

Friends of Christopher Columbus Park
Monthly Meeting Minutes 11-12-13
Mariner House, Boston, MA

Meeting chaired by Joanne Hayes-Rines called to order at 6:37 pm. 14 people were in attendance.

Recording the meeting is Clerk, Audrey Tortolani.
Meeting notes from the previous meeting were distributed.
Each person at the meeting introduced themselves.

Adriana DeStefano from Caffé Paradiso was thanked by Joanne for donating the cannoli's at Monte Carlo night.

I. Committee Reports

Treasurer

Virginia Kimball was not present at the meeting. Joanne referred the group to the previous notes for revenue, expense and account balances.

Horticulture

Meghan Denenberg reported on behalf of Robyn Reed. The season has ended for the horticulture group. They have trimmed the roses to get ready for the mulching for the winter. The wisteria was also trimmed back, and the request was made for the sea grass in the crescent to get trimmed back as well. Confirmation has not been received from the parks department that this will be done.

A huge thank you was given to all the volunteers who worked tirelessly in the garden this season. The extra help and attention enabled the group to pull those roses, which were suffering, back to life. Robyn looks forward to working with everyone again next year and will be keeping in touch over the winter.

Membership

No new information was reported.

Website & Internet Communications

Audrey Tortolani reported on behalf of Christina Sperry.

Five emails were sent to the FOCCP mailing list since the last monthly meeting:

1. The last four were a series of emails about our upcoming annual fundraiser, Monte Carlo Night. Extra thanks to Beverly Knight and Meghan Denenberg for their help with these special event emails.
2. The November 2013 FOCCP newsletter.

Each email went to roughly the same number of recipients (about 740), and each had about the same open rate (about 33%). These are typical numbers.

As of earlier today, FOCCP has 296 Likes on Facebook. This is up from last month, but we're so close to 300 and would love to break this number. If you haven't Liked our page yet, please do! There will be a lot of great information there even as the weather turns cold, especially from Monte Carlo Night and the trellis lighting.

Infrastructure and Marketing/PR

No new information was reported.

II. Urban Oasis Report

Before co-chair Patricia Sabbey gave an update on this project, Joanne Hayes-Rines provided an overview to the group on the history associated with the Oasis Project. The highlights of the summary were:

- The circle outside of the Marriott Long Wharf had no irrigation incorporated at the time the park was renovated.
- About 1 year ago, the FOCCP started to explore enhancing this area.
- 2 grants totaling \$30,000 have been awarded to the FOCCP group for this project.
- A design firm has been hired to propose plans to this area.

Patricia Sabbey reported she and Joanne met at the Parks and Recreation Department with Liza Meyer, City Chief Landscape Architect and Sherry Geldersma, Project Manager for Design and Construction. Given the adjacency of the Christopher Columbus Park land and BRA land, Liza and Sherri had met previously with BRA representatives to share information about the Oasis Project.

The four of them talked about the design process to date and the need for additional consideration for the proposed designs. As a result, the Parks Department is providing FOCCP with a grant to fund a perspective study. This involves Bellalta 3 Design developing a CAD (computer aided design) virtual walkthrough. This will provide a view of the project within the larger context and will help us as we move toward with design decisions.

Joanne let the group know the total cost of the Oasis Project will likely be around \$250,000. She will be announcing a Corporate sponsor at the Monte Carlo event.

III. RUFF (Responsible Urbanites for Fido) Presentation

Leslie Horn, President of RUFF discussed a proposal at the meeting and below is a summary of her presentation.

Leslie indicated RUFF continues to be active and to think outside the box to help solve dog-related issues. Their largest goal has always been to bring a dog park to the North End/Waterfront area. To provide some background, Leslie indicated the RUFF group had a membership of 7 people a year ago and now has 220 members. As of late they have been monitoring and attending meetings in regards to space along the Greenway - Parcel 12. When they met with the Greenway in the spring, they were very positive about the RUFF cause and Leslie discussed pitching them a pilot program at some point. When Leslie heard Parcel 12 had lost its museum and that it is somewhat in limbo she thought, why not act now and propose a dog park on this land. Leslie would like feedback from the FOCCP members as they think putting a dog park on this parcel will greatly help the off leash dog problem currently ongoing at Columbus Park. With Parcel 12 being located so close to the park, Leslie thinks they could attract and be the alternative for dog owners who frequent Christopher Columbus Park today.

