



Cliff Walk Commission
APPROVED MINUTES
April 19, 2017
5:15pm: Newport Public Library

IN ATTENDANCE

Commission Members: Dave Downes, Peter Janaros (Chair), John Hirschboeck, Dave McLaughlin

City of Newport: Scott Wheeler, Building & Grounds Supervisor/Tree Warden

I. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from March 13, 2017 were approved.

II. CURRENT BUSINESS

A. Status of repairs between 40 Steps to Ruggles

Scott met with the project contractors to evaluate progress to date in back of the Breakers. Work will recommence with completion of the Ruggles Avenue next and then back to the Webster Avenue area, with completion scheduled before Memorial Day weekend. The last component of the repairs will be the installation of a permeable stone mat in front of the restrooms.

The Commission discussed the proposed new fence at the sea wall at the end of Ruggles/Anglesea, including the challenge of providing continued access for fishermen and surfers while improving safety. Dave and Peter will be meeting with Bill Boardman to review the project.

B. (Omitted)

C. Maintenance update

All vegetation cut backs have been made, including removal of the “love locks.”

The severely eroded channel on the waterside between 40 Steps and Memorial will have reinforcement material laid down (rather than loose stone) to prevent further erosion.

D. Marine Avenue, Seaview and other rights of way

Erosion at Seaview and the challenge of mitigating water flow among the different buried utilities was discussed. Dave M. may add a “water management project” at Seaview to a list he is compiling for a grant submission through Julia Forge/Dept. of Utilities.

E. "G.R.I.P." infrastructure project at Marine Avenue

Peter and Dave M. are monitoring the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission Island Waters Funding/EPA grant request that has this project listed for consideration, with determination due soon. Dave M. advised that the water quality outflow at Marine Avenue has tested poor and this should give further impetus to funding the infrastructure project.

F. Erosion behind the Breakers

Stone/loam has been added at two locations and areas have been seeded, with snow fences to be placed to help restore the area and prevent future erosion. Until the Breakers new Visitor Center is up and running, additional remedial work will have to wait.

G. Tunnel pathways

Stone block pavers will be secured by City Staff and installed in May.

H. Bench rusting at 40 Steps

Expandable foam needs to be experimented with to see if it will stop future rusting.

I. Prohibiting Concessions on the Walk

Peter is awaiting input from the City solicitor in response to his letter. Peter has asked for an update with the understanding that the solicitation for "tips/donations" could be enforced within current law and ordinances.

J. Memorial Benches update

The concrete footing pad for the 4th bench north of 40 Steps has been installed. The CWC will review other possible possibilities in the spring, although John expressed concern that too many additional placements will only add to cigarette litter and erosion around the benches.

K. New sign at Bailey's Beach

Continued. A quote for the stand has been secured from Panier. Scott called Bailey's Beach to discuss this issue and the deteriorated/corroded fence on the beach side at the end of the Walk and this subject will be explored further.

L. Brass markers on Walk near Ledge Rd.

Lesley offered to locate a large metal punch to experiment with stamping discs that would be installed along the rocky portion of the Walk along with the existing disc markers.

M. D.O.T. and future repairs to the Walk/fundraising

Peter and Scott have met with the City Manager and Director of Public Services to discuss future Cliff Walk capital improvements and repairs and possible funding sources. Scott will explore funding opportunities later in the spring, especially trail grants and the Green Economy bond.

Regarding other smaller, less capital-intensive funding opportunities, it was suggested a special session of the Commission be held to brainstorm funding ideas for the CWC's restricted account managed by the City.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. City Council Resolution regarding CWC's goal, mission, etc.

The following was agreed to:

Goal

Protect and preserve the Cliff Walk as a popular and historic National Recreational Trail and an important State and local asset.

Mission

Advise and assist the City of Newport on critical matters pertaining to the Cliff Walk and its proper maintenance while ensuring the natural character of the Walk is protected (to the extent possible) for the public to enjoy, now and into the future.

Purpose

To preserve, maintain and enhance the Walk, ensuring public access and safety.

Tasks

- 1. Assist City Staff in identifying maintenance and encroachment issues that require attention.*
- 2. Ensure the public is aware of important developments, enhancements, accessibility and environmental issues pertaining to the Walk.*
- 3. Explore funding opportunities to maintain, preserve and enhance the public's experience on the Walk.*

B. 2016 Year End Summary

John prepared and submitted the year-end summary for Council review.

C. New Meeting Time:

It was agreed to move the Monthly CWC meeting times to 5:15pm (3rd Wednesday of each month)

Peter advised that Dave Downes would be applying for re-appointment to the Commission.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Next CWC Meeting: 5:15pm, May 24, 2017 @ Newport Public Library