

Town of Farmington

1000 County Road 8
Farmington, New York 14425

PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE

Monday, August 5, 2024 • 6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

The following minutes are written as a summary of the main points that were made and are the official and permanent record of the actions taken by the Town of Farmington Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update Committee. Remarks delivered during discussions are summarized and are not intended to be verbatim transcriptions. Video and audio recordings of the meetings are available from the Town.

The meeting was conducted at the Farmington Town Hall and via remote video conference.

R = Attended via remote video conference.

Board Members Present: Susan Charland, *Committee Chairperson*
Julie LaRue
Julie Maslyn
Adrian Bellis
Leah Thomas
Larry Potter
Sara Weidenborner

Board Member Excused:

Staff Present:
Eric Cooper, MRB Group, D.P.C. (**R**)
Matthew Sousa, MRB Group, D.P.C.
Ronald L. Brand, Town of Farmington Director of Development and Planning
Tim Ford, Town of Farmington Highway and Parks Superintendent
Steve Holtz, Town Board Member

Staff Excused:
Dan Delpriore, Town of Farmington Code Enforcement Officer

Attending Public: None [either in person or online]

1. OPEN MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairperson Susan Charland.

2. APPROVAL OF JULY 1, 2024, MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Sousa asked attending members if they had any changes or alterations to the July Meeting Minutes as provided. Ms. Charland confirmed that the previously requested changes had been made. With those changes, the Committee approved the minutes.

3. DRAFT PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Mr. Sousa introduced the public engagement plan to the Committee. To ensure Town of Farmington residents are engaged throughout the update process, the Steering Committee has a public engagement plan (PEP) detailing engagement goals, strategies, and opportunities for input. Mr. Sousa detailed the components of the draft PEP including the stakeholder engagement, strategies, schedule, advertising, and communications.

Mr. Sousa mentioned that the stakeholders to be included in the process were identified through meetings with the Town. Ms. Charland asked if the changes had been made to the Stakeholder list which were requested at the July 1st steering committee meeting. Mr. Sousa replied that MRB would ensure these changes have been incorporated. Mr. Sousa asked whether the stakeholder list could be appended to the PEP. Mr. Cooper replied that this would be acceptable except that contact information should be removed.

Mr. Ford noted that the November 4, 2024, steering committee meeting must be relocated or rescheduled due to the election occurring within the room the following day. The committee agreed and felt the meeting could otherwise be held in the lower-level meeting room; details would be finalized in the future.

Mr. Sousa then asked if the committee had any comments or revisions to the PEP. Mr. Brand requested that the plan be referred to in this and other documents as the 2025-2035 Park and Recreation Master Plan. Mr. Cooper said he would revise all documents to be consistent with that language.

Ms. Charland asked when the next newsletter would be distributed. Mr. Brand responded that it would go out in October. The committee agreed that the November public forum must be advertised in that newsletter.

Mr. Cooper stressed to the committee their importance in the public engagement process as local liaisons. He asked the committee to utilize their networks and social media to encourage participation in the planning process.

4. STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS UPDATE

Mr. Sousa reported to the committee that stakeholder meetings had begun including with representatives of the Town of Canandaigua, Village of Victor and Ontario County. The intent was

to introduce the project and make local leaders aware it is occurring. It is also to leverage regional resources and efforts. Mr. Sousa said he would formalize notes from the meetings in a document to be provided to the committee at a later meeting.

Regarding Ontario County, Mr. Sousa reported that their focus is more on regional coordination, regionally important recreation access, and funding support rather than on creating parks with sport fields and similar facilities. He noted that the County believes the Town is very progressive and a leader in subdivision design and requiring multimodal facilities.

Regarding the Town of Canandaigua, Mr. Sousa reported that they felt facilities were available, but they needed more efforts in programming. They also felt pedestrian and multi-modal connectivity could be improved. Finally, they were open to collaborating with neighbors to improve services where it makes sense.

