



Setti D. Warren
Mayor

Newton Parks & Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes
City Hall - Room 209
7:00 p.m. –Monday, November 18, 2013



Robert J. DeRubeis
Commissioner

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

Meeting began at 7:06 pm

1. Meeting Minutes

- October 21, 2013- Approved 7-0

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

- Craft Fair scheduled November 23 & 24
- Preparing for vacation camps and summer camp. The Camp Fair is scheduled January 26 at NNHS. There will be no registrations at the camp fair this year. Registration will open the day after the camp fair.
- The rail trail groundbreaking was held last month. There is discussion of putting an antique rail car in the location; the concern is the rail car will become a late night hangout and a target for vandalism.
- Field maintenance management plan discussions continue. Possibly 5 fields per season will be closed for maintenance. Currently, the maintenance division is prepping ball fields.
- Crystal Lake Working Group continues to meet. Jennifer Steel, the new Sr. Environmental Planner is being introduced to the group and will be attending the meetings. There are continued discussion on rain gardens and bio islands.
- Farlow Park pond and bridge proposal and the Newton Highlands Project have been submitted to the CPC. Thank-you Carol Schein for all the work put into the proposals.
- There is a new process for installation of neighborhood outdoor skating rinks. A permit will be required to be submitted to Parks & Recreation. Insurance is not required from the neighborhood representatives; they will be covered by the Recreational Use Statue.
- Forestry has submitted a 5-year tree planting plan and has completed a windshield inventory of trees that need to be taken down. There are a total of 800 trees that need to come down. Ms. Charkoudian asked if there has been any conversation with the gas company and the damage to the trees from the gas leaks. Commissioner DeRubeis stated there has been some discussion with the gas company.

3. Crescent St-Playground- Re-Use

- Commissioner DeRubeis introduced Alexandra Ananth of the Planning Department. Ms. Ananth reviewed the re-use process for the Crescent Street location which began when the P & R Administrative offices relocated to 124 Vernon Street in 2011 and reviewed the recommendations from the Joint Advisory Planning Group (JAPG) final report dated September 2012. Ms. Ananth is attending tonight's meeting to ask the Commission for permission to relocate the Reverend Ford Playground on the property, accessing the playground is a current issue. The Playground would keep the same square footage and the Commission would retain control of the playground.
- Mr. Clarke asked if it has been determined who owns the property. Ms. Ananth stated Parks and Recreation Department owns the property. Commissioner DeRubeis stated when the Administrative office relocated to 124 Vernon Street the Executive Office asked if the P & R

Department had any use for the building as an operation center, The department did not have use of the property as an operation center, that is when the Commissioner surplused the garage and building at 70 Crescent Street, the playground has not been surplused. Mr. Clarke asked if the P & R Commission needs to surplus the land or is it sufficient that the department has surplused the land. Commissioner DeRubeis stated he spoke with the Law Department and to his understanding it is sufficient the department has surplused the land because it was not a park, playground or playing field. Ms. Ananth agreed with Commissioner DeRubeis. The maintenance Division is still located in the maintenance building and will eventually be relocated to Elliot Street DPW yard, the Forestry Division is already at Elliot St.

