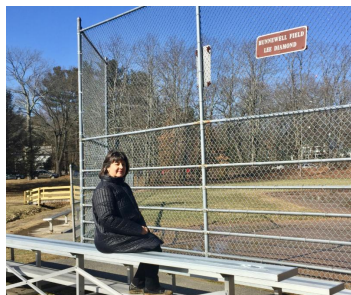


# Wellesley Natural Resources Commission

## February 2018 Insights from Outside

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### Play Ball! Wellesley Girls' Softball Headed for Improved Fields



NRC chair Raina McManus at the Lee Diamond at Hunnewell Field

#### Funding for design phase receives approval from Community Preservation Committee

Wellesley softball athletes are closer to getting long-awaited -- and much needed -- improvements to their fields next to the tennis courts along Washington Street. A proposal for improvements has been under discussion by the Community Preservation Committee, Natural Resources Commission, and Playing Fields Task Force for some months.

On Tuesday, the proposal took a big step forward with the unanimous approval of \$100,000 by the [Community Preservation Committee](#) (CPC) for a design phase that will include detailed plans for the project. The next step will be approval for the allocation at Annual Town Meeting in April.

CPC chair **Barbara McMahon** said, "We've learned from experience that this design phase is an important part of the process in Wellesley and allows all the stakeholders -- including neighbors -- to weigh in on a project and be heard."

Wellesley NRC chair **Raina McManus**, who represents the NRC on the CPC, commented, "The NRC is unanimous in our support for this project and I was proud to be able to make the motion to approve these design funds. We are looking forward to collaborating with the softball athletes and coaches, the Department of Public Works, Wetlands Protection Committee, and all stakeholders to ensure that we create a facility that works for everyone and fits the environment in this corner of Hunnewell Field."

The project has been spearheaded by Wellesley resident **Jill Creevy** and has broad support among many in town who feel that the improvements are overdue. The proposal currently calls for improvements to drainage, new bleachers, dugouts, and access on the two fields on either

side of the public tennis courts at Hunnewell Field. The proposal does not include provisions for additional lights or a sound system.

In 2013, Wellesley sixth grader **Emily Willrich** spoke up about the inequity of facilities for girls' softball and boys' Little League baseball in an editorial in the Wellesley Townsman that got the attention of renowned feminist Gloria Steinem and other female leaders. At the time, town officials on the Playing Fields Task Force noted that there were no funds for field improvements and that the improvements to the Little League field at Reidy were funded with a massive private fund-raising effort over several years, starting in about 2005.

"We're thrilled to see this project moving ahead and are confident that a strong collaborative effort will bring us to a successful outcome -- just as it did with the recent improvements to the football and track facility on the other side of this property," said McManus.

## NRC Project Updates & Announcements

### Your Input Needed on Tree Protection

Please take a moment to give your input on how best to protect the trees in our town. In response to concerns about the number of trees cut down on private property in recent years, the NRC is gathering public feedback on the effectiveness of the [Tree Preservation and Protection bylaw](#) that was passed in 2011.



Through a town-wide [survey](#) of residents, the NRC hopes to learn how well the bylaw is understood, how effective it is perceived to be, and what changes, if any, should be made to the current bylaw.

[Take the Tree Bylaw survey.](#)

### Sign Up for Our Tree Planting Program

The NRC is currently taking requests from homeowners who would like to have a tree planted in their yard through the town tree planting program. [Email](#) the NRC to be considered for the program this spring.

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### Morses Pond Erosion Control Plans Move Forward

The NRC is reviewing recommendations from independent contractor [Horsely Witten Group](#) for restoring parts of the Morses Pond shoreline threatened by erosion. Options include buffer plantings and improvements to trails and access at 11 sites accessible to the public.



One of 11 erosion sites identified at Morses Pond

Once the NRC finalizes the plans, the next steps in the process will be wetlands permitting and funding decisions. Work on the pond shoreline will take place over a number of years.

**In other pond news:** Bid requests have been issued for a new small weed harvester to help clear invasive weeds this summer in all town ponds, including Morses Pond. Funding to purchase this equipment is provided by the Community Preservation Committee.

**An important reminder:** As we head into spring, you can help protect all of our town ponds by

discontinuing or minimizing the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides on your property. Use organic landscaping methods or consider using an organic landscaper. Click [here](#) for a list of certified NOFA (Northeast Organic Farming Association) landscape professionals.