Finally, the Village of Victor does not do a lot of parks planning, which is generally handled by the Town of Victor, Mr. Sousa said. However, the Village is interested in trail connections and partnerships. They did also mention the idea of the recreation center.

Mr. Sousa also told the committee that he had met individually with Julie LaRue to get a better understanding of the Town's current programming. He noted that the conversation discussed the limitations of three seasons and how to fill the winter season with opportunities which might be an indoor facility – not necessarily a recreation center.

Ms. LaRue added that she felt the Town might be able to provide access to equipment like paddleboards or other items that people could rent to bring to the lake or for cross-country skiing or paddles for pickleball. She also noted that in the past most kids lived in Victor but that now it seems they live in Farmington. She said the Town should try to identify the next big thing; currently it might be trails, but maybe it would be a neighborhood pool or a dog park. Ms. LaRue mentioned that there was talk in the past of creating a splash pad but Not In My Backyard (NIMBY) complaints regarding traffic seemed to derail that.

Ms. LaRue began talking about a past project to design a 50-acre plot of land adjacent to Town Hall Park done by Syracuse University students. She noted that it included fields, a dog park, hiking trails and other items. She also mentioned the question of when to look for more than just a part time recreation director. As the Town continues to grow it will become more appropriate.

Mr. Bellis asked whether the projects from the 2017 plan were addressed. Mr. Sousa responded that MRB had prepared a document with the assistance of Tim Ford looking at this and had provided it at the last meeting.

Ms. LaRue also added that she would like to see an inclusive playground similar to that found in the Town of Canandaigua.

Mr. Sousa said meetings remain with the Town of Victor and with the Boughton Park board. He expects further feedback from stakeholders to be provided in September.

5. PLANNING FOUNDATION REPORT

Mr. Sousa introduced the Planning Foundation Report which highlights previously adopted local, regional and state planning documents and identifies information, goals, or strategies of those plans as they may be relevant to the 2025-2035 Park and Recreation Master Plan to be developed by the Town of Farmington. He noted that MRB is still in the process of providing summaries for these documents.

Mr. Cooper added that the section about the 2021 Comprehensive Plan provides important information for the committee because this plan must further the goals of that plan. Generally speaking, those include accessible, diverse parks and recreation opportunities. That plan also highlights specific notable design elements like connections through bike lanes and sidewalks and public open spaces as part of development.

Mr. Cooper further noted that the plans of other communities are often most relevant in their specific project proposals. For instance, the Town of Victor has proposed creating bike lanes along County Road 41 which would provide a connection from the Town of Farmington to Ganondagan State Historic Site and almost to Boughton Park. The Town of Canandaigua places a large focus on the Auburn Trail. The Town of Manchester plan seeks to utilize the Canandaigua Lake outlet as a recreational asset. The Town of Penfield currently has a number of great trails and has proposed numerous bike lanes which could provide connections from the Town of Farmington to the Empire State Trail and NYS Bike Route 5. He noted that these intermunicipal connections and connections to statewide assets is important for securing grants.

Mr. Sousa added that, because this draft document is not complete, it will be circulated once the remaining plans are reviewed.

Ms. LaRue asked what kinds of things are included in the Ontario County draft Parks and Recreation Plan. Mr. Sousa responded that it provides an inventory of assets of the municipalities throughout the county and their goals and recommendations. Mr. Cooper added that, between the plan and our conversation with them, the County has sought to establish boundaries to what their parks efforts would create. The county is less interested in creating ball fields, but they are interested in regional conservation assets that allow users to camp or partake in passive recreation. But they are also not interested in environmental preservation where no access is granted.

6. EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

Mr. Sousa introduced the final document to review, the Existing Conditions Analysis, which reviews the current conditions and recent development in the Town and surrounding region and identifies challenges and opportunities that - in conjunction with the input from the steering committee, stakeholders, and public - can be used to create Action Items for the plan.

