

**PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
TOWN OF NEEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS**

**Minutes of Meeting  
June 13, 2016**

**PRESENT:** Matthew M. Toolan, Chairman  
Christopher J. Gerstel, Vice Chairman  
Cynthia J. Chaston, Member  
Michelle S. Geddes, Member  
Patricia M. Carey, Director  
Robyn G. Fink, Assistant Director

**ABSENT:** David C. DiCicco, Member

**GUESTS:** *BH+A:* Tom Scarlatta, Michelle Granick  
*Community Center of Needham:* Deb Whitney  
*YMCA Board Members:* Janet Jankowiak, Connie Kaufman  
*Needham Resident:* Artie Crocker

Mr. Toolan called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM in the Charles River Room of the Public Services Administration Building.

- 1. Minutes of Meeting: May 23, 2016:** Mr. Gerstel made a motion to accept the minutes of the May 23, 2016 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Chaston. The minutes of May 23, 2016 meeting were approved unanimously.
- 2. Director's Report:** The Commission reviewed the written report. Ms. Carey reported that the Selectmen will be setting their goals later in the month, and issues with trash will be on the list. Mr. Toolan suggested bring groups together to help with suggestions for solving the trash issues, and Mr. Gerstel noted it is helpful hearing from the DPW Recycling and Transfer Division on the collection of trash.
- 3. Program Report:** The Commission reviewed the written report. Ms. Fink noted that low enrollment for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade TGIF night caused it to be cancelled. Summer preparation continues.
- 4. Discussion Items**
  - A. Rosemary Recreation Complex Project:** Mr. Toolan welcomed Tom Scarlata and Michelle Granick from BH+A. Mr. Scarlata explained the process of coordinating the Rosemary Recreation project with the Rosemary Lake sediment removal project. The hope is that the sediment removal project will be approved for a permit to drain the lake in late summer/early fall, so that the pool construction can be done at that time. The Rosemary Recreation Complex project, in the permit applications, will

describe the construction methods with and without draining of the lake. The hope would be to be given the site for the start of construction on June 1, 2017, so other site work could begin and then the pool work begin in August or September. Mrs. Chaston noted that would require not having a pool season in 2017, but give a better opportunity for a full pool season in 2018. If there is no pool season in 2017, Ms. Carey would reach out to neighboring communities with public swimming facilities to see if there were any options for resident rates for Needham for that one year. Needham offered that to Wellesley residents when Morse's Pond was closed for one summer. Ms. Carey would also look to find work opportunities for the pool staff, to try and keep them working with the department, and preparing for new roles at the new facility. Ms. Granick introduced some concepts of the building from four sides, with two different roof lines for the multi-purpose room section of the building. The original slanted roof has a minimum of 14' at its lowest point and 19' at the highest. The pitched roof option has 14' at the ends and 25' in the mid-point. Ms. Carey and Ms. Fink felt that both roofline options would work for programs. The consensus was that the pitched roof line was preferred, but more information was needed on cost differentials. Ms. Granick also showed some color options for the building, looking at some photos of typical Adirondack buildings. The Commission tended to like the darker options. Mr. Toolan asked if solar panels would be an option for the new facility. Mr. Scarlata noted that it could, with the sloped roof facing south, but there need to be some structural supports put into the construction. Needham resident Artie Crocker noted that he can assist with gathering some information on possible cost savings if solar was in place. Community Center of Needham representative Deb Whitney suggested the possibility of solar impacting the decision on the roof line, if the slanted roof was needed for full solar capacity. Mr. Toolan thanked Mr. Scarlata and Ms. Granick for the update. The Commission continued their discussion, and discussed the possibility of the spray park/splash pad. Mrs. Chaston was concerned that it may use too much water, when Needham residents were being asked to conserve water. Mr. Toolan noted that the state did not want to permit the recirculation style, which uses less water. Ms. Carey noted that there are options for reducing water use, plus a reservoir tank could be added to collect water which can then be reused for irrigation. Mr. Toolan asked for more information on amount of water use. Mrs. Chaston asked if there was a formal decision that an elevator is not required. Ms. Carey stated that the Needham Commission on Disabilities already had reviewed the design concepts and did not object to the elevator not being installed, as the two levels of the building operate independently. The state MA Architectural Board will be asked for a review. The Commission would also like information on the possibility of heating one or both pools.

