

Town of Farmington

1000 County Road 8
Farmington, New York 14425

PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE

Monday, November 4, 2024 • 6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

The following minutes are written as a summary of the main points that were made and are the official and permanent record of the actions taken by the Town of Farmington Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update Committee. Remarks delivered during discussions are summarized and are not intended to be verbatim transcriptions. Video and audio recordings of the meetings are available from the Town.

The meeting was conducted at the Farmington Town Hall and via remote video conference.

R = Attended via remote video conference.

Board Members Present: Susan Charland, *Committee Chairperson*
Julie LaRue
Adrian Bellis
Leah Thomas
Larry Potter
Julie Maslyn

Board Members Excused: Sara Weidenborner

Advisory Staff Members Excused: Steve Holtz, Town Board Liaison
Mark Cain, Recreation Director

Advisory Staff Present:
Eric Cooper, MRB Group, D.P.C.
Ronald L. Brand, Town of Farmington Director of Planning and Development
Tim Ford, Town of Farmington Highway and Parks Superintendent
Paula Ruthven, Town of Farmington Zoning Officer

Attending Public: None

1. OPEN MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by Chairperson Susan Charland.

2. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 7, 2024, MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Cooper asked members if they had any changes or alterations to the October Meeting Minutes as provided. No changes were requested, and the Committee approved the minutes.

3. PROJECT STATUS UPDATE

Mr. Cooper provided an update on the next steps for the project. He stated that there will be a public forum on November 18th. There will also be an online form available on November 11 for people who cannot attend the public forum. This will be posted on the website and can be shared with anyone who cannot or does not want to attend the public forum. The online form will mirror the format of the public forum and can be filled out to provide the same information we are seeking from the public. By the end of November or first week in December, a draft of the complete Parks and Recreation Master Plan will be available for the Committee to review in advance of the meeting in December. The Committee will at that time be asked for requested changes which will be addressed in a final draft to be provided around the end of December. The Committee had no questions or comments.

4. REVIEW DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Mr. Cooper provided members of the Committee with the revised draft of the implementation matrix based upon comments received after the October meeting. He provided a high-level overview of the structure of the matrix being facilities, programs, and long range plans, along with priorities, timelines, partners and funding. He asked the Committee not to worry too much about funding at this point because that will be filled in by MRB's grants team. He asked the Committee for final comments on the matrix as it will be part of the public forum on November 18. Also on a feasibility side, he wanted to confirm with Ms. LaRue and Mr. Ford that the items are realistic.

Mr. Brand requested that the matrix be revised to include the Environmental Conservation Board on actions as appropriate. Ms. Charland asked that, for the Public Forum or interactions with the Public, that the matrix be clearly noted that the public will be afforded the ability to influence the actions listed at a later time. Ms. Charland further noted that the facilities matrix is broken down partly by improvements to specific parks and others which are broader. Mr. Cooper said that the public forum presentation boards will reflect specific improvements for parks.

Mr. Cooper said the matrix will also be revised to eliminate a few of the items that Mr. Ford had previously said were addressed or about to be addressed. Ms. LaRue asked if those items which are budgeted or planned could be noted. Mr. Cooper said they could include some notation to that effect.

Ms. Charland asked why there were no actions under the strategy to create a master plan for the 50-acre town lands. Mr. Cooper responded that the strategy itself is action-oriented and so they did not feel it was necessary. Regarding the 50-acre parcel, Ms. LaRue asked whether there could be a small input box that people could provide their suggested improvements. Mr. Cooper responded that this was the plan for the public forum.

Ms. LaRue asked about the matrix's classification of priorities, particularly that most of them are high to mid. Mr. Cooper responded that all items are priorities and are in the plan for that reason; he suggested the timeline could reflect the prioritization with a more descriptive tool. Mr. Brand suggested some of the prioritization's state "ongoing".

Ms. LaRue asked about the Farmbrook park item to convert unused office space into something usable. The Committee felt it should remain in the plan as it does need to be figured out, but that it was not a large priority. Mr. Cooper added that the item came from a prior Committee meeting and activity and could be removed if they want. Ms. LaRue said she was comfortable with it in the plan but did not want to diminish something by saying it was a low priority. Mr. Ford said this is similar to the past plans action items where the actual prioritization and timeline was bumped around based on the evaluation at that time. Ms. LaRue asked whether it should be done by range of time instead of prioritization. Mr. Cooper said this seems possible since the prioritization relates to the proposed timeline.

Ms. Charland wants to be comfortable with what the Committee is presenting to the public as the highest priorities. Specifically, she asked whether the Committee feels the recreation center is a mid-priority. Mr. Brand said it was something that was going to take time and not be done right away. Ms. LaRue said she felt the 50-acre master plan would be the big project priority before the recreation center. Ms. Charland asked whether the committee feels the 50-acre parcel is the priority. The Committee generally agreed because of the demand for outdoor sports fields and the Town's control of the land. Mr. Cooper felt it would be helpful to allow residents at the forum to prioritize the improvements to be made to their own park.

