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ALLSTON BRIGHTON, WATERTOWN

State weighing feedback on future of shuttered Brighton-Allston pool

Posted by Matt Rocheleau January 7, 2013 01:42 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

Officials are weighing community feedback about the future of the state-run Brighton-Allston Swimming Pool on North Beacon Street that shut down in the summer.

So far, the neighborhood has expressed interest in seeing the property used for “a spray deck, wading pool or something aquatic in nature, but not necessarily another full-sized or deep water pool,” said Department of Conservation and Recreation S.J. Port.

The department held a lightly-attended public meeting about the site in mid-December. And, Port said officials plan to continue to collect feedback from the community.

“Right now our plan is to hear what the neighborhood wants and see what the agency can afford,” she said.

She added that the state has “absolutely no plans to sell” the property, which is located on a narrow strip of land, isolated by the Charles River to the north and

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the Massachusetts Turnpike to the south.

Selling the site “would require legislation -- and we very rarely sell property,” she said.

State officials [announced in July](#) that the pool had been closed indefinitely, and perhaps permanently.

Officials have said the pool’s physical condition is deteriorating and could pose health and safety hazards. In the past few years, it has been closed frequently due to problems with the facility, including mechanical issues.

To restore the existing pool to suitable conditions, it would need to essentially be rebuilt, state officials have said. Such an endeavor would cost an estimated \$5 million and would include environmental remediation – a necessary step for reconstructing swimming pools built during the 1950s and 1960s.

Closing the pool saved the state agency about \$115,000 in staffing and operational costs last year, officials said.

The pool’s secluded location, limited parking – there are only about a half dozen spaces – and poor attendance were also weighed in the decision to shut the swimming facility down, officials said.

In the four years before it closed, the Brighton-Allston pool has averaged a daily attendance of 79 visitors, officials said. In 2011, the rate was 59 visitors – the lowest average attendance recorded among all pools the state ran that summer.

Officials said that nearby state-run pools, including the Artesani Playground wading pool on Soldiers Field Road in Brighton and the Reilly Memorial pool in Cleveland Circle, can accommodate those who visited the Brighton-Allston pool in the past.

The decision to close the Brighton-Allston pool “was not made lightly, and we at DCR recognize the affect on the communities involved,” Port said in an e-mail in July. “However, given our limited resources and after careful consideration of all the options, the decision was made to move forward with closing the pool.”

“DCR pools are typically 40 to 50 years old,” she added then. “Additionally,

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they're more susceptible to weather-related deterioration than other public facilities since they are only open for a short amount of time each year and they're affected by whatever weather we have during the off season.”

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