- B. Open Space and Recreation Plan Update:** Ms. Carey and Conservation Director Matt Varrell have met with Mrs. Chaston and Conservation Commission Chairman Janet Bernardo, as the open space representatives of each board. The four of them will work with Tighe & Bond on updating the Town's Open Space and Recreation

Plan, and will be putting together an advisory committee. It is hoped that a member of the Commission will be part of the advisory committee. The goals that are set in the plan are for both the protection of open space, but also the retention and addition of recreation opportunities.

- C. Projects Update – Newman, Mills, Rail Trail, Pollard:** Ms. Carey stated that Parks and Forestry Division is working with the contractor at Newman to do the final punch list items. The contractor also monitors the plantings for the year, and will replace any that do not thrive. Ms. Carey has sent photo updates of Mills, with the plantings now all completed. The contract for the restroom has been sent to the contractor for an installation sometime this summer. Any funds remaining after the restroom installation will go towards improvements of the basketball court. The Rail Trail Advisory Committee has met with an abutter who is having challenges with people cutting through his yard. He will be attending a Traffic Management Advisory Committee meeting to discuss the issues with them. At Pollard, the Parks and Forestry Division will oversee a field renovation project on the fields, starting after school gets out, so everything will be ready for the fall. Ms. Carey left the meeting to attend the PPBC meeting at Town Hall.
- D. Athletic Facilities Fund:** Mr. Toolan noted that Mr. DiCicco had attended the recent Trustees of Memorial Park meeting, at which time the Athletic Facilities Fund was discussed. Mr. DiCicco will update the Commission on the discussion at an upcoming meeting.
- E. DeFazio Parking Issues:** Mrs. Chaston suggested asking for assistance from the Traffic Management Advisory Committee to discuss the complaints about parking, drop-off, and parking on yards. Mr. Toolan believes it is more of an issue with out of town guests. He suggested adding a sign at the end of the side street letting people know that there is no parking for DeFazio Fields on the street. Mrs. Geddes sees the issue with dropping off as the kids who then dart across the street into traffic.
- F. Study of Food Trucks/Food Carts:** Mr. Toolan reported that the Board of Selectmen have asked Park and Recreation for their opinion on possible locations for food trucks/food carts. Avery, Cricket, Perry, Riverside, Claxton, and Dwight all have challenges with parking. DeFazio Field could work. The Commission believes the Board of Selectmen need to make the decision for Greene's Field. Rosemary could be a possible option. Mills could be an option with the new parking area. Dwight is too small. Mr. Toolan says that it is the parents and spectators who want the food trucks/food cart. Mrs. Chaston would like to work with the sports group to see what they prefer.
- G. Study of Skate Park:** Ms. Carey has been doing some research on pop-up skate parks. The Herald Street Fund could possibly be used for the project.

## 5. Action Items

- A. Special Event Request: Alzheimer's Association:** Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the request from Katherine O'Malley for a 3v3 basketball tournament at Mitchell basketball court on Sunday, June 26 from 9 AM to 4 PM to benefit the Alzheimer's Association. Mr. Gerstel seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.
  - B. Special Event Request: Carter Nursery School:** Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the request from Carter Nursery School to host a family event with Barn Babies at DeFazio tot-lot on Sunday, September 25 from 9-11 AM. Mr. Gerstel seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.
  - C. Special Event Request – Cheifetz Birthday Party:** Mrs. Cheifetz did not submit the written request prior to the meeting, so it is withdrawn at this time.
  - D. Request – Needham Track Club Storage:** Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the request of the Needham Track Club to replace their current storage container at DeFazio with a new model, under requirements set by the Director of Park and Recreation and the Superintendent of Parks and Forestry. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gerstel and approved unanimously.
- 6. Topics for Future Agendas:** The following topics will be added to upcoming agendas: Athletic Facility Fund, parking issues at DeFazio, temporary skate park, and food trucks/food carts.
  - 7. Adjournment of Meeting:** Mr. Gerstel made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:36 PM. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Geddes and the meeting adjourned at 9:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robyn Fink, CPRP  
Assistant Director