

Seekonk Meadows

Seekonk Meadows is a nine acre meadowland of tall grasses and wildflowers. When complete, the vision is for it to have walking trails, picnic tables, benches, a pavilion overlooking the meadows, a children's play area and an amphitheater for outdoor summer concerts. It will serve as a restful community gathering space for area residents and provide children with opportunities to explore and learn the joys of wildlife and plants.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

1.) What is Seekonk Meadows?

- Seekonk Meadows is an exciting and unique project that is creating a public gathering space atop a former landfill. It is located on the nine acre site behind the Seekonk Public Library. The site was formerly a town dump, active until the 1970's, and then left abandoned behind a fence for decades.
- Because it is being developed on a former landfill, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has strict regulations about how the land can (and can't) be used. The DEP requires that the Meadows only be used for passive recreation, similar to Caratunk Wildlife Refuge on Brown Avenue in Seekonk. Activities and plantings that could potentially damage the cap are not allowed, including ball fields, active recreation, motorized vehicles and trees and large plants with extensive root systems.
- Seekonk Meadows is a joint project of the Town of Seekonk and seven different town organizations including the Seekonk Board of Library Trustees, the Library Trust, Friends of the Library, Land Trust, Conservation Commission, the Board of Selectmen, and the Recreation & Youth Commission.

2.) When will Seekonk Meadows be open to the Public?

- This project has two phases. Phase I is the typical landfill capping required of all abandoned dumps in the State of Massachusetts. An award of \$1.2 million was granted by the state to cap the former landfill. Most landfills, once capped and seeded, are left alone and look like small grassy hills. Phase I is being managed by Seekonk and includes fences around the parking lot and firmly established grass plantings to control topsoil erosion and runoff.
- Phase II, which doesn't usually happen on a capped landfill, is to bring the Seekonk Meadows to life, following the existing Landscape Design plans. Phase II is being overseen by the Seekonk Meadows Committee and cannot begin until Phase I is complete. We anticipate that the Town of Seekonk will complete Phase I this Summer, the Seekonk Meadows Committee will be able to begin Phase II this Fall, and that the Meadows will be open to the Public by Summer, 2010.

3.) What will the final look of Seekonk Meadows be?

- The vision of the Meadows is to create a tranquil space for walking, communing with nature, bird watching, introducing the joys of nature and wildlife to children and other activities that would not threaten or endanger the cap or the environment.
- The final "look" envisioned for the Meadows is that of a tranquil walking space with paths winding through tall grasses and wildflowers. It will be a public gathering place for the Seekonk Community with picnic tables, benches, a pavilion overlooking the Meadows, a children's play area and an amphitheater for outdoor summer concerts.

OTHER FACTS ABOUT SEEKONK MEADOWS:

- The concept of creating a meadow on top of an abandoned landfill began with Ken Lagerquist in 1993, formerly President of the Seekonk Board of Library Trustees.
- In 2000, Marc Mazzarelli, Landscape Architect, was retained to design the meadows.
- In early 2008, the Town of Seekonk contracted with an engineering firm and a construction company to begin the work of capping and securing the landfill.
- Capping entails, stirring up the landfill to release gasses, putting in gas emission pipes, covering the landfill with a membrane, 10" of gravel, 10" of loam and, finally, with a covering of grasses to prevent erosion.
- The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will provide continual oversight of the Meadows. It is unlikely that the DEP would ever allow manicured lawns, active ball fields, motorized vehicles, trees and plants with large root systems and other traditional recreational sports that could potentially jeopardize the cap or the environment.
- The Meadows will eventually provide access to the Gammino Pond conservation area, a sixty-acre property that includes a five-acre pond and is managed by the town's conservation commission.
- The gardens will require minimal maintenance, the amphitheater will be mowed for summer events and the nine acre Meadows will be mowed once or twice a year.
- Phase I, capping the landfill, is being managed by the Town of Seekonk and the Department of Public Works, under the watchful eye of the DEP whose ultimate goal is to protect the cap and the environment. An award of \$1.2M was granted by the state to cap the landfill. Phase II, developing the Meadows, can begin after the Town of Seekonk completes Phase I.
- Phase II, creating Seekonk Meadows, is being overseen by a ten member volunteer committee made up representatives of seven different town organizations and three members at large. Once the Town completes Phase I, the Meadows Committee can begin their Phase II work of creating Seekonk Meadows.
- Phase II is funded entirely by private funds. The Meadows Committee, which has been meeting since late July, 2008, has been working on fundraising and planning the Landscape Design implementation.
- The budget for Phase II for is \$400,000. \$340,000 to be used for site preparation, plantings and fixtures and \$60,000, or 15%, set aside for a maintenance fund. Between the fundraising efforts of the Seekonk Land Trust and the Seekonk Meadows Committee, we have raised \$133,455 to date. This represents one third of the funds needed to fully create the Meadows.

To support Phase II of this exciting project, the creation of Seekonk Meadows, please send your gift, payable to the Seekonk Library Trust with a memo line designating the Seekonk Meadows project, to the Seekonk Public Library, 410 Newman Avenue, Seekonk, MA 02771.