Mr. Sousa began introducing each section. The first mapped and provided information about the Town Parks. The second section detailed and mapped trail facilities for the region including other municipalities. The sidewalk infrastructure is provided and very robust in the developed Southwest corner of the Town. Ms. LaRue asked whether Boughton Park should be included on the map. Mr. Brand replied that informal discussions had occurred, and the Town is interested in exploring this opportunity. He added that it would cost financial resources due to required facility maintenance. He further added that the public noted their support within the public survey. He said the plan

should absolutely address the question and establish recommendations for the Town and/or potentially Ontario County. Mr. Sousa restated that he would attend an upcoming Board meeting. Mr. Sousa continued to the demographic conditions noted in the existing conditions analysis. He said that population continues to grow at a solid pace. The committee felt the Census and ESRI estimate might be conservative compared to actual conditions. Mr. Sousa said the population of the above 65-year-old population is growing fastest. This might suggest programming for seniors. Mr. Sousa said household incomes have grown substantially. Mr. Brand asked that median income be added to this section. Mr. Sousa continued to education attainment showing that the population is growing substantially more educated as the number of graduate school attendees grows. Ms. Charland reiterated this large change and how abnormal it seems.

Mr. Sousa continued to discuss park access. MRB mapped the density of residential parcels not within a half mile distance of parks to simulate park access. He said there are high densities of addresses within that Southwest Quadrant not proximate to park facilities. Mr. Cooper added that those areas are largely apartments and manufactured homes. He further added that they are not entirely without park facilities as the private communities have playgrounds, generally, but they lack access to larger sport facilities. The committee discussed more granular consideration of mapping such as locations within the Town for younger or older population and identifying lands that has previously been considered to be developed for a dog park.

Finally, Mr. Sousa introduced the map and section describing environmental resources of the Town. He specifically noted how the largest wetland in the County is within the Town of Farmington. These environmental areas represent significant developmental constraints and also recreational opportunities. He added that these areas could be partnership opportunities with the County if they are interested in conservation.

Mr. Cooper added that he would revise the document to include information on disabilities to support Ms. LaRue's desires for an inclusive playground.

7. PLAN FORMAT

Mr. Sousa started talking the committee through the format and structure of the 2017 plan to understand if the committee wants it similarly structured. Mr. Sousa said the committee could review that plan and discuss further in September.

8. OPEN DISCUSSION - COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND TOWN STAFF

Mr. Sousa asked if the committee had additional comments. Mr. Potter said that it seemed like all Towns are working to see a collection of trail system, and asked whether there was anything in the making to do that as part of this plan. Mr. Sousa replied that the analysis portion will look more into trail amenities and connections and identify what needs to occur to make them happen. He reiterated that this plan would absolutely look at trail amenities. Mr. Potter asked whether these trails could be biked upon. Mr. Sousa responded that they would most likely be multimodal and, as cycling has grown, creating bike amenities is important.

Mr. Potter asked about talks regarding the railroad conversion into a rail trail. Mr. Sousa replied that the Village of Victor is exploring this further but that there is one current active user and a property owner wanting to preserve rail access. The Village is supportive as the rail line itself

requires investment not supported by its use. Ms. Charland stated that it seemed important to have another municipality – the Town of Farmington – supporting this conversion project. Mr. Brand added that GTC has already called out this railroad as a future conversion to a rail trail. Mr. Cooper said that a future map will include existing and proposed trail connections to illustrate the potential future connections. He further added that National Grid has a utility corridor which could be evaluated to create a major trail corridor as well.

Mr. Bellis stated that he feels it's important to make sure existing parks are held to a high enough standard for everyone to enjoy. Mr. Sousa responded that some of the improvements from the past plan have not all been completed and the committee could do a more interactive exercise at the next meeting.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Brand said that what was provided was a good foundation to keep building upon and reminded everyone that the next meeting in September would not be held on the first Monday due to Labor Day.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

The next Committee Meeting will be held on Monday, September 9th at 6:30 p.m., in the main meeting room at the Town Hall. Notice will be provided to the Daily Messenger and posted on the Town's Website (September Calendar).

Respectfully submitted,



Eric Cooper