



Setti D. Warren  
Mayor

**Newton Parks & Recreation Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**City Hall - Room 209**  
**7:00 p.m. –Monday, February 24, 2014**



Robert J. DeRubeis  
Commissioner

**Attending:** Arthur Magni, Chairman, Commissioner Robert DeRubeis, Peter Johnson, Bethel Bilezikian Charkoudian, Byron Dunker, Andrew Stern, Michael Clarke, Peter Kastner, Robin McLaughlin, Secretary

*Meeting began at 7:01 pm*

**1. Meeting Minutes**

- January 27, 2014 - Approved 7-0

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

- February Vacation Camps-well attended
- Budget Process- Additional \$200,000 in R-M Public Property, \$100,000 in Forestry for Tree Planting
- The letter from Chairman Magni to the Law Dept. regarding review of the draft waterways rules & regulations was sent.
- Wednesday, February 12th-unveiled the Turf Program to leagues, Athletic Director's – presented a Power point presentation showing the fields that will be part of the program and when they will be taken out of play.
- Wednesday, January 29th-on-line Camp Registrations-(see attachment)
- Thursday, March 6th-Farmers Market relocation meeting (Friday market only) Potential site is Ed. Center-Saturday 10AM to 2PM
- Kennard Park discussions -March 7th-Carolyn Kraft, Jennifer Steele, Josh Morse, Carol Schein, Carol Stapleton
- Crystal Lake Working Group Meeting, March 11
- Crescent St. Re-use committee meeting- Tues, 7pm, Room 222
- Forestry has been on stand-by for snow storms, this limits the number of tree removals they are able to do.
- Maintenance has been very busy with the snow.

**3. Newton Centre Rally- Larry Koplan, Anna Kolodner- Christians & Jews Unite for Israel**

- Laurence D. Koplan, of 1131 Commonwealth Ave, and Ana Kolodner both representatives of the non-profit organization Christians and Jews Unite for Israel, Inc. (CJUI) request the use of Newton Centre Green on Sunday, June 1, 2014 to hold its annual Jerusalem Day Festival. CJUI is planning on having games, contests, face painting, dancing and singing to Israeli music. CJUI will also invite several speakers to attend the event.
- Ms. Kolodner stated the event has previously been held in Brookline, and now they are looking for a larger space. The event is a celebratory, low key fair, multi-cultural, multi-denomination and multi-generational festival. The intent is to bring the community together.
- Mr. Clarke asked how many people are anticipated to attend. Ms. Kolodner stated maybe 500 people. Commissioner DeRubeis responded according to the Special Permit policy this event would be considered a medium impact event.
- Mr. Kastner inquired if the group has coordinated with the police regarding the march to city hall. Ms. Kolodner replied yes.
- Ms. Kolodner asked if food vendors would be allowed to participate in the event. Commissioner DeRubeis stated the group would have to contact the Health Department.
- Mr. Koplan stated the group is sensitive to the merchants and neighbors and would like to come back next year. Mr. Dunker commented the Newton Highlands merchants did not like the competition of vendors at other events, and recommended CJUI reach out to the merchants around the Newton Centre Green. Commissioner DeRubeis suggested the group

contact the Director of Cultural Affairs, Linda Plaut. Ms. Plaut holds events in this area and would be a great resource.

*Mr. Johnson made the motion to move the proposal to a public hearing. Mr. Clarke seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.*

- Mr. Stern commented if the message is upbeat, the event would be ok, if the message is anti any other group there may be an issue. Mr. Kastner commented the Commission has to look at the group as any other group applying for a permit, unless there is strong evidence otherwise. Chairman Magni stated there is nothing in the Commissions by-laws that prohibits the group from submitting an application. Mr. Stern asked if the Commission should create a policy distinguishing between events for political views and events for awareness. Mr. Clarke commented the public hearing may bring out the issues if there are any.

