



## Newton Parks & Recreation Commission

### Meeting Minutes

### Room 205 – City Hall

7:00 p.m. –Monday, January 25, 2016

**Attending:** Chairman Arthur Magni, Vice-Chairman Richard Tucker, Commissioner Bob DeRubeis, Andy Stern, Bethel Bilezikian Charkoudian, Peter Johnson, Jack Neville, Sam Figler, Michael Clarke

Meeting began 7:00 pm

1. Meeting Minutes – December 21, 2015
  - Approved 8-0
  
2. Commissioner's Reports on Programs, Forestry and Maintenance
  - All snow operations over the weekend went well. The new Angier School is difficult to plow due to the mall area; there is a lot of hauling of snow from the Angier School.
  - Newton South Tennis Courts are paved; there is a new entrance and fence. The courts are now handicap accessible. In the spring the contractor will check for puddling on the courts and then sealcoat and line the courts.
  - The Newton Highlands Project will cost 3.3 million. The CPC awarded 2.5 million to the project. Weston & Sampson will provide a proposal to phase the project. There is a benefactor willing to contribute six figures. Mr. Figler asked if the money can be bonded. Commissioner DeRubeis responded no, the Executive Office would like the project done in phases. Mr. Stern asked if the benefactor is expecting synthetic turf, the Commissioner responded yes, the proposal will be presented to the Commission. Commissioner DeRubeis commented he is very disappointed the project did not receive the 3.3 million from the CPC. Mr. Clarke asked what happened to the league donations. There is a different administration running the leagues. Mr. Clarke commented the CPC would like more documentation from organizations. Mr. Neville asked if there is money in the budget to fence the synthetic field to keep animals off the turf. Ms. Charkoudian asked what the difference is between natural and synthetic turf. Commissioner DeRubeis stated there is more playing time, decreased maintenance and larger replacement costs. There are pros and cons to both sides.
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- Newton North Backstop – there has been a slight change. The soil testing showed the ground will not support the backstop. The backstop is being replaced with an 8ft. fence and netting in its place. The overhang will still be part of the project.
- Greenway Upper Falls- the Greenway is done except for River Overlook which Iron Horse built incorrectly. The City will contact Needham to request access all the way across. Mr. Neville thanked the Commissioner and staff for their hard work to get this project done. Commissioner DeRubeis will also pass along the thanks to Public Works Commissioner McGonagle who took the lead on this project.
- Albemarle Playground- Cheesecake Brook Bridge is being rebuilt and relocated. The Project will cost approximately \$55k-\$60k.
- Summer Camp Fair is scheduled Sunday January 31 at NNHS between 12pm and 4pm.

### 3. Nahanton Park Tool Shed Memorial

- Mr. Clarke commented previously the Commission had discussed memorializing the Alms House site in Nahanton Park. The temporary fire station has moved out and the tool shed building will be removed in the near future. Mr. Clarke suggested posting along the ruins of the foundations with barcodes that would link back to a website with the historic information. And also include a kiosk.
- Mr. Figler asked if there is a current proposal. Mr. Clarke responded no. Mr. Stern asked if there were any hazards. Mr. Clarke stated no, the ruins are overgrown with brush and trees which would need to be cleared to expose the foundations.
- Mr. Tucker stated there was discussion by the working group to have a clear record of what is there and maybe have an educational pamphlet and some landscaping to make the area more appealing.
- Mr. Stern asked if there is a budget for this proposal. Mr. Clarke stated no but is hoping to work it out with volunteers.
- Mr. Clarke commented the Commission should have input on the demolition of the tool shed. Commissioner DeRubeis reached out to the Public Buildings Commissioner Josh Morse. Commissioner Morse stated he would notify Commissioner DeRubeis when the demolition will be scheduled.
- Ms. Charkoudian stated it is important to educate the public about the Alms House. Chairman Magni asked if Parks & Recreation department has the funds for this project. Mr. Clarke commented he would speak with the Friends of Nahanton Park.
- Mr. Clarke made the motion to recognize the historic value of the Alms House site and move to incorporate it more into the Nahanton Park with trails, signage and a kiosk. Mr. Stern asked if there may be unintended consequences by using the term “historic” in the motion. Mr. Clarke stated the Historic Commission would have to claim the historic value. Mr. Figler asked what Mr. Clarke would like to achieve

with this proposal. Mr. Clarke stated would like to make the park a better park.

- Mr. Stern asked if they would be extending the current Nahanton Park Working Group's current work. Mr. Tucker the chairman of the current working group suggested representatives from the Conservators and neighbors are included to add specific details to the proposal. Mr. Tucker mentioned the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the tool shed is below grade and will create a significant drop-off, will this be filled in. Commissioner DeRubeis will speak with Public Building Commissioner Morse.
- Mr. Clarke would like to be present when the tool shed is cleaned out. The archivist is interested but agrees the items are most likely trash. Ms. Charkoudian agrees the items should be looked at. Commissioner DeRubeis stated if the items are to be sifted through piece by piece the Commission may be responsible financially for the clean out and the project would also have to go out to bid. Ms. Charkoudian did not want the project to be slowed down, having the archivist present at the clean out would be sufficient.

Mr. Clarke revised the original motion to: *Request the existing Nahanton Park Working Group explore the historic value of the Alms House site. Move to incorporate the site into Nahanton Park with trails, signage and a kiosk and coordinate with the Public Buildings Department to be present during the demolition. Ms. Charkoudian seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-1-1*

- Mr. Clarke recommended the name of Nahanton Park be changed to the Alms House Park. The group requested the working group discuss the name change of the park.

#### 4. Committee Reports

- Community Preservation Committee – No report
- Farm Commission – No report
- Cabot Redesign Committee – Commissioner DeRubeis stated he has been attending the meetings, nothing formal is happening at this time. Mr. Stern asked if there were any changes to the impact of the park would the group be required to return to the Commission. Commissioner DeRubeis replied yes any changes impacting the park would be presented to the Commission.
- Commonwealth Golf Course – No report
- Off-Leash Area Working Group (OLAWG) – The group is looking for an area for a small dog off-leash area. The Commissioner will also revisit citation powers for the Off-Leash Specialist.
- Crystal Lake Working Group (CLWG) – Meeting in February to finish up the RFP for Lake Management.
- Filed Permit- Mr. Figler asked for input on the newly revised field permit policy. Mr. Stern had some corrections and questions regarding the tiers. Mr. Figler requested Mr. Stern forward the questions to him via email and he will discuss with the Permit Manager Mr. Cahill.

5. New Business

- Commission Elections

*Mr. Stern made the motion nominating Mr. Magni as Commission Chairman. Mr. Clarke seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.*

*Mr. Neville made the motion nominating Mr. Tucker Commission Vice-Chairman. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0*

Meeting adjourned 8:24 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

*Robin McLaughlin*