

Morses Pond Beach Advisory Committee Charge -Approved 5-23-24

Background:

The Morses Pond beach is located on the south side of Morses Pond. Developed in the 1940s, the beach area is about five acres in size. The pond is used by Wellesley residents for active and passive recreation in addition to being an important source of drinking water, a wetlands area, and vernal pool and wildlife habitats. Facilities at the beach have included a bath house, picnic facilities and a small playground. Morses Pond is under the jurisdiction of the Natural Resources Commission. Recreation Commission manages the programming activities and the day-to-day operations of Morses Pond during June-August.

Around 2018, the Town determined that the overall conditions of the Morses Pond Beach and Bathhouse required renovation. The 2018 ATM approved the use of \$40,000 from the CPA to fund half the cost of a comprehensive analysis and recommendation for the Morse's Pond Bathhouse and Beachfront Project. In 2019, the Recreation Department engaged the firm of Weston and Sampson to undertake an initial analysis and recommendation. They completed an analysis which, among other tasks, involved engaging Town departments; holding three community forums; and to recommend a layout to provide an enhanced experience for residents and visitors while respecting the unique historic nature and environmental qualities of the property.

The 2021 ATM approved a \$175,000 appropriation from CPA Undesignated Funds to the Recreation Department for a feasibility study of the Morse's Pond beach and pond area. The Recreation Department proceeded with Weston and Sampson for the Feasibility and Design phase, which led to the submission of a feasibility study report.

Additional background information on this project can be found in ([currently on Rec Website](#))

Committee Charge

On March 27, 2024, following a request from CPC as part of the presentation of Article 17 Motion 2 – Morses Pond Bathhouse and Beachfront Project, the NRC is forming the Morses Pond Beach Advisory Committee (the “Committee”). The committee will hereby be designated to represent all stakeholders (Project Proponent) in the advancement of the Morses Pond Beach Renovation Project (“Project”) in preparation for the design and implementation phases of the project. The Committee will address questions and concerns identified by the NRC, Town Meeting, the Advisory Committee, and others pertaining to the project design presented at the 2024 Annual Town Meeting. The Committee will be supported by the Natural Resources Commission and Recreation Commission staff and work with consultants from Weston and Sampson.

The Permanent Building Committee (PBC) has been directed by the Town to manage the Project's Design Phase. The Committee will designate a "PBC Project Liaison" to represent the Proponent at the PBC meetings.

The Committee will regularly report to the Design Team through the Committee's liaison or designated working group.

In support of the Design Team and the Permanent Building Committee, the Committee's tasks will include:

- evaluate the Project under the Natural Resources Commission's Change in Use Policy and the Recreation Commission's programming and usage policies to determine the necessary scope and design criteria to achieve the restoration of an important Town recreational asset; The Committee shall confirm the program and/or adjustments before Schematic Design shall commence.
- Identify permitting requirements;
- Identify and recommend opportunities for environmental stewardship and sustainability;
- Review and report on annual operational costs and beach maintenance requirements;
- Review options for project financing.

The Committee will regularly report and make recommendations to the Natural Resources Commission, as the property owner and project proponent, and ultimately request approval for the final project scope and design for submission to the Permanent Building Committee.

Members of the Committee will be appointed by the Natural Resources Commission and will serve a one-year term, continued annually in accordance with Town Bylaw Article 6.5 or until their successor is appointed, for the duration of the Project. The Committee will be supported by the Natural Resources Commission and Recreation Commission staff.