Amy Hand, Chairperson from RUFF, let the group know the small Richmond Street dog run has been successful and it has really pushed them to continue the hard work to bring a safe, clean and enjoyable off leash dog park to our area. This space is now maxed out and the belief is Parcel 12 would be ideal given the space is unusual/awkward and there are no abutters. Amy talked about the many benefits of a larger dog park including the social aspect and multi-generational interest; older people enjoy petting the dogs. Leslie and Amy are suggesting a pilot but indicated the details behind the pilot still need to be defined further.

Leslie passed around some proposed plans for the dog park in Parcel 12. She indicated local resources were used to create the plans and they are being very conscientious about keeping the goals of the Greenway in mind; recycle, green focus. The space would be 3 to 4 times larger than the Richmond Street space and they plan to have a running area for the

dogs. They are looking for support from the Friends groups in the neighborhood and would like support from the FOCCP.

Joanne asked how RUFF keeps the Richmond Street dog area clean. Leslie indicated volunteers sweep and also throw away dog feces and RUFF organizes regular "clean up" days. They are now looking into how to keep this area open in the winter and are in the process of buying shovels. One challenge discussed was the City of Boston would not allow a trash barrel in the dog area. Currently the feces bags are put in a barrel across the street. All dog owners are encouraged to put their dog feces in plastic bags. It was indicated that after the pilot, they will look into the option of recycling dog feces.

Leslie indicated the next steps were as follows:

- Get support via meetings with the Friends Groups in the neighborhood.
- Get support via meetings with politicians.
- Do more research creating the proposal. Proposal to potentially indicate what RUFF would do if they were given access to the land. E.g. raise money
- Pitch proposal.

Joanne let Leslie and Amy know they have support from the FOCCP group.

III. North End Musical and Performing Arts Center (NEMPAC) Proposal

Sherri Snow, Executive Director and Rebecca Rapoport-Cole, Communications Director, of NEMPAC presented to the group. Sherri gave a brief overview of NEMPAC.

- NEMPAC is a non-profit organization.
- It serves both children and adults by providing affordable arts and music to the community.
- The NEMPAC children are coming to the Trellis Lighting to sing.
- They offer teen internships in the summer.
- They are very busy and growing.

Rebecca discussed the Opera project. Both Rebecca and Sherri are opera singers. She let us know there are not many opportunities to sing or hear opera in Boston. NEMPAC has provided a free community opera performance in the Park for the last couple of years and they don't have the funding for the opera next year. They would like FOCCP to help fund the free community outreach performance this year. They are planning to perform the opera at Faneuil Hall, The Great Hall on June 27th and 28th. The proposed date for the performance in the Christopher Columbus Park would be on Sunday, June 29th, 2014 in the late afternoon.

Sherri will send a budget to Joanne and Joanne indicated the request for funds would be discussed at the next FOCCP board meeting and if approved by the board, the request would be presented at the January FOCCP meeting to membership for approval.

IV. Monte Carlo Night Fundraiser Update

Beverly Knight provided an update on the status of the FOCCP annual fundraiser to be held on Saturday, November 16th. So far 194 tickets have been sold. Everything is wrapped up for the event and Beverly thanked Joanne and Meghan for all of their help. Volunteers are asked to arrive at 6:30 pm; there are about 20 volunteers. The set up of the event, including casino tables and silent auction, will start at 3:00 pm.

V. Trellis Lighting Event

Joanne indicated the event, scheduled for Monday, November 25th, will start at 5:30 pm. The expectation is Mayor Menino will be at both the Monte Carlo event and the Trellis Lighting event. A picture of the Trellis will be presented to the Mayor as a gift from the FOCCP. Joanne has also invited Marty Walsh. The Marriott will be providing cookies and Starbucks will be providing hot chocolate.

The previous months minutes were accepted without change.

Meeting adjourned at 7:47 pm