#### **4. New Business**

##### **✓ Crescent Street Property**

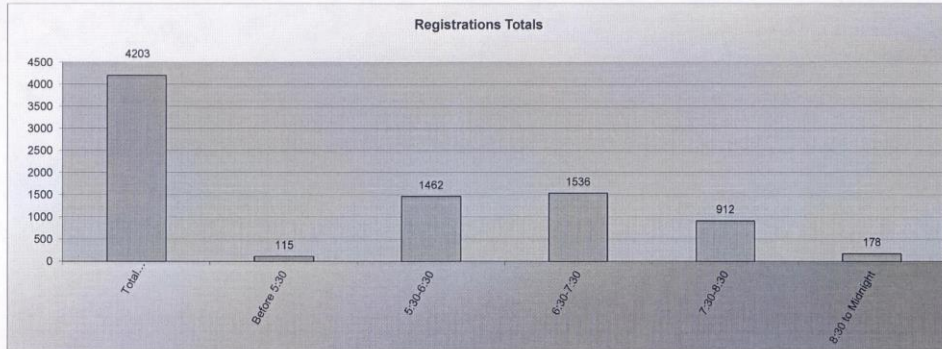
- Mr. Stern requested a discussion on Crescent Street re-use and the letter (attached) submitted to the Board of Aldermen Real Property Re-use Committee regarding the property at 70 Crescent Street.
- Commissioner DeRubeis commented the Real Property Re-use committee would like to make a decision on this property, possibly tomorrow night. The Chairperson of the Committee asked for the department's priorities, hence the letter. Commissioner DeRubeis met with the neighborhood group and explained the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) process along with the CPC Program Manager, Alice Ingerson. Commissioner DeRubeis explained his concern regarding the project and property sitting in CPC for a long time, where a developer may push the project through quicker.
- Mr. Stern stated this is a unique situation, opportunities for open space are rare and the Commission voted to keep the property open space. Mr. Stern asked how Waban Hill gets priority over Auburndale where there is hardly any open space. Is there a flow chart of funding?
- Chairman Magni asked who makes the priorities. Commissioner DeRubeis responded the CPC. Mr. Clarke stated the Commissioners letter listed the department's priorities; the Commission needs to rank their priorities.
- Mr. Stern commented there are concerns about mitigation on the property, but if you look at Millennium Park in West Roxbury, that area was probably toxic and now it is a beautiful open space.
- Mr. Kastner stated the idea here is to save money and find space for housing. Nobody on the committee (JAPG) could advocate for open space. The Crescent Street neighborhood is the most congested in the city. The Planning Dept. report is disingenuous the group never suggested open space as an option.
- Mr. Stern asked if the land with the buildings is under the jurisdiction of the Commission. Commissioner DeRubeis replied no, the buildings were handed to the department as an operation center.
- Commissioner DeRubeis stated his letter proposes housing with parameters for additional open space. The question of how many housing units would be acceptable did come up at the Re-use meeting. Mr. Stern stated a developer would need enough units to make it worth it for them.
- Chairman Magni asked the members what the goal is of the conversation.
- Mr. Stern replied this is a political issue and the reuse committee may believe the Commission agrees with Commissioner DeRubeis' letter but the Commission voted to keep the area open space.
- Mr. Clarke suggested taking the departments list and the CPC list and prioritizes the lists as a Commission. Mr. Stern stated that would be a good exercise. Mr. Clarke state the CPC would want to know.

- Mr. Stern stated the neighbors should be able to make the choice. Commissioner DeRubeis stated his concern that over time if there is no movement on the project the space would become a blighted area.
- Mr. Kastner stated there needs to be a balance between housing and open space. Until we see a proposal for the area we should not allow city to relocate the playground.
- Chairman Magni asked for closing thoughts and/or action items for the Reuse Committee meeting. The members present agreed Commission members should attend the Reuse Committee meeting to remind them the Commission voted to keep the area open space and the playground will not be released until the Commission sees a unified plan for the area.
- ✓ Mr. Clarke commented he has been collecting historic pictures of the Parks & Recreation Commission and suggested if there is a light agenda in the near future the Commission may want to view the collection
- ✓ Mr. Stern stated the swim season will be here soon and the Swim at Your Own Risk issue needs to be addressed. Until the Alderman update the ordinance there is nothing that will change. Ms. Charkoudian asked what the point is of the Commission, if the decisions made, do not change anything. Commissioner DeRubeis stated the Commission gave advice to the Aldermen on the changes required to the ordinance. Chairman Magni stated it is a system of checks and balance.

Meeting Adjourned 9:00 pm  
Respectfully Submitted,  
Robin McLaughlin

Camp- On-line registration statistics

Total Registrations Before 5:30 5:30-6:30 6:30-7:30 7:30-8:30 8:30 to Midnight  
 Registrations 4203 115 1462 1536 912 178



Registration Totals by Camp

Camp	# Registrations	Fees	Amount Paid	Discounts	Adjustments	Amount Due	% Collected
Camp Echo Bridge	751	\$ 127,035.00	\$ 76,845.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,190.00	60.49%
Camp Echo Bridge CIT	20	\$ 4,950.00	\$ 2,415.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,535.00	48.79%
Albemarle Acres CIT	30	\$ 7,200.00	\$ 5,180.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,020.00	71.94%
Centre Acres CIT	24	\$ 2,640.00	\$ 2,035.00	\$ -	\$ 45.00	\$ 560.00	77.08%
Camp Brunen Brooke CIT	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.00%
Albemarle Acres	1009	\$ 183,935.00	\$ 82,095.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 101,840.00	44.63%
Auburndale Station	204	\$ 46,480.00	\$ 28,739.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 17,741.00	61.83%
Centre Acres	390	\$ 76,335.00	\$ 46,222.45	\$ -	\$ 17.55	\$ 30,095.00	60.55%
Camp Brunen Brooke	334	\$ 54,480.00	\$ 31,190.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 23,290.00	57.25%
T-Ville Trails	607	\$ 113,320.00	\$ 66,203.50	\$ -	\$ 22.50	\$ 47,094.00	58.42%
Echo Explorers 1	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.00%
Echo Explorers 2	8	\$ 2,600.00	\$ 2,305.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 295.00	88.65%
Acres in the Falls	258	\$ 44,870.00	\$ 21,080.00	\$ -	\$ 20.00	\$ 23,770.00	46.98%
Next Stop Auburndale Station	116	\$ 23,655.00	\$ 11,040.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12,615.00	46.67%
Outdoor Adventure	72	\$ 17,999.00	\$ 17,849.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 150.00	99.17%
Kid's Korner	117	\$ 33,440.00	\$ 18,565.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 14,875.00	55.52%
Thundercat Sports	109	\$ 21,875.00	\$ 18,971.00	\$ 2,012.50	\$ -	\$ 991.50	86.72%
Summer Vacation Burr Park	50	\$ 11,440.00	\$ 9,360.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,080.00	81.82%
Camp Extreme	122	\$ 34,040.00	\$ 31,575.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,465.00	92.76%
Summer Vacation Emerson	81	\$ 16,560.00	\$ 15,700.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 860.00	94.81%
Summer Vacation Hut	153	\$ 26,817.50	\$ 26,817.50	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	100.00%
		\$ 849,671.50	\$ 514,187.45	\$ 2,012.50	\$ 105.05	\$ 333,366.50	