[Learn more about Morses Pond management.](#)



Gypsy moth caterpillar

## Don't Spray for Moths This Spring

You can save money and protect the environment by not spraying trees for moths this spring thanks to the success of natural pest control treatments in Wellesley. Recent [updates](#) from the Department of Public Works show that the winter moth caterpillar has been nearly eradicated by a parasitic fly that was introduced into the area in 2008 by researchers from the UMass Department of Environmental Conservation. The fly is a natural enemy of the winter moth but doesn't harm other helpful insects. As the fly continues to attack the winter moth population, we can expect to be permanently rid of this pest in the next few years.

Gypsy moths are also expected to decline this spring, aided by a fungus that kills that caterpillar population. Wet weather last summer helped the fungus spread. While we may still see some gypsy moths this year, healthy trees will usually recover from an infestation so spraying isn't necessary.

## A Polite Reminder About Pets in the Parks

Does your dog need a deportment lesson? Wellesley is a dog-friendly community and the NRC wants owners to make sure their canine pals practice good behavior in our parks and open spaces. You can find information on licensing, park hours, dog-walking permits and more on our [website](#). As a reminder, residents and professional dog walkers must get a permit from the NRC to walk more than three dogs at the same time. All dogs in town must be licensed through the [Office of the Town Clerk](#) by April 1.



Jim McLaren,  
Wetlands

## Changes to Wetlands Protection Committee

In January, the NRC appointed Wellesley resident and retired science teacher **Jim McLaren** to the Wetlands Protection Committee (WPC). McLaren taught biology and other sciences at Newton South High School for 38 years, including 12 years as the Science Department Head, and is the co-author of two biology textbooks. "Teaching appreciation and respect for the natural world has always been the core of what I do in life," he said. "I'm looking forward to bringing my expertise as an educator to my new role helping preserve Wellesley's sensitive wetland areas."

McLaren replaces **Bob Collins**, who was appointed to the WPC in 2010 and served as a member and chair. During his tenure, Collins helped oversee the completion of two major town projects - the construction of Wellesley's new high school and the restoration of Fuller Brook Park. Thank you to both of these dedicated volunteers!

[Learn more about the Wetlands Protection Committee.](#)



## NRC Co-Sponsors Dinner & Movie Series

A free movie series co-sponsored by the NRC and [Sustainable Wellesley](#) is providing food for thought on environmental topics at the Wellesley Free Library. The evenings include a light dinner and movie screening followed by a discussion. At the first movie on February 12, NRC board members **Regina LaRocque** and **Lise Olney** spoke about gas leaks after the showing of [Triple Divide](#), a film covering the devastating impact of fracking on people who live near fracking wells. (Thanks to Chipotle for providing dinner for the February 12 event.)

Join us for the next two movies in the Wakelin Room at the library, 6:15 to 9:00 PM. Free to the public, but [RSVP](#) is required!

- **March 14 - [PlanEat](#)**, "Nothing changes the planet as much as what we eat." Dinner provided by Cocobeet. Panelist will be Kelly Caiazzo.
- **April 11 - [A Plastic Ocean](#)**, "We need a wave of change." Dinner provided by SweetGreen. Panelists to be determined.

## News from Our Partners

### Food Waste Pilot Recruiting More Participants

More families can now sign up for Wellesley's [food waste drop off program](#). The RDF has extended the program through the spring and is inviting 300 more participants to join. [Sign up](#) now and get your starter kit, including a countertop basket, compostable bags, and bucket to transport food waste. Participants drop off filled bags at the RDF, then the food waste is taken to an anaerobic digester, turned into a slurry, and converted into energy. Since the pilot began in November, more than 10 tons of food waste has been diverted from the RDF, resulting in the generation of 3,000 kwh of electricity.



Starter kit for food waste pilot

## Mark Your Calendar for Upcoming Events

NRC events and those of NRC committees appear in **bold**.

- **February 15: [Wetlands Protection Committee Meeting](#)**, 6:30 PM, NRC Office, Town Hall.
- **February 22: [NRC Meeting](#)**, 7:30 PM, NRC Office, Town Hall.
- **March 6: Election Day in Wellesley!** Vote for candidates for town government, including two positions on the NRC. For voter information, contact the Town Clerk, 781-431-1019, ext. 2252

[Web Site](#)

[NRC Meeting Agendas](#)

[Permit Applications](#)

[Community Gardens](#)

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