

Friends of Spy Pond Park Newsletter

Winter 2017

Will You Join Me in the Fun of Organizing the Next Fun Day?

by Betsy Leondar-Wright

PHOTO BY RAM SUBRAMANIAN



Children and adults enjoyed "Catching a Bug" on Fun Day 2016

The most enjoyable thing about planning Fun Day is connecting with so many wonderful people. You could share that enjoyment too!

I'm looking for some liaisons between our key contacts and me, to invite their participation, check in with them and troubleshoot any problems they have, especially during August when I'm away, just a month before Fun Day in September. Would you be up for being in touch with one or more of these special collaborators next summer?

- Arlington Land Trust
- Art Beat
- Tinkergarten
- Mass Audubon / Habitat
- Kickstand Cafe Open Mic producer, Mark Sandman
- Martial arts teacher, Charles DeVirgilio
- Arlington-Belmont Crew Team
- Vision 2020 Spy Pond Committee
- Arlington Parks & Rec Department
- Book Rack

I also want to ask your help in recruiting some new blood. Do you know someone who face-paints, someone who likes teaching nature crafts, and/or someone with a big network of parents and kids to publicize the event to?

We always need more prizes, especially nature-themed toys and books. One source is tag sales during the summer; often sellers are quite generous when they hear it's for the Friends of Spy Pond Park.

And, of course, we will need volunteers before and during Fun Day. Could you take flyers to stores, schools and libraries? Set up A-frame signs on Mass Ave? Haul tables and chairs and help put up tents?

If any of these roles appeal to you, or if you'd like to be a Park Activities Co-Chair, please call me at 781-648-0630 or email me at betsy@classmatters.org.

Fun Day is so successful every year because it's a collaboration of so many people. I hope you'll be one of them next September!

People Making a Difference® (PMD)

PMD is a nonprofit organization that Lori Tsuruda founded in 1992 to promote informed and responsible volunteerism by involving people in meaningful, hands-on work that meets local needs and by assisting select companies and charities to build successful community involvement programs.

We are so fortunate that Lori has arranged for her volunteers to participate in our Work Days every year since 2010. We look forward to continuing our work with them to help maintain Spy Pond Park. You can find out more about this worthwhile organization, PMD, via the following contact information:

People Making a Difference® (PMD)
PO Box 120189, Boston, MA 02112-0189
781-963-0373
<http://www.pmd.org>
lori@pmd.org



People Making a Difference® volunteers rest after collecting many bags full of autumn leaves and natural debris in brown paper bags and invasive plants in black plastic bags

PHOTO BY PEOPLE MAKING A DIFFERENCE® (WWW.PMD.ORG)

Spy Pond Edge Protection and Erosion Control Project

By Catherine Garnett, Landscape Architect

PHOTOS BY CHESTER ENGINEERS



Portions of the Spy Pond shoreline for which the Conservation Commission is requesting CPA funds

As I have reported previously to the FSPP in the spring of 2013, members of the Arlington Conservation Commission noticed that the shoreline along Spy Pond was deteriorating, with the potential for long-term bank failure adjacent to Spy Pond Park. The erosion was a result of high recreational pressure and stormwater inputs from overland flow and wave/ice action.

Following passage of the Community Preservation Act, the Commission applied for funding in the FY2017 funding cycle and was awarded \$49,760 for a feasibility study and detailed survey of four Town-owned parcels (Spy Pond Park, Scannell Field, land adjacent to the Boys and Girls Club, and Spring Valley Street). The work undertaken during 2016 found that the Spy Pond Park shoreline is marginally stable with scattered instances of loss of vegetation, compacted soils, and uncontrolled access. The other three areas, however, present unstable conditions for similar reasons.

The goals of the project are to preserve, stabilize and strengthen the pond's banks to control erosion; protect and enhance wildlife habitat; prevent unauthorized paths; broaden and strengthen constituency groups; increase water quality and recreational opportunities; and improve stormwater infiltration. The Commission is submitting a phase two CPA grant application for FY2018 to implement the project's recommendations.

After two public meetings with Conservation Commission input, the project's recommendations will allow for limited/controlled access to the edge of the pond from the boat launch to the North Beach. This area will be accessible by new paths from the parking lot and the playground. New paths will be created to directly access the water's edge with one new stone lookout area added. The existing random and eroded foot paths will be revegetated and eliminated. All other areas of the park's shoreline will have limited access. The edge of the pond will be reinforced with coir fascines edge treatment and new plantings and fencing will be added to prevent public access to the new planting beds

