

August 8, 2018

Hon. Matt O'Malley, Councilor 6th District and Chair, Environment Committee

Hon. Michelle Wu, Councilor-at-Large

City Hall, 5th Floor

City of Boston, 02201

ref: Docket #1096 - Local Wetland Protection Legislation

Dear Councilor O'Malley, Councilor Wu and Members of the City Council:

Friends of Allandale Woods and the Roslindale Wetlands Task Force are writing this joint letter in support of local wetlands protection legislation for the City of Boston.

Our 2 neighborhood-based organizations help preserve and improve City natural resources at Allandale Woods and the Roslindale Wetlands. Both sites contain delineated wetlands, closely-related upland ecosystems and extensive, healthy urban tree canopy. Both are part of larger urban watersheds, where water quality and flood protection features contribute essential elements to the City's comprehensive response to climate change.

As evidence of neighborhood interest in such natural areas, a recent on-line petition in support of protecting the Roslindale Wetlands gathered over 1,000 signatures in 2 weeks.

Local wetlands protection legislation - tailoring resource protection provisions to City of Boston needs and processes - will provide multiple benefits to residents and property owners and to the interconnected, biodiverse natural systems existing within and near these areas.

At this stage in the City's consideration of local wetlands legislation, we offer the following initial recommendations:

- Establishment of robust ecosystem and flood protection mechanisms by, for example, defining permitted and forbidden uses within the 100-ft wetland buffer zone, and, where applicable, stream and vernal pool buffer zones.
- Provision for mandatory filing of initial project plans - where applicable - to the Conservation Commission for staff, proponent and public comment to the Commission; allowance for Commission or staff advisory submissions to other City reviewing Departments such as BPDA, Parks and Inspectional Services/Zoning Board of Appeal.
- Related to item 2 above, establishment of a standard sustainability checklist and clear "road map" so that relevant components of proposed projects that include local wetlands legislation jurisdiction are considered at the earliest feasible stage of review.
- City process transparency via up-to-date, one-stop project information posting on-line.

We look forward to working with City leadership and organizations City-wide as this process moves forward. Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments and for the City's efforts in this important area.

Sincerely,

Friends of Allandale Woods

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<http://allandalewoods.org/>

Roslindale Wetlands Task Force

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<https://sites.google.com/site/roslwetlands/>