hiring for the intern will reflect the diversity of Boston's communities, particularly underserved neighborhoods.

2) Muddy River BiocharNow Water Filtration Pilot Project: To continue our cleanup of the Muddy River, the Muddy River Initiative has investigated a new use of biochar, an activated charcoal product, to filter pollutants out of waterways. We have designed an **innovative new boom system to deploy this technology in a low-cost, minimally invasive way with no toxic byproducts to clean the Muddy River.** The boom can be thought to resemble the charcoal water filter in a goldfish aquarium, but on a different scale and with more sophisticated inputs.

The BiocharNow Boom will stretch across the Muddy River and filter major pollutants including phosphorus, E.coli, nitrogen, and hydrocarbons out of the river water. We will accompany the deployment of the Boom with a water-testing program both before and after deployment to measure the system's efficacy. The used BiocharNow filters will then be composted, both to render the collected toxins inert and to use the filtered and filtering materials to enrich soils. Testing of the final product—compost—will also be undertaken to make sure the toxins have been rendered inert. This pilot project would provide water cleanup data and act as a pilot for other water cleanup projects along the Muddy River and beyond.

The BiocharNow Boom will be placed across the Muddy River at Ipswich Street, where the WaterGoat Trash Collection Boom will also be located (see our website for this first project). This location is selected because 1) there are no culverts in the area complicating the testing equation, 2) access to the area is good and we work well with the landowner (the DCR), and 3) we already have initial engineering plans within these limits.

There would be 18-20 socks filled with BiocharNow strung across the 70-foot span of the river. The socks, weighted at the bottom, would hang vertically at two-foot intervals, suspended on a cable, allowing aquatic fauna to pass unimpeded. The socks would not touch the bottom of the river (the socks are two-feet long, and we would adjust the pods accordingly). These kinds of BiocharNow socks

are currently being deployed in lakes and ponds in Colorado with excellent results—for example, removing 99% of phosphorus from waterways.

We will test for four major pollutants of the Muddy River before and after the deployment of the BiocharNow Boom: Phosphorus, Nitrogen, hydrocarbons and E. Coli. The Charles River Watershed Association, whose Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) designation from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) assures the highest reliability of data, will test the water in the deployment area weekly for four weeks prior to deployment of the Boom and for two weeks post-deployment under the direction of Dr. Lisa Kumpf, CRWA’s aquatic scientist and a member of the Muddy Water Initiative’s Advisory Group. This data will be used to ascertain the BiocharNow Boom’s effectiveness in filtering pollutants out of the river.

The used BiocharNow socks will be taken away by a local compost company, Bootstrap Compost, and composted. The resulting soils will be tested for toxicity by Cornell Laboratories under the direction of Bootstrap. The data from CRWA and from Bootstrap will be compiled in a white paper and analyzed with the help of Professor of Chemistry Michael Berger, PhD at Simmons College, a member of the COF Sustainability Forum.

Start/End Dates:

WaterGoat Stewardship Program: August-September 2020 (?), July-August 2021

BiocharNow Water Filtration Pilot: Design, Permitting: September 2020-June 2021; Water testing June 2021-September 2021; BiocharNow Boom Deployment June-September 2021; Composting and soil testing: September-October 2021.

Budget:

WaterGoat hire:

Intern: 4 months, average 12 hours/week. \$ 4000

BiocharNow Water Filtration Pilot:

BiocharNow Socks: \$55 dollars per sock, 24 socks total: \$1320

Boom Installation and Installation materials: \$1000

Boston Conservation Commission and DEP permitting and required studies: \$6000

Abutter Notification: \$700

Water Testing done by CRWA: \$12,500

Removal of used BiocharNow Socks, testing, composting and testing soil by BootStrap Compost: \$2500

White Paper and analysis by Dr. Berger, Honorarium: \$2000

TOTAL FOR MUDDY WATER INITIATIVE PHASE II: \$30,020



Michelle Goldberg (City Council) <michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov>

Pubic comments for Ways & Means FY21Budget: Parks and Recreation Department including Revolving Funds and Parkman Fund

Lara Caralis <laracaralis@gmail.com>

Thu, May 14, 2020 at 12:12 PM

To: michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov

Hi Michelle -- I may be late with these, but an organization I am involved with, TREE Eastie, has submitted a letter in advance, supporting as many funds as possible going toward increasing Boston's tree canopy -- particularly in East Boston, where we have only 7% canopy -- way below the city average, which I believe is 27%. Just wanted to also personally voice my support for this.

Thanks in advance!

Lara Caralis
39 Princeton Street
East Boston, MA 02128
617.710.4632



Michelle Goldberg (City Council) <michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov>

Billings field

1 message

Julie Walsh <jwalsh292@verizon.net>

Thu, May 28, 2020 at 4:22 PM

To: ccc.wm@boston.gov

Cc: michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov

My name is Julianne Walsh, 14 Quinn way, west roxbury. I'm writing to share concerns about proposed renovations to Billings field. I'm not sure what the process is but I understand councilor O'Malley supports this project.

I live in a street that overlooks the field. It's a small street with seven homes all owner occupied. The parkway ymca is dead ends at the end of the street so for a small street we deal with ymca issues and park issues. A renovation to the field could help address issues such as drainage etc but there are also other important issues that affect our quality of life. Parking is a huge issue for us. The neighbors and myself have been dealing with various city departments for several years over the ymca members use of the fire lane for parking. Zero solutions have been offered. Parking for the field is likewise an issue.