SETTI D. WARREN  
MAYOR

## NEWTON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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parks@newtonma.gov



NEWTON  
Parks & Recreation  
ROBERT J. DERUBEIS  
COMMISSIONER

February 18, 2014

Alderman Susan Albright, Chairman  
Real Property Reuse  
Newton Board of Aldermen  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459

Dear Alderman Albright,

On Tuesday, February 11, 2014, I met with Elaine Rush Arruda and Shule Askan, proponents of the Crescent Street Open Space proposal. Also present at this meeting were Alice Ingerson, Community Preservation Program Manager, Carol Schein, Open Space Coordinator and Carol Stapleton, Recreation Program Manager. Ms. Ingerson presented an overview of the CPC process as well as the history of the Curve Street neighborhood. Ms. Ingerson referenced the Biddy Mason Park in Los Angeles, California as a wonderful example of incorporating the historical perspective into a park setting.

The proponents' proposal consists of community gardens, an extension of the current Reverend Ford Playground, to include equipment for school age children, picnic tables and benches and increasing the parking lot of the Myrtle Baptist Church. The approximate area that this would encompass is 97,000 square feet or 2.2 acres.

As the Parks & Recreation Commissioner, I have been a proponent of open space and continue to work on the improvement of our parks and playgrounds. While I commend the proposers on their perseverance and the desire to develop open space, I cannot endorse the proposal as presented.

The following are concerns that hamper the viability of the project:

**Priority:** It would not be high on the current list of departmental projects. The following would take precedence;

- Newton Highlands Playground –CPC proposal stage
- Farlow Park-CPC proposal stage
- Waban Hill Reservoir-CPC pre-proposal stage
- Crystal Lake Bathhouse-CIP
- Gath Pool-CIP

**Time:** Newton Highlands was identified as our top priority in 2005 through a citywide inventory and assessment. In 2007, a master plan of the site was developed. This fall, we presented a CPC proposal for construction documents. It is apparent from this timeline, that even projects that occupy a place of prominence are faced with a substantial period of time from inception to completion.

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MEMBERS

WARD 1 – BETHEL CHARKOUDIAN  
WARD 2 – ARTHUR MAGNI, CHAIRMAN  
WARD 3 – PETER JOHNSON

WARD 4 – FRANCIS J. RICE  
WARD 5 – BYRON DUNKER  
WARD 6 – ANDREW STERN

WARD 7 – RICHARD TUCKER, VICE-CHAIR  
WARD 8 – DONALD FISHMAN  
SECRETARY-ROBIN MCLAUGHLIN

ALTERNATES: MICHAEL CLARKE, PETER KASTNER, JACK NEVILLE,

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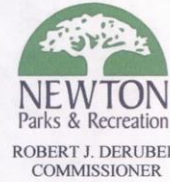




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**Cost:** Turning the entire site into open space requires additional funding to design, construct and maintain on an ongoing basis. As a department we are working toward improving the current inventory, any additional acreage increases the burden.

**Environmental Assessment & Mitigation:** This has been an operations center for the past 40 plus years with a number of different materials on site. Mitigation of this site is a wildcard cost that has to be taken into account.

While I believe that a green space equal to that of the current Reverend Ford Playground should be larger and more easily accessed, I feel that the most prudent avenue to reach that desired goal is to have a developer undertake the project as part of development of the entire site. The Open Space proposal could be incorporated as part of the entire proposal.

By placing it in the hands of the developer, the project will take on a more aggressive timeline and not allow the land to remain stagnant for a number of years. As part of the plan, the developer should incorporate a maintenance endowment so that we can make sure that the open space gets maintained properly. The cost of mitigation would also be a cost that would have to be incurred by the developer.

I would recommend that there be a limitation on the housing units with the intent of development to be the driver on funding the open space. By limiting the housing units and expanding the current open space at the site we have what I feel would be a tenable situation for all parties involved.

Sincerely,

Robert J. DeRubeis

cc: Robert Rooney, Chief Operating Officer  
Candace Havens, Director of Planning and Development  
Alexandra Ananth, Chief Planner for Current Planning  
Carol Schein, Open Space Coordinator  
Carol Stapleton, Recreation Manager

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