



MUDDY RIVER RESTORATION PROJECT
MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT
COMMITTEE

POST OFFICE BOX 470535
BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS 02447

WWW.MUDDYRIVERMMOC.ORG

GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY FOR THE MUDDY RIVER
PROJECT – OCTOBER 10, 2012, 3:00 P.M.

REMARKS OF THE CHAIR, FRAN GERSHWIN

Members

Frances Allou Gershwin (Chair)
Emerald Necklace CAC
Betsy Shure Gross (Vice Chair)
Emerald Necklace CAC
Kate Bowditch
Charles River Watershed
Association
Kelly Brilliant
Fenway Alliance
Ed Burke
Emerald Necklace CAC
Julie Crockford
Emerald Necklace Conservancy
Janice Henderson
MASCO
Arleyn Levee
Emerald Necklace CAC
Jack Malone
Muddy River Restoration Project
Technical Advisory Committee
Kay Mathew
Emerald Necklace CAC
Arlene Mattison
Brookline GreenSpace Alliance
Fredericka Veikley
Emerald Necklace CAC

Ex Officio

Margaret Dyson
Boston Parks and Recreation
Department
Erin Chute Gallantine
Brookline Parks and Open Space
Division
Kurt Gaertner
Massachusetts Executive Office
of Energy and the Environment
Patrice Kish
Massachusetts Department of
Conservation and Recreation

Good Afternoon Everyone.

I am incredibly happy to be here today to share this historic moment.

As chair of the Citizens Oversight Committee of the Muddy River Project, the MMOC, and prior to that as a member of the MEPA Citizens Advisory Committee, I have been involved with the Muddy River Project as a volunteer since 1999. Many of the other members of the MMOC have been working towards this day as volunteers since the 1970's.

The MMOC was created by the Secretary of Environmental Affairs and serves as an independent oversight body for the Project. It:

1. Provides ongoing independent evaluation in connection with the Project,
2. Serves as the formal vehicle for public participation in all aspects of the Project, including the long term management and maintenance of the Project area after Project completion,
3. Facilitates coordination and cooperation among the Project partners, and
4. Ensures compliance by the Project proponents and partners of all environmental obligations relating to the Project.

The public, through the Citizens Advisory Committee, through the whole MEPA and permitting process, and through the MMOC, has been intimately involved in the Muddy River Project since the first MEPA certificate was signed by Secretary Of Environmental Affairs Bob Durand on April 29, 1999, and the existence of the MMOC, which will continue for 30 years after the completion of the Project, makes the Project truly a public-private partnership.

But we would never have gotten from that first MEPA certificate in 1999 to today's celebration without the unfaltering financial support of elected officials, the daily commitment of governmental staff at the federal, state and local levels, and the passion and persistence of citizen advocates.

On behalf of the members of the MMOC and the citizens of Brookline and Boston, I want to thank:

A. Our congressional delegation, including Congressmen Mike Capuano and Barney Frank, without whose efforts the Project would have no federal funding, and including Senators John Kerry and Ted Kennedy, and thank you to the Project's newest congressional supporter, Senator Scott Brown.

B. The seven (7) Massachusetts governors who supported the Project from Governor Michael Dukakis to Governor Deval Patrick.

It was during the Dukakis administration that the Commonwealth first committed to reclaiming the magnificent historic, cultural and environmental legacy of public parks and open space left by Frederick Law Olmsted. The Olmsted Historic Landscape Preservation Program was created then, funded through the Open Space Bond Bills of 1984 and 1987; and through that program the Emerald Necklace Environmental Improvements Master Plan was developed. That Master Plan provides the framework for the restoration of the entire Emerald Necklace.

C. During those seven administrations, there were eleven (11) Massachusetts Secretaries of Environmental Affairs, each of whom led the Commonwealth's continued commitment to restoration and the direction of the Project,

- Evelyn F. Murphy
- John Bewick
- Jamie Hoyte
- John Devillars
- Trudy Coxe
- Bob Durand
- Ellen Roy Herzfelder
- Stephen Pritchard
- Robert Golledge
- Ian Bowles
- Richard K. Sullivan, Jr.

Special thanks go to Secretaries **Bob Durand** and **Ellen Roy Herzfelder** who, between 1999 and 2005, signed the seven (7) different MEPA certificates that shape the environmental requirements for the Project, including requirements to include the public, through the MMOC and its members, in the long-term management and maintenance of the Project area; and

Special thanks as well to current Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs, **Richard K. Sullivan Jr.**, who approved the section 61 findings that continue to ensure that the Project will fulfill its goals while avoiding or minimizing impacts to the environment, permitting the release of Commonwealth funds to support construction of the Project.

D. Thanks especially to those in government who had the foresight to recognize the value and the importance of including the public in the planning of the Project.

E. And thanks too to the unsung heroes of the Project, the dedicated staff of the Us Army Corps of Engineers, Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Department of Conservation and Recreation, Brookline Parks and Open Space and Department of Public Works, and the

Boston Parks Department, who have worked so tirelessly for so many years to take the lofty goals of the Project and make them a definitive reality.

Role of Advocates

But the path to this day really started in the 1970's, and from then to now, it has been consistently shaped by the passion of individual members of the public, who also deserve our recognition and thanks today.

A. It started with the commitment of early advocates in the 1970's, like the **Friends of Leverett Pond, Friends of the Muddy River, the Restore Olmsted's Waterways Coalition, Fenway Civic, and later the Muddy River Action Group**, whose activities developed a public awareness of the deteriorated condition of the Muddy River, its parks and amenities.

B. It continued, starting in the early 1980's, with the work of the **National Association for Olmsted Parks**, and the **Massachusetts Association for Olmsted Parks** (the first such state organization) that together created what became a national movement – a renewed interest in, and a concern for the preservation and restoration of Frederick Law Olmsted parks, like the Emerald Necklace.

C. Once the first MEPA certificate was signed in 1999, it continued with the work of the original 29 members of the Citizens Advisory Committee for the Muddy River Project, and the MMOC, who significantly influenced the shape of the Project, the final management structure and the long-term maintenance obligations of the Project proponents.

D. And it continues today with the ongoing contributions to the Project and the Project area by organizations like:

The Fenway Alliance
Fenway Civic Association
Brookline Greenspace Alliance
Charles River Watershed Association
Friends of the Carlton Street Footbridge
Emerald Necklace Conservancy, and
MASCO

Conclusion

The Muddy River Project will dramatically reshape the area upon which we are standing today and will restore to the public who live, work, study and visit the Project area, a valuable section of urban environment that they have been deprived of enjoying for more than 50 years.

If you have not already done so, take a close look at the rendering for the Project and see what is in store for all of us.

Thank you.