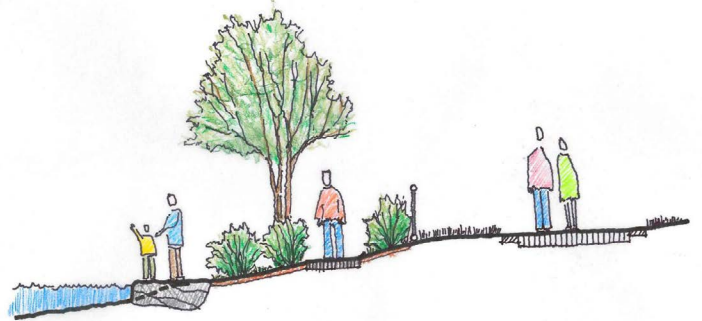


ILLUSTRATION BY CHESTER ENGINEERS

Cross section of proposed paths and lookouts at the water's edge in Spy Pond Park

treated shoreline. The project will also have a strong educational component and maintenance recommendations.

The Conservation Commission is asking for \$534,925 for grant funding to prepare final design plans with estimated costs, hold a public meeting to review the design, prepare and obtain required permits for the work, construct the necessary improvements and oversee the construction. The Community Preservation Committee will meet and prioritize their recommendations for FY 2018 funding to the Board of Selectmen and how they want the money to be distributed will be voted on at Town Meeting in the spring. We will ask you to indicate your support to your Town Meeting representatives. The consultants would file permits in the fall of 2017 with construction proposed for the Spring through Fall 2018 (Construction will not take place in the park during the summer months, however.)

Note: for more information please go to <http://www.arlingtonma.gov/town-governance/all-boards-and-committees/conservation-commission/projects> and refer to the public meeting materials from this fall.



ILLUSTRATION BY CHESTER ENGINEERS (MAP DATA: GOOGLE)

Areas delineated in the Spy Pond Edge Protection and Erosion Control Project

Spy Pond Work Days

By Beverly Williams

Saturdays are Work Days at the

Park! Along with

Young and older, we work

Proudly to keep

Our special park in Arlington looking beautiful,

Never minding pulling weeds or

Dumping tree limbs, leaves, and trash.

Welcome groups! We thank all who participated in 2016: B.U. Day of Service, Arlington/Belmont Crew Team, People Making a Difference®, Zhen Ren Chuan Martial Arts Center, Tufts Alumnae, GOYA youth group from St. Athanasius Greek Orthodox Church...and

Other volunteers who came alone or with family,

Reveling in the chance to

Keep our park pristine.

Do all you can.

Always pick up

Your trash and the trash of others.

So, until our 2017 Work Days get under way, I hope you're enjoying the park!

President's Letter

Dear Friends,

This winter has begun with colder temperatures than last with a hint of ice beginning to form on Spy Pond as I write to you. Consequently, visitors to Spy Pond Park are passing through rather than lingering to relax, play or enjoy the long gone blooms and fall splendor. As I mull over the 2016 accomplishments of FSPP, I reflect on my pride for all the volunteers who have come to help on our Work Days in the park as well as the faithful board and committee members who have participated in pursuing the FSPP's mission.


We owe much gratitude for the many hours in service to Spy Pond Park to: Marshall McCloskey, Treasurer and Membership Secretary, Beverly Williams, Recording Secretary, Sally Hempstead and Jamie Ciocco, Communication and Outreach Co-Chairs, Elaine Crowder, Publicity Chair, Fred Moses and Deepak Bidwai, Webmasters, Betsy Leondaar-Wright, Park Activities Chair, and Lally Stowell and the Beautification Committee: Betty Athanasoulas, Gail McCormick, Richard Norcross, Ruth Slotnick, and Beverly Williams. We also appreciate the work the DPW has done in the park repairing and replacing benches, securing new ones to cement foundations, and replacing the playground wood chips. Thank you so much!

In 2017 many good things will occur. Ram Subramanian will be our Photographer and Videographer; we are hoping to add a new Recording Secretary and a Park Activities Co-Chair soon, also. Phase 1 of the Spy Pond Edge Protection and Erosion Control Project surveying and design is complete. The Conservation Commission has applied for Community Preservation Funds for permitting and construction in Phase 2.

In addition to the Town organizations, I want to thank the FSPP members who again wrote letters of support for the continuation of the pond project: Colin and Susanne Blair, Christopher and Anne Ellinger, William Eykamp, David and Lauren Kops, Lisa and Stephen Reynolds, Stoker Rogovin, and Lally Stowell. We will monitor its progress and give further assistance, when needed. There is much to be done all year, so we hope you will get involved with the FSPP, whenever and however possible, too.

As always, please note the location of storm drains on your street, especially on Linwood Street and Pond Lane, making sure they're clear after snowstorm plowing and at other times. In February we'll be selecting the dates for our Work Days that will be published in the Spring 2017 Newsletter. Have a good winter, with good health and good times in the New Year to you all!

