

Greeley Park Advisory Committee

Mines Fall Conference Room

848 West Hollis Street

Date: July 8, 2026. Minutes

Call to Order: 5:05PM

Members: Francis Murphy, Alyson Galipeau, Kerry Miller, Richard Smart, Vicki Donchess, Kathy Lodi, Lisa Law, and Sue McNamee.

Alderman Patricia Klee, Director Lisa Fauteux, Superintendent Bryan Conant

Guests: Will Darby (Conservation Commission), Matt Sullivan, Alderman Jim Ravann (Ward One), Gary Gouldrup (New England Forestry Consultant)

Call to Order, Roll Call, and Minutes

- The July meeting of the Greeley Park Advisory Committee was called to order; quorum confirmed with the minimum of at least seven members present.
- Previous meeting minutes were posted online; a motion to approve passed unanimously.

Park Use, Signage, and Horseshoe Pits/Gazebo

- Review of Greeley Park user organizations continued from the prior meeting, with updates provided.
- New signage is in progress for the horseshoe pits and gazebo. Horseshoe pits are reserved Tuesday nights after 6:30 PM and otherwise open to the public.

Garden Plot Waitlist and Distribution

- Garden plot waitlist has been reduced to 28 (down from ~80).
- Plot policy allows multiple plots per person; sizes are reduced as plots turn over.
- Current distribution:
 - 40x18 plots: 84 single, 7 double.
 - 20x18 plots: 32 single, 4 double, and one quad block.

Brush Clearing, Field Use, and DPW Coordination

- Discussion on clearing brush and debris in Greeley Park with DPW coordination.
- Field usage, schedules, and fees were previously reviewed and believed resolved.

Forestry Management Proposal and Park Forest Health

- Gary Goldrup presented municipal forest management principles: set goals, create plans, define harvesting rules; balance recreation/aesthetics with resiliency to climate change, pests (e.g., emerald ash borer), and diseases.
- Harvesting improves forest health via thinning and airflow, with immediate canopy/sunlight changes and long-term benefits; post-harvest planting recommended, favoring resilient hardwoods (oak, hickory, sugar maple).
- Costs can be offset by timber value. Public education, pre-harvest walks, and clear communication are key due to sensitivity around tree cutting.
- Significant imminent need noted: unhealthy, spindly, and dead trees, prior fires behind public bathrooms, downed trees blocking paths, changing canopy, and fire danger. Concern about public perception highlighted.
- Invasive species risk when canopy opens; Mr. Goldrup's team works with licensed arborists on pre/post-harvest controls and monitoring.

Master Plan vs. Immediate Forestry Needs

- Debate on initiating forestry management before a full park master plan; the consensus was to proceed with forestry management due to health and safety risks while recognizing forestry is a subset of a master plan. Vicki Donchess objected.
- Master planning is longer-term (funding, public input, recommendations). Desire to run forestry management and master planning concurrently to avoid losing sight of broader goals.

Motions, Boards, RFP, and Funding Mechanics

- A motion passed to approach the Board of Public Works (BPW) and Board of Aldermen to fund a forestry management proposal; first step is securing board buy-in before issuing an RFP.
- BPW agenda addition targeted for August 27 at 4 p.m.; committee attendance encouraged. Consider scheduling a site walk in early September with required public notice; take photos to inform BPW members.
- Self-funding concept discussed: sell timber to offset cleanup costs. RFP process would include walkthroughs, marking sellable trees, and bids; a consultant would develop a timber prospectus and value estimates (~\$500 per acre initial estimate).
- Alderman Klee: City cannot barter services for timber; budget must show project cost with offsetting revenue. Timber sale revenue likely goes to the general fund; special revenue funds are discouraged by the Board of Aldermen.
- Decision pending on whether the city or a contractor would control the timber sale process; requires board discussion.

Community Concerns: Wading Pool Closure and Communication

- High-engagement complaints about Greeley Park wading pool closure for a second year; Change.org petition (~170 signatures), social media reactions/comments, concerns about yellow jackets under swings and aging equipment.
- Committee acknowledges communication gaps and public frustration; agrees to improve communication with the public.

Wading Pool Repair Status and Broader Pools Priorities

- Initial intent for simple repair shifted after assessment; full engineering required. Engineering completed; Weston & Sampson selected for Gunite pool and stonework.
- Work starts this summer; reopening likely next spring. Budget allocated; timeline depends on contractor milestones.
- City operates three large pools; some in poor condition (Rotary and Centennial designs underway). Approximate cost is \$2.5M per pool; bonding likely. Lifeguard shortages previously reduced hours of operation. Priority is keeping major pools operational, which impacts wading pool timelines.

Alternative Water Recreation Options

- Existing splash pad at Sandy Pond.
- New water park planned at Jeff Morin Park (formerly Park Social), expected to open next year. Proximity matters; communication should highlight options.

Playground Safety and Repairs

- Longstanding advocacy to repair Greeley Park playground; prior resident resistance slowed action. Safety issues include old equipment; a hazardous slide was previously removed quietly (possibly after vandalism).

- Director Fauteux favors pragmatic repairs over extravagant upgrades; considers playground safety a higher priority than forest matters. Committee support sought; funding to be identified.

Public Communication and Transparency Improvements

- Recommendations: list park/pool status on Parks & Rec webpage with closure reasons and timelines; install clear on-site signage for the wading pool closure and expected reopening.
- Utilize city Facebook channels, dpwrequest@nashuanh.gov, and a website for resident inquiries and issue reporting.

Master Planning: Combined RFP Approach

- Proposal to combine master planning for the Greeley Park area and the southwest quadrant into one RFP with two independent scopes to attract higher-quality consultants; may increase total cost.
- RFP can proceed to gauge scope and costs even before funding is secured. Plan to work with Superintendent Conant and the Mayor to draft within 1–2 months and then bring to DPW and the Board of Aldermen. Status update requested for the next meeting.

Conservation Commission Involvement

- Prepare a statement/presentation to BPW regarding forestry management RFPs by August 12, targeting an August 27 presentation.
- Discuss Conservation Commission's wetlands-focused jurisdiction and potential involvement; past neighborhood pushback on forestry actions noted. Master plan may aid community acceptance.

GOING FORWARD:

- Post signage at the horseshoe pits clarifying public availability and at the gazebo.

- Add forestry management proposal to the BPW agenda (target August 27th at 4 p.m.). Committee members are encouraged to attend the meeting and organize pre-meeting educational materials (photos) and plan a site walk with required public notice.
- Make a motion to engage BPW to begin a forest management plan due to imminent need; any action requires approval from the Board of Aldermen and BPW. If pursuing cleanup for public safety, obtain an estimate as a first step.
- Contact UNH Cooperative Extension for expertise and support ahead of BPW engagement.
- Post clear status updates on Parks & Rec webpage for pools/parks, including Greeley Park wading pool closure reasons and timeline; install on-site closure signage indicating expected reopening.
- Begin construction on the Greeley Park wading pool (Gunite/stonework) in summer 2026; track milestones toward spring 2027 reopening.
- Draft a combined RFP for master planning (Greeley Park area and southwest quadrant) with Superintendent Conant and the Mayor within 1–2 months; report status, approvals, and draft progress at the next committee meeting.
- Prepare BPW presentation materials for forestry management RFPs by August 12, 2026; present on August 27, 2026.
- Evaluate funding options and define a modest repair scope for Greeley Park playground safety improvements.
- Promote dpwrequest@nashuanh.gov and website for resident inquiries and issue reporting.

MEETING ADJOURNED 6:15 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Francis Murphy

Chairman

