



Newton Parks & Recreation Commission

Meeting Minutes

Room 204 – City Hall

7:00 p.m. –Monday, September 19, 2016

Attending: Chairman Magni, Vice-Chairman Tucker, Commissioner Bob DeRubeis, Peter Johnson, Byron Dunker, Peter Kastner, Don Fishman, Jack Neville, Michael Clark

Meeting began 7:00 pm

1. Meeting Minutes – June 20, 2016

- Approved 8-0

2. Commissioner's Reports on Programs, Forestry and Maintenance

- This was a busy summer but a good summer. Summer camp numbers were up. Aquatics was very busy with the heat, though it was tough on the lifeguards, they really did not have any breaks from the heat. There was some green water spotted a Crystal Lake last week and we are keeping an eye on it.
- September 18 the *BBQ, Badges and Basket Ball* event at Newton Centre Playground was a great event.
- Kennard Park Sculpture Trail and speaker series is doing well.
- Projects:
 - *Newton Highlands Playground* – Low bid is 2.6 million which allows everything to be done except the building and sod will be used instead of seed. The area will be closed for approximately 1.5 years.
 - *Waban Hill Reservoir* third public meeting will take place September 22.
 - *Farlow Park*- Bridge and pond- to meet with Keith Jones and Jay Walters.
 - *McGrath Tennis Courts and off-leash area*- The off-leash area and the four courts will be renovated. The courts will be converted to three courts to allow more space. The Executive Office has asked for an inventory of tennis courts and justification for having 68 courts. Pickelball is becoming a popular activity and uses some of the tennis courts.
 - *The Auburndale Cove* had a lot of improvements completed over the summer: New Playground structure, tennis courts were renovated, parking lot was re-paved and a cluster of exercise equipment was installed.
 - *Horace Mann Elementary* – new playground installed. Next on the list for playground installations are Memorial Spaulding, Underwood and Aquinas. Kevin Kelly and the Carpenters Union

have been a huge help with the playground builds supplying volunteers.

- *The Greenway Ribbon Cutting* took place last week. Mr. Clarke asked if the bridge has been discussed with Needham. Commissioner DeRubeis replied the discussion is on hold due to structural concerns.
- *Newton Corner Beautification*- the area will receive additional planters and the BoxArt that was damaged by an auto accident will be replaced. There is discussion of adding a QR code to the BoxArt to include audio of the area history.
- *Forestry*- 1,000 hazardous trees have been taken down and 2,000 stumps are scheduled to be removed.

3. Committee Reports

- *Community Preservation Committee –no report*
- *Farm Commission* – Mr. Kastner mentioned a celebration scheduled in a couple of weeks.
- *Cabot Redesign Committee* – Mr. Valcarce, Public Buildings sent a letter to the Commissioner explaining the roundabout has been removed from the Cabot Design Plans which has less of an asphalt impact on park land.
- *Commonwealth Golf Course* – Mr. Neville reports the Golf Course is doing well. Chairman Magni asked if there is a water ban. The Course has a well system in place. Commissioner DeRubeis reports the information he received states the Quabbin Reservoir is in good shape. The department is investigating a Weathermatic system for the fields which allows better control of the irrigation system.
- *Off-Leash Area Working Group (OLAWG)*- Meeting in October
- *Crystal Lake Working Group (CLWG)* – Larry Beals has submitted a proposal to tier Levingston Cove. Crystal Lake Conservancy is having a Vision 20/20 meeting to discuss a new bathhouse at Crystal Lake. The bath house is not a priority; Newton Centre Hut is a priority.
- *Nahanton Park Committee*- Vice-Chairman Tucker stated the committee has split the work to be done into two phases:
 - Phase 1 would be focused on stabilization
 - Phase 2 would focus on the historic information
 - Phase 2 would be done when phase 1 is complete. Mr. Tucker suggested the group endorse phase 1 so the work can be done as soon as possible.
 - Chairman Magni asked if the mess left by DPW this summer had been cleaned up. Mr. Tucker stated some debris has been left behind. The Commissioner will speak with DPW Commissioner McGonagle.
 - Mr. Tucker wants this issue on the record.
 - Mr. Clarke commented the Alms House artifacts have not been discussed. The artifacts need to be discussed to inform people of what was there and the cultural history of Newton.

- Mr. Tucker stated the group has discussed the artifacts and agreed something could be done but phase 1 should be completed first.
- Chairman Magni stated if Phase 1 will lay the foundation. Mr. Tucker agreed. Mr. Clarke stated both phases should be done at the same time. Chairman Magni stated it is obvious the committee does not agree. Mr. Tucker commented the committee is not disregarding Mr. Clarke but the basic foundation needs to be done.
- Ms. Carol Schein, P & R Open Space Coordinator stated the responsibility is to vegetate the bare areas, add a guardrail for safety and remove the two areas of invasive plants. Chairman Magni asked if this is a department issue. Commissioner DeRubeis replied yes but wanted the Commission notified of the plan.
- Ian Reed, Friends of Nahanton Park commented he is appreciative of work being done but is concerned of money being spent on a guardrail for the road. Mr. Fenstemacher commented it is important not to have any parking at the top of the road. Duane Hillis stated he is against the guardrail and would not want kiosks in the area.
- Ms. Schein reviewed the scope of work for Phase 1:
 - 4" loam spread over the road (no asphalt)
 - Hydro seed
 - Hydro seed the slope
 - Remove the invasive plants and hydro seed
 - Grade the area
 - Add a natural low wood guardrail, the same that is already in the park

*Mr. Kastner made the motion to approve phase 1 scope of work as presented.
Mr. Tucker seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-1.*

- Mr. Clarke commented the committee needs a more comprehensive plan to recognize the cultural history of Newton.

4. New Business

- Mr. Johnson asked the status of the West Newton Farmers Market, the attendance seems to be down from last year. Commissioner DeRubeis stated the market is doing well; the issue is there are more farmers markets in the area than there used to be.

Meeting adjourned 8:14 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Robin McLaughlin