
PICKERING & WEST LYNN MIDDLE SCHOOLS – Lynn, MA

PARK LAND CONVERSION/REPLACEMENT NARRATIVE

Through the site selection process for the Pickering and West Lynn Middle Schools, it was determined that the McManus Field site was the most appropriate location for the West Lynn School based on the middle school demographics. The design of the West Lynn School is to be modeled after the recently completed Thurgood Marshall Middle School. It was determined that 4.74 acres of the 9.62 acres comprising McManus Field would be needed for the West Lynn Middle School. To replace the McManus Field acreage that is being converted to school use, 5 acres of land at the City-owned reservoir site is being proposed for designation as park land. The remaining 4.88 acres at McManus Field is being proposed for redevelopment for a soccer field, practice football field and an overlay softball field. The soccer and football fields may be synthetic turf to allow a higher frequency of use. At the 5 acres proposed for designation as park land at the reservoir site, the land will remain in its natural state and will serve as a permanent buffer between the new school and the adjacent neighborhood. The Project Budget for the West Lynn Middle School includes all monies to install all replacement fields.

The Lynn Park Commission voted to confirm that the 4.74 acres of designated park land at McManus Field is surplus to its needs which allows for the conversion of the designated land for use by the new West Lynn Middle School under the Article 97 procedures and approvals process. The Conservation Commission is scheduled to vote the same in February 2017. During the development of the lands, the Conservation Commission will also be involved during the site plan review and approval process.

After the Park Commission and Conservation Commission votes, the City Council will need to vote to remove the 4.74 acres of park land at McManus Field from protected status and to request the Law Department prepare a Special Act to convert and replace these park lands. Surveys of the lands being converted and replaced and descriptions of the lands will needed to be provided. An Environmental Notification Form will be filed with EOEEA's MEPA Unit as required of Article 97.

Based on the requirements of the Article 97 Disposition Policy, the following is an online of the process which should take approximately 5 months. The process must be complete by June 15, 2017 to execute a Project Funding Agreement with MSBA within the 120-day timeframe from MSBA Board Approval.

Parkland Disposition Process

- 1) Municipal Conservation Commission must vote that the land is surplus to its needs (Unanimous Vote Required)

- 2) Municipal Park Commission must vote that the land is surplus to its needs (Unanimous Vote Required)
- 3) City Council must also vote to remove the land from protected status (a 2/3 vote of City Council)
- 4) Municipality must file an Environmental Notification Form with EOEEA's MEPA Unit
- 5) The disposition request must pass by a two-thirds vote of the Massachusetts Legislature and be signed by the Governor. (a 2/3 roll call vote of both Houses of the State Legislature)

It should be noted that if the property was either acquired or developed with grant assistance from EOEEA's Division of Conservation Services (DCS), the converted land must be replaced with land of equal monetary value and recreational or conservation utility. It was noted that McManus Field was partially developed utilizing grant assistance. Therefore, the new replacement fields have been proposed but the extent of new work required should be confirmed.

Article 97 of the Amendments provides that land held for conservation and natural resource purposes, including parks, athletic fields and playgrounds, may not be transferred, disposed of, or used for other municipal or private purposes without the process outlined above.