

Report of Fernald Developmental Center Land Reuse Committee

I. Introduction

Founded in 1848 by Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, Fernald School is the oldest publicly funded institution serving the developmentally disabled in the Western Hemisphere.

One hundred and twenty-two (122) years ago, in 1887, the Massachusetts School for Idiotic and Feeble Youth moved to a hilly idyllic site in suburban Waltham.

II. Enabling Legislation

As Amended: Massachusetts Acts of 2004, Chapter 149, Section 402

III. Members

Mayor Jeannette A. McCarthy, Chair	Thomas J. Curtin, Vice Chair
Senator Susan Fargo	Representative Peter Koutoujian
Representative Thomas Stanley	Commissioner Elin H. Howe
Commissioner David Perini	Joseph Attardo
Charles Brophy	Marie Daly
Ray Russo	Joe Vizard
Ron Vokey	Ralph Zampitella
Carl Zinnell	

IV. Subcommittees

Closure	Infrastructure/Traffic
Communications	Recreation
Environmental	Reuse/Intake
Historic	

V. Reuse Committee Meetings

January 14, 2004	February 26, 2004	March 18, 2004
------------------	-------------------	----------------

(Meetings were suspended by the State due to litigation and resumed in 2009 upon resolution of the litigation)

April 7, 2009	May 12, 2009	May 17, 2009 Site View
June 18, 2009	September 10, 2009	October 1, 2009
October 15, 2009	October 29, 2009	

VI. Subcommittee Meetings

Closure	August 5, 2009
Environmental	July 13, 2009
Historic	July 28, 2009
Infrastructure/Traffic	During regular meeting
Intake/Reuse/Recreation	July 8, 2009, July 22, 2009, August 5, 2009, August 12, 2009, August 18, 2009 Site View, August 19, 2009, August 26, 2009, August 31, 2009, September 2, 2009

VII. Summary of Subcommittee Reports

Closure- Have DCAM continue to update Reuse Committee on its closure plans

Environmental- Require a full environmental report; have a request for determination done on the streams to determine if intermittent or permanent, to determine if they can be daylighted; maintain several open spaces parcels, key link to Western Greenway; varying elevations problematic to development of slopes; neighborhood flooding is problematic; and there will be more impervious surfaces if more parking lots are built.

Class A-2 Response Action Outcome (RAO) for Malone Park (4/1/2005) and Class A-3 RAO and Activity and Use Limitation (AUL) for Power Plant (3/19/2008)

Historic- Seek an independent analysis of buildings. Categorize buildings: Historical buildings to be preserved and restored; if no historical significance, buildings to be demolished; and if already rehabbed and in move in condition to be used as part of re-use plan. In addition to applicable state and federal laws, any demolition is subject to compliance with City of Waltham Demolition Delay Ordinance.

Infrastructure/Traffic- All infrastructure-roads, lots, water/sewer/drain, water tower, water pressure, asbestos and hazardous material, below grade as well-coal ash and electrical power are problematic. Recommendation: proceed with caution, funding is an enormous task. Entrances and exits have to be looked at carefully.

Recreation- Greene Building is in great condition 133K sq. ft.; 200 monthly visits, approximately 2000 developmentally disabled are served by the facility; City should assume control of this facility and adapt to reuses such as bowling, gym rentals, dancing, arts and crafts, learning/teaching center for basketball, soccer lacrosse, and golf etc.; Park and Recreation Department surveys were used for community needs; Best reuse of the property is a strong recreation component, walking trails, Western Greenway, soccer/lacrosse complex, golf component, if

land available, baseball complex for Park and Recreation Department. North Waltham is badly underserved by passive and active recreation. Skateboard parks, disc Frisbee, golf driving range, baseball-hitting cages, are some suggestions for a comprehensive recreation facility which would serve as a cornerstone and gateway for North Waltham. Cemetery use is feasible, but wind and solar power initial studies show site is not feasible (low wind factor or financially not viable). Recommend a professional feasibility study.

Reuse/Intake- Solicited ideas from the public, had several public input sessions, reviewed written proposals; sought input from all abutters within 300 feet of the property; worked with Sasaki Associates to develop topographical zones; then uses and topographical zones were combined into 4 renditions of proposed use zones; no recommendation on those. Recommendations: portions of Fernald be used for recreation and open space, including but not limited to, areas around the property near existing neighborhoods where green space can serve as a buffer; work collaboratively with Recreation Subcommittee on recreation uses, fields, golf, farming, community gardens, walking trails, open space; a portion of the Fernald be used for a new city cemetery; any land not used for recreation or open space be reused in a manner consistent with what currently exists on site which is either health care related or residential; low impact, low density in order to avoid traffic and other adverse impacts for the residents of Waltham; the City of Waltham reserve its right of first refusal; zoning is outside the purview of the subcommittee; Sasaki was asked to conduct a study of what an economically viable housing would be on the site as well as an appraisal for presentation to the full re-use committee; after this study there could be a real discussion of the housing uses on site.

VIII. Sasaki Associates Inc.

Sasaki Associates was hired by DCAM to assist the Reuse Committee.

Sasaki topographical zones: highly forested, flat-treeless, main road (Adm., Howe and Marquardt), Shriver, stream/wetlands, Waverley Oaks Road
Sasaki calculated the high (Owl Hill) and low (power plant) elevations.

Translated into Sasaki uses: recreation, trails/forest, farming, cemetery, residential houses, health, and RD/lab.

DCAM will do an appraisal but only after an actual reuse plan has been formulated.

