



**City Council**  
**Maintenance &  
Development Sub-  
Committee Meeting**

36 Court Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
<http://www.springfieldcityhall.com>

**Lavar Click-Bruce (Chair)**

~Final~

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**February 12,  
2026**

**5:00 PM**

**City Hall - Room 200**

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**Call To Order**

5:00 PM Meeting called to order on February 12, 2026, in Hybrid Room 200, 36 Court Street, Springfield, MA 01103.

**Roll Call**

**In Person**

Lavar Click-Bruce (Chair)

**Virtual**

Justin Hurst  
Kateri Walsh  
Laura Walsh

| <b>Attendee Name</b> | <b>Title</b>            | <b>Status</b> | <b>Arrived</b> |
|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Brian Santaniello    | City Councilor At Large | Excused       |                |
| Gerry Martin         | City Councilor — Ward 7 | Excused       |                |
| Maria Perez          | City Councilor — Ward 1 | Absent        |                |
| Malo Brown           | City Councilor — Ward 4 | Excused       |                |
| Zaida Govan          | City Councilor — Ward 8 | Excused       |                |
| Kateri Walsh         | City Councilor At Large | Virtual       |                |
| Justin Hurst         | City Councilor At Large | Virtual       |                |
| Victor Davila        | City Councilor — Ward 6 | Excused       |                |

|                   |                         |         |  |
|-------------------|-------------------------|---------|--|
| Michael Fenton    | City Councilor — Ward 2 | Absent  |  |
| Jose Delgado      | City Councilor At Large | Excused |  |
| Lavar Click-Bruce | City Councilor — Ward 5 | Present |  |
| Melvin Edwards    | City Councilor — Ward 3 | Excused |  |
| Tracye Whitfield  | City Councilor At Large | Excused |  |

### **Public Portion**

Discussion on Blunt Park overgrowth and potential walking path.

### **Minutes:**

#### **Maintenance and Development Meeting – Summary Minutes**

**Date:** Tuesday, February 12

**Time:** 5:09 PM – 5:32 PM

**Chair:** Council Chair Click-Bruce

**Attendees:** Council Chair Click-Bruce; Councilor Justin Hurst; Councilor Kateri Walsh; Laura Walsh (Department of Parks, Buildings & Recreation Management – DPBRM)

The meeting was called to order by Council Chair Click-Bruce at 5:09 PM. He noted the presence of Councilor Walsh and Laura Walsh (DPBRM). The meeting addressed concerns raised in a letter from the Bay Area Neighborhood Council regarding a wooded pass-through path adjacent to Bay Path Cemetery in Blunt Park.

Laura Walsh (DPBRM) provided a presentation identifying the path in question, located along the edge of Bay Path Cemetery in Blunt Park, connecting the neighborhood near Blunt Park Road and Roosevelt Avenue in Putnam. She described the path as an informal “boot path” formed over time by public use.

Laura Walsh outlined several considerations related to paving or formalizing the path:

- A granite slab is located within the path area. It is unclear whether it is related to Bay Path Cemetery. She stated that prior to any earthwork, surveying and an archaeological study would be required to confirm whether the slab or surrounding area is associated with cemetery burials.
- Bay Path Cemetery, active approximately from the 1870s to 1951 and formerly known as a Potter’s Field, contains approximately 900 interments. Because cemetery boundaries may extend beyond the existing chain-link fence (installed in the 1980s during revitalization efforts), due diligence, including potential ground-penetrating radar, would be necessary before any construction.

- Pine trees along the path have shallow roots and would likely be adversely affected by grading and clearing required for a paved, ADA-accessible path.
- Converting the dirt path to a paved walkway would require additional clearing beyond the 4–5-foot path width to accommodate grading and drainage, potentially encroaching closer to cemetery boundaries.
- ADA compliance would require proper grading, drainage, and accessible transitions.
- Sidewalk conditions at Blunt Park Road were noted. Laura Walsh observed that tactile warning strips appear present on one side of the road but not on the cemetery side or at the path terminus. On the park side, no sidewalk exists, and users would enter directly into the roadway, raising safety considerations.

Laura Walsh estimated that survey work, archaeological study, design, and construction would likely total at least \$150,000 if the path were developed as a paved walkway. She indicated that stone dust would likely not be suitable due to maintenance demands and New England weather conditions.

Council Chair Click-Bruce summarized six concerns from the Bay Area Neighborhood Council letter (dated January 7):

1. Immediate snow and ice removal from both pass-through areas.
2. Regular winter maintenance.
3. Temporary lighting solutions during early darkness.
4. Clarification of departmental responsibility for pathway maintenance.
5. Brush and overgrowth maintenance.
6. A plan or timeline for safety improvements, including walkway surfacing and lighting.

Laura Walsh stated there is currently no lighting in the path area. She also explained that the path was not originally intended or formally designated as an official park connection, which may explain why it has not been maintained as such.

Councilor Justin Hurst inquired whether Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding might apply. Laura Walsh responded that CPA typically funds recreational amenities rather than access routes and indicated that the proposal may not meet eligibility criteria, though confirmation with CPA staff would be required.

Councilor Hurst also referenced prior improvements in the area. Laura Walsh confirmed recent and ongoing projects at Blunt Park, including tennis court and playground renovations, a PARC grant-funded project for softball fields and walking track improvements, and CPA-funded enhancements at Bay Path Cemetery. She noted that while discussions about the path may have

occurred previously, the project has not advanced beyond conceptual stages.

Councilor Hurst recommended inviting representatives from the Bay Area Neighborhood Council to a future meeting to clarify concerns and determine whether any issues have already been addressed. Council Chair Click-Bruce agreed to follow up with the Neighborhood Council and share Laura Walsh's presentation.

Councilor Kateri Walsh asked whether there had been accidents or safety incidents at the location. Council Chair Click-Bruce stated he was not aware of documented incidents but emphasized a proactive approach to safety. Councilor Walsh also inquired about the existence of a cemetery commission. Laura Walsh explained that while a cemetery commission previously existed, city-owned cemeteries are currently under the Parks Department's authority.

Regarding next steps, Laura Walsh stated that the initial step would be to identify funding for and complete a boundary survey and archaeological study. She indicated she would bring the matter to Director Ash for further consideration.

Council Chair Click-Bruce requested that Laura Walsh provide her presentation for the record and for sharing with the Neighborhood Council. He stated that a follow-up would be conducted to determine whether a subsequent meeting, including neighborhood representatives, is warranted.

The meeting was adjourned by Council Chair Click-Bruce at 5:32 PM.

[MIN\_SIGNATURES]