



Setti D. Warren
Mayor

Newton Parks & Recreation Commission

Meeting Minutes



Robert J. DeRubeis
Commissioner

Room 204- City Hall

7:00 p.m. – Monday, September 18, 2017

Attending: Arthur Magni, Chairman, Richard Tucker, Vice-Chairman, Commissioner DeRubeis, Andrew Stern, Byron Dunker, Peter Johnson, Peter Kastner, Sam Figler, Jack Neville

Meeting Began 7:00

1. **Meeting Minutes - June 19, 2017- approved 7-0**
2. **Commissioner's Reports on Programs, Forestry and Maintenance**
 - The summer camp and swim facilities had a successful summer. The water quality at Crystal Lake was good for the entire summer. Extra money was spent on functional parts at Gath Pool along with the deck being renovated.
 - Farlow Park Project – there have been cost overruns, original bridge may have some changes.
 - NNHS Indoor Recreation- begins in October
 - Picnic n Play in Park - Kennard- Oct 7
 - Paddy's Road Race - October 15
 - Fall Programs: Ice Skating Lessons, Horseback Riding, Funtastic Fridays, Super Saturdays, Haunted House at Hyde
 - Continued discussions regarding the Maintenance Division moving to Craft Street.
3. **499 Winchester Street/Nahanton Park- Easement Request**

Terrence P. Morris, Esq. & Joseph Porter, VTP Associates, Inc.

 - Mr. Morris and Mr. Porter are requesting an easement through Nahanton Park land to run a sewer line for new houses proposed at 499 Winchester Street. Mr. Morris and Mr. Porter are representing a client who is purchasing the single family home at 499 Winchester Street. Currently there is a septic system at 499 Winchester Street. The client is submitting a special permit to put three homes on the property. There is a sewer line connection 900' down Winchester Street, but would prefer to install the sewer pipe in an easement through the park. This would be a 20' x 200' (4,658 feet) easement with approximately 4 trees (7", 8", 12", 16") needing to be removed.
 - Mr. Stern asked what the cost savings would be to run the sewer line down the proposed easement instead of down Winchester Street. Mr. Porter replied \$20k-\$30k.
 - Mr. Morris stated the only downside would be the trees being removed. Chairman Magni asked if the area would be restored. Mr Morris replied yes.
 - Mr. Stern commented owners of the easement has the rights, the City would be giving up the rights to the land, allowing this proposal would set a precedent for similar requests. [Mr. Stern opposes this proposal due to the general principle that interests in](#)

public land should not be granted to private parties unless there was an overriding, substantial public benefit to be realized. This easement proposal did not satisfy that standard and only was being requested to provide a private party additional savings for his private real estate development.

- Chairman Magni asked the status of the Conservation Restriction. Commissioner DeRubeis stated the Law Department is working on it; an entire survey of the land is required.
- Mr. Stern commented if the Conservation Restriction was on record this easement would not be allowed.
- Mr. Kastner suggested requesting information from the Law Department on what the procedure is for an easement. Mr. Tucker agreed with Mr. Kastner.
- Chairman Magni asked Commissioner DeRubeis if this request would require a public hearing. Commissioner DeRubeis replied yes.
- Representatives from the Friends of Nahanton Park and Newton Conservators were present and do not support this proposal and are against cutting down the trees and cutting through the trail.

Mr. Stern made the motion to reject the proposal for an easement through Nahanton Park. Mr. Figler seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-2-1.

4. Committee Reports

- **Community Preservation Committee –**
 - A P & R Commission member is needed to fill the position left by Mr. Fishman's resignation.
- **Farm Commission**
 - No report
- **Cabot Redesign Committee**
 - The softball field is staying as is. Home plate will face Eastside Parkway and be slid over to the left to avoid the sun. Mr. Stern asked if netting will be required. Home plate is being moved so netting will not be necessary.
- **Commonwealth Golf Course**
 - Two new members will be joining the committee next month
- **Off-Leash Area Working Group (OLAWG)**
 - McGrath Off-leash area will be renovated in spring 2018
 - Norumbega – An RFP for design is being developed
 - DCR land by Chestnut Hill Mall is being researched as an option
- **Crystal Lake Working Group (CLWG)**
 - An RFP for Levingston Cove to help with the erosion has been advertised
 - Chairman Magni commented that Sonya and Ray Kurzweil are hosting an event for the Mayoral candidates to discuss their vision for Crystal Lake.
- **Nahanton Park Committee**
 - No report

5. New Business

- Mr. Figler is asking the Commission to recognize there is a problem with field usage. Mr. Figler is part of the Lacrosse league and stated the following issues:

- How the city uses fields
- Supply exceeds demand
- Need for better allocation of fields
- Would like to start with a clean slate
- Mr. Stern mentioned the facilities usage analysis done under Commissioner Towle and asked if it needed to be revisited. Commissioner DeRubeis stated that analysis reported the quality of the site only.
- Commissioner DeRubeis stated the current issue is overbooking of the fields
- Mr. Figler agreed and stated the other issue is single purpose fields. Of 60 fields 40 are for use by baseball/softball only.
- Commissioner DeRubeis suggested the top 4 Sports Leagues meet to discuss field use; baseball, football, lacrosse and soccer. The members present agreed.

Meeting adjourned 8:50 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Robin McLaughlin

Commission Secretary