



Setti D. Warren
Mayor

Newton Parks & Recreation Commission

Special Meeting Minutes

Room 204 – City Hall

7:00 p.m. –Monday, June 29, 2015

Attending: Chairman Arthur Magni, Vice-Chairman Richard Tucker, Commissioner Bob DeRubeis, Bethel Charkoudian, Byron Dunker, Andy Stern, Peter Kastner, Jack Neville, Pat Palmer

Meeting began 7:00 pm

7:00pm:

1. Meeting Minutes - June 15, 2015 – approved 7-0 (Stern not present)

2. Kennard Park – Art Show- Public Hearing- Vote Required

- Carolyn Kraft, Friends of Kennard Park and Allison Newsome, local artist are proposing an outdoor art show in Kennard Park during the Fall of 2016. Ms. Newsome has run a similar event at Allendale Farm. Once the artists are selected by the committee, a website would be designed for the public to watch the artists design and create the artwork for the art show. This would be a temporary art show the pieces would not remain the park permanently. Ms. Kraft appeared before the Commission on May 18, 2015 for an informational meeting. Notification was sent to the abutters for a chance to comment or ask question regarding this event. There were no comments or questions from the abutters regarding the event.
- Mr. Kastner asked how the Friends of Kennard Park would use the money raised at the event. Ms. Kraft stated the money would be used to improve the park, such as installing a new sign, or repairing the stone wall. The event is an opportunity to bring awareness and educate others about Kennard Park.
- Mr. Tucker commented this is an opportunity of coordination between the Friends of Kennard Park and the Parks & Recreation Department. Commissioner DeRubeis stated the cooperation has already been established between the department and the Friends group.
- Ms. Kraft thanked the Commission for holding the special meeting, timing is important in contacting artists for the art show.

Mr. Tucker made the motion to accept the proposal as presented with the agreement that the Commission will review and approve the sketches of art work. Mr. Neville seconded the motion. Motion passed 8-0.



Robert J. DeRubeis
Commissioner

7:30pm

3. Newton Highlands Project Update – Informational Public Hearing - No Vote required

1. Gene Bolinger and Cheri Ruane of Weston & Sampson presented an update of the Newton Highlands Playground Rehabilitation CPA funded Project. This final design phase follows the 2008 Master Plan. (see attached)
2. Work completed to date during this phase:
 - Field Work
 - Public Meeting
 - Design development
 - Advancing on permitting
3. Upgrades to be done:
 - Grading and drainage of field
 - Formalize pathways in wooded area and around perimeter of the field and to connect the different areas
 - Signage
 - Ms. Ruane reviewed Playground plan
4. Questions & Comments:
 - How close, to the abutters, will the trails be in the wooded area?
 - ✓ The trails will be closer to the field due to cost and accessibility
 - Mr. Tucker: Will there be bleacher seating?
 - ✓ Yes ~ 100-140 bleacher seats
 - Mr. Palmer: question design of little league field. Mr. Bolinger replied the little league field is 210' all around.
 - Mr. Tucker: In favor of the plan, asked if there was any concern about safety of kids in the wooded area. Mr. Bolinger replied safety is an item to be discussed, to his knowledge, over the past few years there have been no reported incidents. Inviting people to use the park creates more security. Mr. Kastner suggested requesting Police reports for the area or any other area with a proposal.
 - Abutter: this was a wonderful presentation. The wooded area is an untouched areas heavily wooded with bugs, etc. Not many people will use the paths.
 - Abutter: There is a lot of poison ivy on Dedham Street. Agrees the formalized paths are not a good idea, keep the wooded area in its natural state.
 - Mr. Kastner: What is a seat wall? Mr. Bollinger replied the seat wall is a stonewall, for sitting. Mr. Kastner suggested adding a back to the

wall, the backing may be a good option for seniors. Mr. Bolinger replied there will also be benches though-out the park.

- Alderman Crossley: Had the pleasure of previously working with Weston & Sampson and is enthusiastic about this plan. Alderman Crossley is concerned about the capacity in the culvert the plan needs to tie back into the culvert. Has there been discussion of collecting water for watering the grass. Mr. Bolinger stated the idea has been discussed. Alderman Crossley stated the City does not have a phosphorus removal plan to improve water quality, but a plan is coming using water without phosphorus is a great idea.
- Abutter: Is the Upland Ave extension being graded to change the width? Mr. Bolinger stated the money for the master plan is for the park land proper but they are coordinating with the Engineering and Public Works departments to upgrade the street.
- Abutter: 56 Washington Street ramp to Sunoco gas station is higher than the field
- Abutter: what is the timeframe on the upgrade? Mr. Bolinger stated it is dependent on funding. Commissioner DeRubeis stated three years is being optimistic
- Abutter: is there a plan to restore the water fountains. Commissioner DeRubeis stated it depends on the location of the water lines.
- Mr. Neville: asked the purpose of the perimeter pathway and the width of the pathway. Mr. Bolinger stated the pathway will be 5' to 6' wide, connect the facilities and meet ADA regulations. Mr. Neville suggested the asphalt pathway be 8' to 10' wide like a golf course, when maintenance vehicles travel on the path you will get breakage on the edges of the path.
- Mr. Palmer asked if artificial turf is an option. Commissioner DeRubeis stated the CPC will not fund artificial turf.

5. Other items

- **Cabot School renovation sub-committee** meeting is Monday July 6th at 10 am. Mr. Stern commented the Commission should be proactive, should be quid pro quo
- Chairman Magni stated there were some off sets provided in the last public meeting presentation.
- Mr. Neville stated the plan is taking more land than you think; the Commission needs to do the right thing.
- Ms. Charkoudian stated we should not have to give up park land the Commissions job is to keep park land.
- Mr. Tucker stated he sat through the Angier School presentation and never would have thought it would like it does now.

- **Nahanton Park** – Mr. Tucker has contacted the Mass Historical Society (MHS) in regards to the application submitted for landmark status of the tool shed. The MHS will take into account the owner’s opinion regarding the landmark status. Mr. Kastner suggested a letter be written to MHS. Chairman Magni reminded the group this topic was not on the agenda for discussion. No action taken on this item.
- **Emerson Playground** – Mr. Neville thanked Commissioner DeRubeis and Carol Schein for the refinished basketball courts at Emerson Playground. Commissioner DeRubeis thanked Mr. Neville and stated this was a combined effort with the neighborhood.

Meeting adjourned 9:00pm

Respectfully Submitted

Robin McLaughlin



**NEWTON HIGHLANDS PLAYGROUND
 PREFERRED SCHEME**