

MMOC Meeting Minutes
January 11, 2023 ZOOM Meeting, 6:00-8:00pm
As approved March 8, 2023
Minutes prepared by Matt Eddy, MMOC Staff

Member Attendees:

- Kelly Brilliant, Elisabeth Cianciola, Elton Elperin, Kurt Gaertner, Jan Henderson, Parker James, Lisa Kumpf, Arleyn Levee, Jack Schleifer (representing ENC), Marilyn Ray Smith, Tom Timmons, Freddie Veikley, Matt Eddy (MMOC staff).

Other Attendees:

- Nikki Borglin, Arlene Mattison, Leslie Pond, Caroline Reeves, Carroll Williamson.

General Announcements:

- The new MMOC website (www.muddyrivermmoc.org) is officially live. Congratulations are due to Carol Lasky, the MMOC's media consultant, and the entire Communications Subcommittee for their hard work. Please submit feedback or suggestions to Matt Eddy.
- A reminder that the MMOC's annual public meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 26, 2023 from 6:00-8:30PM at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Organization representatives are asked to distribute "Save the Date" information to their mailing lists as soon as possible.

Phase 2 Update:

- Above-water Phragmites removal is underway at Work Area 6 (Back Bay Yard); the visual difference is striking. Dredging in that area is still awaiting permitting from MWRA. Dredging of Phragmites in Work Area 12 is complete.
- Recently reopened stone-dust paths in Work Areas 3 and 4 remain the management obligation of Charter.
- Inspection for final acceptance of landscaping in Work Areas 3, 4, 7, 8, and 9 is scheduled for October 15, 2023. Tom Timmons has submitted a budget request to the City for maintenance funds for these areas.
- Inspection for final acceptance of landscaping in Work Areas 1, 2, 5 and 10 is scheduled for October 15, 2024.
- Phase 2 landscaping for Work Areas 11, 12 and 13 will take place this spring. Following provisional acceptance, the 2-year guarantee period will begin, with final acceptance anticipated in October 2025.
- Matt Eddy presented photos of apparent erosion along the Riverway between Netherlands Rd and Longwood Ave. He will follow up with Tom Brady to get his perspective on whether any action is necessary.

- Kelly Brilliant asked about Boston’s commitment to ongoing maintenance of areas where Phragmites has been removed. Tom replied that the city has been forthcoming with funds so far and that dredged areas remain Charter’s responsibility for two years following dredging. It is hoped that Charter’s experience will inform Boston Parks’ efforts to enact an effective management strategy for areas previously occupied by Phragmites.

Carlton St Footbridge:

- Arlene Mattison reported that the bridge construction project continues on schedule with a hoped-for opening in spring 2023. She stated that there will be a need for further conversation about the usage patterns of the bridge and adjacent pathways now that Boston University has acquired the Wheelock campus. More pedestrian traffic is expected, and this may warrant a larger maintenance budget for the pathways.
- Freddie Veikley asked for an update on plans to extend the Yawkey-Fenway path under Park Drive and connect to the Riverway. Tom Timmons said he was unaware of this plan but would follow up.

Phase 1 Update:

- Tom Timmons reported that the new maintenance contractor for Phase 1, A&M Home Services, has been out on site twice so far to conduct litter clean-up and general maintenance. He is happy with what A&M has done so far.
 - Matt Eddy reported having seen a lot of litter on Monday, January 11; Tom will find out when the next maintenance visit is.
- Matt Eddy presented a photo of spraypainted lines identifying underground utilities along Brookline Ave between the Fenway and Park Drive. No one present is aware of the purpose of these, but they are likely the work of MassDOT. Tom Timmons stated that any work by MassDOT that would require them to enter the parks would require permission from the Parks Department. Tom will follow up.
- Tom Timmons and Max Ford-Diamond (Boston’s arborist) will host a meeting Tuesday, January 17 to discuss the planning process for supplementary tree planting in Phase 1. Members of the LMSC and Jack Schleifer (ENC) will attend.
- Regarding the 2022 USACE Inspection of Phase 1, Tom Timmons stated that a date had been identified for inspection of the culvert flappers under Brookline Ave. He believes the bathymetry data has been collected and will ask that the data be forwarded to the MMOC when available.

MEPA Annual Update: Summary and Commenting Plan

- Three subcommittees (Water Quality, Landscape Maintenance, and Historic Resources) are reviewing the draft of the 2014-2021 combined MEPA Annual Update and preparing feedback for CDM Smith for revision of the draft. Lisa Kumpf spoke on behalf of the Water Quality Subcommittee, and Arleyn Levee summarized the perspective of the

Landscape Maintenance Subcommittee. A cover letter and detailed supporting documents will be sent to the full MMOC later in January before the comments are delivered to CDM Smith on or before February 1.

Historic Bridges:

- A new Historic Bridges Subcommittee has formed and hosted its first meeting, with its next meeting scheduled for February 13, 2023. The subcommittee is discussing questions related to comprehensive bridge assessment and monitoring, jurisdiction, structural integrity, historic accuracy, and architectural design.

Charlesgate:

- Parker James (Charlesgate Alliance) presented an update on MassDOT planning activity for the Bowker Overpass and the Charlesgate area. “Part 3” of the project, which involves widening the bridge over the Mass Pike and adding pedestrian access along one side, is likely to begin in 2024. The project is currently at the 25% design phase.
- There is a lack of interagency communication and commitment regarding stormwater management from MassDOT-owned roadways. Parker asked the MMOC membership for assistance in advocating for additional green infrastructure funds for all three of the MassDOT projects.

Public Comment:

- Arlene Mattison asked whether the Landscape Maintenance Subcommittee believed that Marion Pressley’s original landscape design for Phase 1 was overambitious and whether or not a new landscape plan had been developed. Matt Eddy replied that no, there is no new plan, although there is active and constructive discussion with BPRD regarding how desire paths are to be managed, the relative sizes of shrub beds vs. turf areas and the effect of addition of a bike lane to Brookline Ave may have on the parks. The LMSC (on which Marion sits) continues to advocate for landscape decisions that align with the Olmsted-inspired vision for the Phase 1 area.
- Arlene Mattison asked about the status of the Phase 1 “health inventory tool” developed last summer. Matt Eddy replied that more robust testing of the tool will take place in the spring once the weather improves. Kelly and Matt expect to utilize input from the MEPA Annual Update review process to add more specificity to the tool.

MMOC Member Business:

- Kelly Brilliant moved that the minutes from the MMOC’s meeting held November 9, 2022 be approved, and Freddie Veikley seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

- Freddie Veikley moved that the minutes from the MMOC’s meeting held December 14, 2022 be approved, and Parker James seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.
- Kelly Brilliant announced that the MMOC’s Operations Subcommittee would have its next meeting on January 24, 2023, at 5:30PM.
- Kelly Brilliant shared the MMOC’s FY22 and FY23 budget with MMOC members for discussion. A draft FY24 budget (with a start date of July 1, 2023) will be created by the Operations Committee for discussion and vote by MMOC Members.
- Reminder that the MMOC’s annual public meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 26, 2023 from 6:00-8:30PM at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Organization representatives are asked to distribute “Save the Date” information to their mailing lists as soon as possible.

Upcoming MMOC Meetings:

- Weds, February 8, and Weds, March 8, 6:00 PM

Adjourned 8:00PM.