IX. Notices

Written notice was sent to all abutters within 300 feet, including to UMass Shriver Parcel. Newspaper, cable, public hearings and an informal survey were utilized to obtain community input.

X. Current Uses

Research (Shriver) and medical
Open Space
Recreation fields and facilities
Residential housing
Chapel
Gardens/Greenhouses
Power plant
Maintenance
Education and Training
Food services
Institutional
Forest
Archival Cemetery (possible)
Library
Passive and Active Recreation

Current zoning: Conservation/Recreation

Uses Permitted Under Current Zoning: As of right: conservation, water and water supply area; public outdoor recreational facility; By City Council Special Permit: semipublic outdoor recreation facility; commercial recreational facilities, indoor; commercial, conservation/nature facilities; Permitted by right and additional intensity of use permitted by Special Permit: nonprofit sports/recreational clubs with grounds for games and sports; commercial recreational facilities, outdoor

Continued use of existing uses by the state itself would be allowed, but there is no grandfathered use for any potential third-party reuser of the land.

XI. Suggested Community Uses*

Athletic Fields
Baseball Fields
Biotechnology Park
Bowling alley
Cemetery
Chapel
Commercial (light)
Commercial-minimize
Community Arts Center & Performing Arts
Conservation
Conservation-Rose Gardens
Conversion of existing buildings for low cost low density housing
Cottages- tear down and daylight

Dog Park
Driving Range
Easement around neighboring properties
Environmental- have a full report done
Environmental clean up
Farming and community gardens
Farming- approx. 30 acres same as amount for a cemetery- not as part of
Greenway which is meant to be a natural border
Flooding of adjacent neighborhoods
Frisbee golf course
Golf Course
Golf Course with a few houses, bike jogging paths, restaurant, and new football and baseball fields for WHS
Green construction
Greene Building Table Tennis
Greene Building pool- serves Fernald residents and disabled community members
Greene Building to honor Senator Edward Kennedy
Handicapped park for disabled kids
Heliport
Historical Buildings- Preserve
Hospital
Housing for Fernald Residents- low density
Housing for non Fernald Residents- rental and home ownership
Housing for women and children
Housing- one or two buildings only
Housing- affordable
Housing- minimize
Howe Library- preserve with historical documents
Impervious surfaces- reduce
Library and archival- keep
Malone Park- new state-built housing
Marquardt- larger facility to serve residents
Movie studio
Museum
Museum and Library to honor Eunice Kennedy
National Historic Site
National Park
No apartments
No bowling alley
No business zoning
No cemetery
No commercial
No development
No golf course
No housing

No more housing, condos, townhouses, homes
No industrial
No large-scale residential development
No shopping area
No more traffic
No more overdevelopment
No more strain on infrastructure
No windmills
Nursing center (skilled nursing facility/state of the art health center) and assisted living and independent retirement residences
Open Space- preserve
Owl Hill- preserve
Park with recreation facilities
Passive and recreation use
Pool- community
Public Transportation- need
Recreation
Redemption Center- keep
Reuse brick, copper, and whatever else is feasible
Sell at auction
Shopping- Retail
Sledding in front of Shriver- preserve
Small business
Soccer Fields
Solar Farm
Solar powered homes for the elderly (cluster of)
Special Olympics events
Surgical Center
Traffic- no more
Transit Oriented Development
Trauma Center
Tree border- preserve it
Utilize existing buildings
Village at Fernald
Veterans Hospital
Water/sewer/drain infrastructure issues
Walking trails and biking
Water Tower- capacity for reuse proposals
Western Greenway
Wetlands- delineate and daylight
Wildlife- preserve
Wind Turbine for electricity needs
Wind Farm atop the hill where Kelley Hall
Woods- preserve

*There may be one or several responses for each of the above suggestions.

XII.

Proposed Uses

The reuse of Fernald School will have a major impact not only on the residents of Fernald, but also on North Waltham and the entire City of Waltham.

The property encompasses approximately 200 acres off Trapelo Road, which is a heavily traveled, narrow "country" road.

There are 71 major buildings, 14 other structures for a total of approximately 1.2 million sq. ft.

(To be determined by Reuse Committee at public meeting, refer to Matrix provided.)

XIII.

Additional Recommendations

XIV.

Attachments

Chapter 149 of the Acts of 2004, Section 402

City of Waltham Planning Department Structures by Use 9/21/09

City of Waltham Planning Department Structures by Year Built 9/21/09

City of Waltham Planning Department Analysis of Land Area and Developed and Undeveloped Areas 9/21/09

XV.

Appendix

State Disposition Process For State Land

Chapter 7 Process:

State agency surpluses to DCAM

DCAM polls other state agencies

DCAM surpluses and determines any conditions

City of Waltham is notified of surplus (of a portion of the land or of the whole parcel)

City of Waltham elects to proceed to purchase surplus portion (by recommendation of mayor and 2/3 vote of City Council)

City of Waltham does title search, at its own cost

State selects an appraiser and City of Waltham is required to pay for state selected appraiser

City of Waltham does 21E, at its own cost

Appraisal and sale reviewed by the Inspector General for the Commonwealth

State imposes any conditions on deed and deed usually contains a reversionary clause back to the State in the event of any default of the conditions.

City of Waltham is required to pay appraised value.

RFP Process:

Individual parcels surplus

Bidders respond to DCAM'S Request for Proposals

Special Act:

By Governor, individual legislators or community

Special legislation requires House, Senate and Governor approval

(Various Special Acts have already been filed by the Governor and State Legislators regarding surplus of State land.)