When the baseball diamond closest to Quinn way is in use our homes routinely get hit with foul balls. It's a very dangerous situation. The parks department has been responsive and a large net was installed several years ago. It's torn now so not very effective anymore.

I am not opposed at this stage to a billing field project but there are many constituencies to involve if the project moves forward. It has to work for the homeowners that live nearby as well as the users

On a final note while I'm not opposed to the project it's hard for me as a tax payer to see that there is money for this. I think the schools (I do not have children) could use the money or whatever happened to the centre st project?

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

Sent from my iPhone

Sent from my iPhone



Michelle Goldberg (City Council) <michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov>

Testimony on City Council Budget

1 message

Sara Saperstein <sara.saperstein@gmail.com>
To: ccc.wm@boston.gov, michelle.a.goldberg@boston.gov
Cc: MATTHEW.OMALLEY@boston.gov

Thu, May 28, 2020 at 6:23 PM

Hi Michelle and the rest of the city council budget committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the city council budget. I'm a resident of West Roxbury and am writing in support of spending budget on improvements to Billings Field. I'm both an abutter of the field and a frequent enjoyer of it. The woods provide a wonderful urban wilds and important tree canopy for the city, and is even able to support a long time lineage of nesting hawks on one of the southeastern lights. I am also one of the organizers of a group that meets regularly to help clean up trash around the field, especially up in the woods, as we care very much to keep the park clean and free of trash. Matt O'Malley has joined us in our clean-up efforts and we appreciate his attention to this important piece of Boston.

Billings Field provides a center point not just for nature but especially for the various forms of outdoor recreation, which are increasingly important during this pandemic when being active while physically distanced outdoors is much safer than exercising indoors. It is important for children's sports teams such as baseball, softball, and football, as well as other forms of recreation such as tennis and basketball. The playground in the corner is also very well utilized and an important fixture in the park. During the summer the YMCA also makes heavy use of the field. As the need for outdoor recreation and the number of children in West Roxbury increase, it becomes even more important for Billings Field to be updated and made to handle the increased occupancy while also supporting our need for healthy natural ecosystems.

Some concrete recommendations for how to improve the field include the following:

- improvements to the drainage of the sports fields
 - the field often floods after a rain, requiring re-grooming of the diamonds
 - the soggy surface could be a hazard for children playing sports on the field
- improved lighting
 - good lighting is needed for night games
 - ideally we would use wildlife-friendly lighting that also meets the needs of the sports teams
- improved access to the park to cut down on the need for parking
 - Quinn Way is often overrun with cars and there is not enough parking for park users, especially during games
 - allowing parking on both sides of the street would be unsafe as it would reduce visibility of children running out of the park, and it would block the fire lane
 - I recommend improving non-car access to the park: a protected bike lane along Centre St and improved safety of the crosswalk at Quinn Way would help park users access the park by bike and by foot instead of by car
 - yellow lines painted on the road might also help people recognized that it's a two way road, and the visual narrowing of the road might encourage drivers to drive more carefully, as befitting a road next to a park frequently crossed by young children
- larger nets at the baseball diamonds to protect surrounding homes from stray balls. Multiple houses on Quinn Way have been damaged by stray balls.
- improvements to support wildlife such as
 - pollinator strips: strips of native plants that help native bees and birds, such as seen in North End and elsewhere in Boston
 - invasive species removal and addition of keystone native plants to allow the urban wilds to develop with native plants that support local ecosystems

As you can see there are a lot of options to improve this gem of a park, and a lot of love and support from the community to see these changes happen.

Thank you for your attention and for your service to the city.

5/28/2020

City of Boston Mail - Testimony on City Council Budget

Best,
Sara

May 28, 2020

Christopher Cook, Chief Environment Energy & Open Space
Ryan Woods, Commissioner of Parks and Recreation
1010 Mass Ave.
Boston, MA 02118

Dear Chief Cook and Commissioner Woods:

I am writing to express CRWA's strong support for two projects of the Muddy Water Initiative (MWI): the WaterGoat Pilot Project, which will provide surface trash removal in the Charlesgate area, and the BioCharNow Program, which will deploy an activated charcoal filtering system in the Muddy River area adjacent to Ipswich Street to improve the water quality of the Muddy River.

Since 1965 CRWA has worked to protect, restore, and enhance the Charles River and its watershed using science-based strategies. Twenty-five years of monthly water quality samples at the Muddy River shows that it has long been one of the most polluted tributaries to the Charles, and it has been a major challenge to clean up. CRWA is happy to provide support to the Muddy Water Initiative by performing water quality sampling to verify the efficacy of the WaterGoat and BioCharNow initiatives. We support the deployment of these innovative methods for cleaning up this tributary, which would ultimately enhance the water quality and habitat of the Charles River.

A successful launch of these two lead programs will require funding. As outlined in the attached overview below, The Muddy Water Initiative is requesting a grant of \$30,000 from the City of Boston. This funding will enable the MWI to seed the pilot programs and engage an intern to orchestrate volunteer initiatives beginning in August, 2020.

We thank you for your consideration of this request and hope you can support the Muddy Water Initiative's proposal.

Sincerely,



Emily Norton
Executive Director