Mr. Potter asked whether there are plans for new developments to keep getting their own parks. Mr. Ford and Mr. Brand replied that this was not the current intention; often because new subdivisions are nearby existing parks. Where green space is included in new subdivisions it is managed by the residents.

Ms. LaRue wanted to confirm that the Committee is comfortable having Boughton Park as a mid-priority. Ms. Charland said she liked how the action items' timelines are stratified by actions to be completed first. Mr. Cooper suggested that the conversations with Boughton Park and the Community Center could both be handled in the immediate timeline. After they are explored and costs are scoped further, it can be prioritized and weighed at that time. Mr. Brand added that the timeline is not the end timeline but the start timeline, so that the implementation can be flexible to the needs of the community at the time. He further added that this is a guide to the Town Board at that time. Mr. Cooper asked how the Town will utilize this plan for implementation. Mr. Brand replied that he would like the Parks and Recreation Board to provide annual updates on implementation and annual prioritization.

Ms. LaRue asked whether the manner items are included influenced grant opportunities. Mr. Brand replied that yes it certainly does and can be revised as needed if items arise in the future. Ms. Charland asked whether the prioritization – if an item is noted as a low priority – might influence grants success. Mr. Cooper suggested utilizing timelines and eliminating prioritization.

Mr. Potter asked how soon Mr. Cooper needed suggested changes to the matrix. Mr. Cooper said they should be provided by November 8th.

5. OVERVIEW AND UPDATE ON THE NOVEMBER 18TH PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SESSION

Mr. Cooper provided flyers for the November 18, 2024, public forum and asked attendees to distribute them excessively. Mr. Brand provided a very long list of places he had already visited to put up flyers. Mr. Ford said that at this point everyone should be boosting this event on their social media. Mr. Cooper thanked everyone for their hard work and to let MRB know if more flyers are needed.

Mr. Cooper said the event will have pizza and drinks and coloring for kids. Since some people won't be able to attend a fillable form will be made available on the webpage starting on November 11th through November 22nd. It will be formatted to provide basically the same input as those at the meeting. Due to timelines, Mr. Cooper asked whether everyone would prefer to meet on December 9th instead of December 2nd to allow more time for public engagement recap and review of the draft plan. Ms. LaRue said she would not be available that night due to a conflict. There was a general agreement to meet on December 9th.

Mr. Brand asked when the Committee members should show up. Mr. Cooper responded that members do not need to arrive more than 10 minutes before 6 pm. Mr. Cooper said he would print name tags for Committee members, so respondents know to ask them questions.

6. OPEN DISCUSSION - COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND TOWN STAFF

Mr. Brand introduced a project relating to a community/wellness center at the Cobblestone Performing Arts Center which has recently received \$2,000,000.00 in grant funding from Tom Golisano. The Cobblestone consultant has prepared concept plans for development and is interested in partnering with the Town of Farmington to realize the vision. He said that Lori Benson has offered the Committee the opportunity to tour the facility and to speak to the committee about their plans at the December meeting.

Ms. Charland asked what is being asked of the Committee. Mr. Brand responded that, if their plans have merit, it could be incorporated into the Town's plan, and that it might provide an alternative to municipalities thereby avoiding duplicating efforts for similar facilities. Ms. LaRue reminded the committee that recommendations for the Community Center are already included in the draft implementation matrix. Mr. Cooper said that the plan could easily be modified to include a general description and background of the project but without endorsing the project.

Ms. LaRue said that past projects would have gone before the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee for a recommendation and wanted to be sure her committee was not excluded. Mr. Brand said that they will not be excluded, and they will be included.

Ms. Charland wanted to make sure the Town's plan does not preclude or close the door on this project, but she was not sure that it may be beyond the scope of this Committee's charge to provide a detailed recommendation.

Ms. Thomas asked whether the Committee could speak with Lori Benson on December 2nd, and then meet on the plan for December 9th. Ms. LaRue said that was too much for this time of year. She further suggested that she come before this committee similar to the Little League Group did in October. Ms. Charland just wanted to be sure that the conversation did not derail the need of the Committee to finalize the plan draft.

The Committee agreed to invite Lori Benson to the December 9th meeting to speak for 10-15 minutes. A tour of the facility would then be set for a different time.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

The next Committee Meeting will be held on Monday, December 9th at 6:30 p.m , in the Main Meeting Room at the Town Hall. Notice will be provided to the Daily Messenger and posted on the Town's Bulletin Board and Website

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Cooper