

Roger Williams Park Ponds Public Meeting
November 15, 2011
Roger Williams Park Casino

Issues Raised

- Boating
 - Concerns about motorized boats polluting the ponds with gasoline; *only electric motor boats are allowed*
 - Concerns about invasive species being introduced (particularly weeds) – *Save the Lakes offered to help look into this*
 - Educate about the release of invasives (carp and weeds)
- Geese
 - Need more education to the public about why it's bad to feed them, also that it is illegal!
 - Don't rake the leaves so they are not attracted to the lawns; *not a feasible strategy for a variety of reasons.*
 - Can the geese just be removed?
 - Get border collies to patrol the park
- Dredging
 - Who is responsible and where does the fill go? *No dredging has occurred since 1981; would require a DEM permit*
 - Would you look to dredge Mashapaug and Spectacle first? *Those ponds while sources of phosphorus for RWP ponds do not need dredging*
- Water Quality
 - Need to look at cleaning Mashapaug and Spectacle first—cleaning Park ponds wont do anything is runoff continues to come from these ponds
 - Treatment of the ponds (Copper sulfate) is used to control algae; *DEM permit is obtained each year*
 - Species diversity—Ray Hartenstine offered to blitz the ponds
 - Consider using fountains to mix the ponds and bring oxygen to bottom; *this will have no positive effect on the ponds algae problem*
 - Watershed Watch would like to work with project to reinstate monitoring
 - Could you revert ponds back to natural marshes/wetlands? *Unlikely, give DEM regulations.*
 - Put wetlands in middle of ponds?
 - Can you create wetland areas in low-lying grass areas? *Yes.*
- Road salt, sand and runoff
 - Is there funding to clean the catch basins? *Cleaned by DPW, but not frequently enough due to funding limitations.*
 - How is sand picked up around bodies of water? *Street sweeping done by DPW*
 - Need to increase frequency of street sweeping
 - Need to review street sweeping strategy to determine where gets swept first
 - Can you require permeable asphalt parking in new developments? *yes*

- Can you remove old-unused parking lots (Particularly in Mashapaug area)?
Will require funding and easements.
- Could neighbors in abutting areas do more to prevent runoff into ponds?
Yes—rain gardens for rain runoff.
- Ordinances requiring reduction of suspended solids
- Habitat and species diversity
 - Can you increase diversity? (if you fix it, they will come)
 - Will planting be done with native plants? *Yes.*
 - Can the plants be grown in the park greenhouses. *To a limited extent*
 - Does putting herbicides/pesticides harm diversity? *Yes, if not used properly.*
- Funding
 - Will you need to raise more money?
 - Cranston should be brought in as a partner since they are doing much to control nutrients
 - Cranston also agreed to street sweep the waterfront areas first this year
 - Could look to work being done by DEM, URI and Save the Bay on providing a funding mechanism to address stormwater issues in existing developments
- Outreach and education
 - Need to increase diversity
 - Contact abutter neighborhoods with direct mail and maybe door to door
 - Contact businesses around Mashapaug and get them to do more for their pond
 - TV stations are required to do public service—could do commercials to educate public
 - Need to reach Spanish speaking population—could use Poder 1110 and Hispanic public radio
 - Identify a neighborhood that could have a demonstration program (rain gardens and rain barrels)
 - Create incentive program (trophy awards) for good lawn keeping
 - Create law or ordinance around use of fertilizers
 - Future public meetings should include site visits to problem areas and areas where BMPs are proposed
 - Direct mailing to all watershed residents
 - Invite senators, representatives and city council members to these meetings
 - Get a Cranston official on the steering committee
- Other comments
 - Soft engineering is good, but is there consideration of hard engineering (vortechinics, etc)?
 - Identifying exact placement of culvert from weir box to Roosevelt and seeing where it goes, what else comes in and how that could be cleaned before it reaches Roosevelt
 - Natural processes work better than any hard engineering—should play a role in this urban environment