Warm regards ,



Karen L. Grossman

President

Friends of Spy Pond Park

2016 FSPP Annual Meeting

By Beverly Williams, Recording Secretary

Jonathan Marshall, Director of Parks and Recreation for the Town of Arlington, kindly came to talk with us at the Friends of Spy Pond Park's Annual Meeting in the Jefferson Cutter House Conference Room on December 4, 2016. He asked us to introduce ourselves and tell of our connection to Spy Pond Park. Mr. Marshall noted that he had held the same job in Natick, his hometown, for twelve years: "There I knew everyone in town; here I knew no one." He is learning the jurisdictions for agencies in Arlington and getting acquainted with groups like ours. Mr. Marshall thanked us for keeping the park beautiful. Right now, his vision is to educate himself and to work toward stewarding our natural resources. Mr. Marshall noted that he has been President of Massachusetts Parks and Recreation, giving him a network "so that we don't always have to reinvent the wheel". He asked the group for input about Spy Pond Park and its needs for the future. We look forward to working with him to further the goals of our organization and appreciate his taking the time to get to know us and to hear about Spy Pond Park.

GOALS FOR 2016:

All FSPP standing goals and goals for the year were achieved, except recruiting two new board members from a broad range of the membership. For details of our accomplishments, you can find the Annual Meeting Minutes posted on our website after approval at the next meeting, January 29. Congratulations to the FSPP Board and Committee members for their support and hard work all year!

GOALS FOR 2017:

1. Purchase 1-2 more permanent trash barrels to replace the temporary ones in Spy Pond Park.
2. Obtain and convey feedback to Conservation Commission about proposed new fences and paths in planting beds.
3. Monitor progress of Phase 2 of Conservation Commission's Spy Pond Edge Protection and Erosion Control Project involving permitting and obtaining funds for construction. Assist and advocate, if necessary.
4. Hold a contest for an appropriate design for the bench within the playground: coordinate with Arlington Public Art Committee, gain approval for chosen design and have the bench painted.
5. Recruit volunteers for Open positions of: General Vice-President, Recording Secretary and Park Activities Co-Chair.

6. Recruit a Fundraising Chair and appoint someone to that position, if needed.
7. Continue park grooming and planting bed maintenance monthly April through October.
8. Recruit volunteers to keep storm drains clear year round on Pond Lane, Linwood, and adjacent to Spy Pond Park.
9. Recruit volunteers to pick up litter throughout the park between Work Days.
10. Plan and promote a Spy Pond Park Fun Day with the Arlington Land Trust in September.

Needed: Recording Secretary for FSPP Board

By Karen L. Grossman

We can't thank Beverly Williams enough for serving the FSPP as Recording Secretary for the past five years. Unfortunately, due to personal issues, she has resigned from this role on the board. Thus, we are asking if YOU could be our Recording Secretary in 2017? You would attend and take the minutes at Sunday evening Board Meetings every other month and at the Annual Meeting, using the agenda as a guide and email them to the President. This is a great opportunity to find out about what's going on with the FSPP and to have a vital role in helping us further our mission! Please contact me a.s.a.p. to express your interest: fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org

Ice Cutting on Spy Pond

By Richard Joly

From the 1890's to the 1920's ice cutting on Spy Pond was a major industry. In 1841 a railroad line was built from the Charlestown wharves to the southern end of Spy Pond. This rail line also serviced the ice cutting industry on Fresh Pond in Cambridge. Ice was hauled to the Charlestown wharves by rail, where it was sent by ships all over the world. The ice was used in refrigeration as well as for iced drinks. Ice cutting was also being done at Walden Pond when Thoreau lived there. In his book *Walden* he notes, "The sweltering inhabitants of Charleston and New Orleans, of Madras, Bombay and Calcutta drank at my well...."

The winter ice cutting industry at Spy Pond employed up to three hundred workers and a hundred and fifty horses. Boots with thick cork soles were worn by the men to insulate their feet from the ice. The horses had spiked horseshoes to prevent them from slipping. Horse-drawn ice cutting plows, similar in appearance to those used to plow farm fields, were used to cut the ice. These plows had thick metal blades to cut the ice into blocks. To create clean blocks, snowplows would be pulled by horses to level the top of the ice. These blocks would be floated for storage to huge ice houses, which had thick, insulated walls. Sawdust would be packed around the ice blocks for additional insulation. Ice could be stored in this way for a year or more with little loss.

The other large industry in town at this time was market gardening. These two industries worked well together. Ice cutting would provide employment in the winter months when the market gardens would be down. And the ice from Spy Pond would be used to refrigerate produce which was shipped to many other parts of the country. Because of the ice cutting industry, Arlington (or West Cambridge as it was known then), gained a new factory. In 1858 the Williams T. Wood Ice Tool Manufacturers was built near Spy Pond at the end of Linwood Street. This was a large factory that manufactured ice plows, ice saws, and a range of other tools used in the industry. The firm relocated to Hudson, New York in the early 1900's.

