

Oak Island Park Restoration
Media Talking Points
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*ask Dimple
Est comp date
15 years*

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CITY OF REVERE

Dan M. Angelo
Mayor

- The City of Revere's application with Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs 2016 PARC Grant to refurbish the Oak Island Park in Revere was approved in January of this year. The project includes renovations to the baseball field including grading, loaming, seeding, a new infield, and irrigation; to the basketball court including replacement of posts and backboards and resurfacing; removal of the existing tot lot and replacement with an expanded playground facility; fencing and walkways; landscaping; benches; and lighting. This PARC grant is funded at \$231,700.
- Revere on the Move has worked closely with the City of Revere's Office of Planning and Community Development and the Oak Island neighborhood residents through our Neighborhood Organizing strategy.
- The Neighborhood Organizing initiative is funded through Massachusetts General Hospital's Determination of Needs (DoN) funds and is based out of Revere on the Move, a partnership between the City of Revere and the MGH Revere CARES Coalition to increase healthy eating and active living.

"Community Engagement is at the core of what we do by making connections between residents, supporting them in taking on neighborhood-based and citywide projects, and developing leaders to contribute to the work of making Revere a healthier city," stated Dimple Rana, Co-Leader of Revere on the Move.

One of the tactics of this initiative is to involve the community in efforts to reclaim public space, including participating in community park builds. This model increases sense of community in the neighborhood, excitement about having safe and clean places for children to play, and community ownership of the park itself. The use of this model in Revere to renovate DiSalvo and Louis Pasteur Parks was recognized by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs as a model for engaging residents in local neighborhoods for open space and recreation projects.

- Oak Island Park is located in a densely populated Environmental Justice neighborhood just a block away from beautiful Revere Beach, known to be one of the first and last remaining free beaches in the country.
- The overall recreation space was last updated in the early 1980's and has deteriorated considerably over the last 35 years.



- The Oak Island Park recreational area includes 2.48 acres of space and has the potential to be a thrilling and vibrant destination for Neighbors, Bike Riders, and Beachgoers with the public beach boardwalk only moments away. Unfortunately, the current state of the park is in need of reworking with all the grounds and equipment in dire need of refurbishment.
- Over the past year, a number of community meetings with Oak Island residents have been facilitated by Revere on the Move's Neighborhood Organizer, Elle Baker. These meetings bring residents together to plan, design, and create an implementation plan for a new park. Encouraging resident involvement and collaboration throughout the entire process of planning through to implementation leads to a more in depth gratification and stewardship upon completion. We are planning a community style playground build to expand the opportunity for real hands on neighbor involvement nurturing a sense of family and community.
- The Saugus River Watershed Council educational programs have expanded to include the Oak Island Salt Marsh, located only a block from this Oak Island Recreational Facility. This public outreach and education program includes walks & canoe trips in the marsh area to expose and educate Revere youth about this precious ecosystem. Oak Island is an integral part of the overall Rumney Marsh/ Revere Beach System. This particular estuarine system has been noted by the US Fish & Wildlife Service as "one of the most biologically significant estuaries in Massachusetts North of Boston" as home to at least 5 endangered species. The restoration of this park will allow it to be part of the education process as a base for meeting and regrouping.
- Revere is focused on the health equity and playability as a means to improve the quality of life for the youth of our City. Making recreation readily available to our youth especially in social justice neighborhoods is a high priority and part of the Revere Open Space and Recreation plan. Access to recreation increases the development of locomotive skills through free play providing open space to run, jump, skip, and also improves object control through playing ball and better body management through climbing on play structures. Nearly 45% of Revere students are overweight /obese. Revere adults have higher rates of related chronic disease than the state averages, including heart disease, diabetes, stroke and cancer. Neighborhood Playgrounds such as Oak Island Park reduce the risk of childhood obesity in Revere by making active living an early accessible habit in heavily populated areas where homes are smaller and backyards are non-existent. The majority of housing in the immediate area was originally built as turn of the century beach cottages, smaller in size and used as rental cottages or summer homes to access Revere beach. The average house lot in the Oak Island neighborhood is only 3000 sf. The single and small multi-family dwellings within this densely developed neighborhood have little or no outside space for



play, making the Oak Island Park recreation space the backyard for the entire neighborhood. As a multi-cultural community, the rehabilitation of Oak Island Park will also act as a catalyst to bring residents of all cultures together and foster increased enthusiasm and pride in the Oak Island community.

CITY OF REVERE

Brian M. Arrigo
Mayor

Renzo's

- *Fortunately, it's not an issue you have to address right this second*
- We did send them a letter because they were expanding their patio space beyond the licensed boundaries, and they are leaving the doors open after 10 and/or when they have entertainment – also Sean spoke to them about same
- The Parsons have been complaining to everyone who will listen, and some that won't – that having been said, as you see above, some of the complaints are valid
- As you know better than I, most of this boils down to smokestacks
 - No one in City Hall has any documentation of the 'required' or agreed-upon height of the smokestacks – the closest we have is one email from Mayor Ambrosino saying he was trying to resolve the problem by seeking an agreement to raise the stacks by 15 feet, and that he had spoken w/Mr. Gateman, who had indicated that a company had been hired to raise the stacks; obviously, it *was* agreed upon, but that was between the Mayor and Mr. Gateman, and not the License Commission (which had conspicuously stayed out of questions about specific heights)
 - Lenore Parsons claims to have a copy of an agreement, but she won't show it to me, because the AG's office and/or the Ethics Commission have told her not to (according to her, but she seems to feel that threats are the best motivators)
 - Mr. Gateman says he plans on retaining a lawyer and suing the Parsons for harassment
- NOTE: I got a call from the ABCC – Lenore Parsons has been complaining to them, too (and also threatening to go over their heads, as well): she seems to be trying to get Renzo's shut down, as far as I can tell
- Mr. Gateman would like to extend his patio to include the side section, but when I told him that he'd need both your approval and the ABCC's, he decided not to at this time