Now we know Spy Pond as surrounded primarily by residences and parks. But this is very different from its appearance in the late nineteenth century. At that time Spy Pond would have had an industrial character. There would have been huge ice houses built right up to the shoreline, as well as railroad sidings and the Williams T. Wood Ice Tool factory. Competition from ice cutting in Maine and upstate New York, along with the development of refrigeration, ended the ice industry at Spy Pond. Between 1894 and 1930 the ice houses were destroyed by fires. When we go to Spy Pond these days it is hard to imagine the scene as it was in the 1890's to 1920's!

Richard Joly is a retired city planner, a resident of Arlington, and a volunteer guide at the Jason Russell House.

PHOTO BY RAM SUBRAMANIAN



Fire in the Sky over Spy Pond from Spy Pond Park

Call for Artists to Design and Paint a Park Bench in Spy Pond Park

By Adria Arch, Arlington Public Art

Artists living or working in Arlington are invited to submit color designs for the park bench located within the fenced playground in Spy Pond Park. The design should be appropriate to the site, and appeal to families, children, and visitors to the park. All design ideas and themes will be considered.



PHOTO BY ADRIA ARCH

Wooden bench in the Spy Pond Park tot lot that will be painted by an artist selected by a juried panel

Sketches and application must be submitted on or before March 15, 2017. The time frame for painting the bench is May 1 through July 1, 2017. A member of the Friends of Spy Pond Park, the Parks Commission, and Arlington Public Art will jury the submissions. A stipend of \$500 will be awarded to the selected artist.

- Submit up to three sketches per artist by March 15 via email to arpublicart@gmail.com. Jpgs or pdfs only. Label each sketch with your last name e.g. lastname_sketch1.jpeg.
- Provide a link to website or submit five to ten jpegs of recent works (labeled lastname_image1, lastname_image2 etc. along with a CV.
- Sketches must be original work.

NOTE: The artwork will be a long-term installation and will become the property of the Town of Arlington.

- Selected artist will be notified the week of April 7
- Artist is required to complete liability and contract forms before beginning the project
- Is responsible for prepping the bench surface, painting the art, and applying an anti-graffiti clear coat to protect the art upon completion. Artists provide their own acrylic paint,
- The Friends of Spy Pond Park will provide the primer, clear coat, and anti-graffiti coat.

Sponsored by Friends of Spy Pond Park, and supported by Arlington Public Art and Arlington Parks and Recreation Commission.

Friends of Spy Pond Park next meeting at Karen Grossman's Sunday, January 29, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. 32 Hamilton Road #402

RSVP (optional) to 781-646-5990
email fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org

Park on Linwood Street off Mass. Ave. or on Lakehill off
Lake St. at the far end of the complex.

To join Friends of Spy Pond Park...

Send your annual dues (\$15 individual, \$25 household, \$5 low-income) to:
FSPP, P.O. Box 1051
Arlington, MA 02474-0021
For more information, call a Friends officer.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| President: Karen L. Grossman | (781) 646-5990 |
| General Vice-President: Open | |
| Treasurer: Marshall McCloskey | (617) 548-9877 |
| Recording Secretary: Open | |
| VPs for Communication & Outreach: | |
| Sally Hempstead | (860) 944-1370 |
| Jamie Ciocco | jamcio@gmail.com |
| Chair for Publicity: Elaine Crowder | (781) 648-1927 |
| Beautification Committee: | |
| Betty Athanasoulas | (781) 646-1343 |
| Gail McCormick | (781) 646-0614 |
| Richard Norcross | (781) 641-2404 |
| Ruth Slotnick | (813) 732-2639 |
| Lally Stowell | (781) 777-2759 |
| Beverly Williams | (781) 316-1917 |
| Web Committee: Fred Moses | fred@fmoses.com |
| Deepak Bidwai | deepbidwai@gmail.com |
| Chair for Outreach/Park Events: | |
| Betsy Leondar-Wright | (781) 648-0630 |
| Fundraising Chair: Open | |
| Photographer and Videographer: | |
| Ram Subramanian | ramkumar@gmail.com |

Newsletter contributions and general comments can be sent to
fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org

Friends of Spy Pond Park • <http://www.friendsofspypondpark.org> • P.O. Box 1051 • Arlington, MA 02474-0021

We recognize those who have made contributions to the FSPP in 2016. This money has enabled us to pursue the mission of supporting the preservation, enhancement, and enjoyment of Spy Pond Park and Spy Pond as natural and community resources. We extend our sincere thanks for the generosity and commitment of these 151 individuals and households.

2016 Donations

\$500

Harvard Pilgrim Community
Grant via Laura Smith

\$200-\$499

Brad Barber
Dr. Norman Garber
James McSwiggen

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