- Chairman Magni clarified the Commission is not making any decisions on the 62k square feet of property. Tonight the Commission is to make a decision on the playground and to authorize the relocation of the playground. Ms. Ananth agreed and stated the relocation would allow additional options, regarding development and access.
- Ms. Charkoudian commented the JAPG report recommends any development would not increase the current amount of traffic, and asked how that is possible. Mr. Kastner stated currently there are city vehicles and trucks going in and out of the property. Ms. Charkoudian asked how many units are recommended. Ms. Ananth estimated between 8 and 12 there is a two car per housing unit limit. Mr. Neville asked if 5,000 sq. ft. is required per unit and Ms. Ananth said yes but with attached dwellings the number is changed. Mr. Neville asked if there are attached units in the neighborhood, Ms. Ananth replied yes. Mr. Neville asked if additional square footage could be given towards the playground.
- Mr. Kastner stated there are regulations the developer would have to follow and could improve the playground. The recommendation given to the city by the Comprehensive Planning Committee, in regards to open space, is to create pocket parks in the neighborhoods. We should not surplus the playground until we can see the final plan.
- Chairman Magni asked if the Commission would eventually have to surplus the playground. Ms. Ananth stated the other option is to leave it as it is. Commissioner commented the term "surplus" is a bit confusing. The ownership of the playground is with Parks & Recreation and will remain with Parks & Recreation even if the playground is included in the parcel plan and relocated. Commissioner DeRubeis has been receiving e-mails from the neighbors in support of keeping the property as open space. Alderman Albright the Chairperson of the re-use committee requested the Commissioner ask the Commission for an opinion on use of the property. Chairman Magni also spoke with Alderman Albright and she asked if the Commission would like to keep the land open space, she would like a plan/vision on what will be done with the area. Commissioner DeRubeis has had requests for passive recreation at the site.
- Chairman Magni asked for one person to speak and share the comments of the neighbors in attendance.
- Ms. Shule Aksan of 98 Crescent Street made the following comments for the neighbors of 70 Crescent Street:
 - The neighbors have only recently been involved in the surplus process; somehow the flow of information did not get to the neighbors at the beginning of the process.
 - The neighbors are hearing different numbers of the units that could be built, the number has been as much as 20 and the community cannot absorb that number of units. This is a residential neighborhood and there have been lots of change and additions of units on Curve Street and Auburn Street.
 - The neighbors want open space, they need someplace to go. If the property is sold the City cannot get it back.
 - The neighbors have started a petition and are collecting signatures to keep the entire property open space. Four of the JAPG members live in the neighborhood and have signed the petition.
- Mr. Kastner commented the responsibility for the 67k square foot piece of land was lost when the area was surplused and recommends the Commission not surplus the playground.

Ms. Shula asked if the Aldermen put the process on hold maybe the Commission could reclaim the property. Mr. Kastner commented the Commission would only retain the property if the Aldermen decide to keep the land as open space.

- Commissioner DeRubeis stated Alderman Albright has requested he attend the January 2014 Re-use Committee meeting with some estimated costs to keep the area open space. Mr. Clarke asked if the neighbors are advocating for passive recreation, active recreation will create a traffic concern. Commissioner DeRubeis commented an issue the department has currently, is there are not enough playing fields; a soccer field is about 45k square feet.
- Chairman Magni commented the Board of Aldermen will want to know where the money is coming from; there is no money in the budget to reclaim the area as open space. Mr. Clarke commented if the area is turned into open space you could get money from the leagues. Mr. Neville stated the city should come up with the money and not depend on the leagues.
- Ms. Charkoudian stated the Commissions commitment should be to open space and park land. Once we lose the land it is gone forever.
- Mr. Clarke stated the Commission should stay open minded, housing brings in money. Mr. Clarke lives in a townhouse and it is fine. He is not opposed to listening to other options but without money the area will stay as it is.
- Chairman Magni asked for two motions:
 1. Surplus 35k square foot Revered Ford Playground?
 2. Recommendation for 67k square foot parcel

Mr. Clarke made the motion not to surplus the Reverend Ford Playground. Mr. Neville seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Ms. Charkoudian made the motion to maintain the entire area as open space. Mr. Neville 2nd the motion. Motion passed 3-2-2.

4. Ice Skating Rules & Regulations

- Commissioner DeRubeis presented the 2013-2014 outdoor ice skating rules and regulations (attached). There were no changes from last season. Ms. Charkoudian commented she used to skate on Bulloughs pond, and she has seen neighbors recently shovel out a corner on Bulloughs Pond to ice skate. Commissioner DeRubeis stated the Bulloughs Pond Association will be presenting a proposal to the Commission in December to restore the small pavilion located at Bulloughs Pond.

Mr. Johnson made the motion to accept the outdoor ice skating rules as presented. Mr. Kastner seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

5. Camp Scholarship Report

- Commissioner DeRubeis presented the 2013 Camp Scholarships (attached). Camp fees have not gone up in several years. There have been issues with keeping staff due to low wages. At a meeting with the Mayor the P & R Staff requested an OK to raise the rates to help with retaining staff. Mr. Clarke suggested the Commission make a motion to endorse the raise in fees.

Mr. Clarke made the motion to recommend raising camp fees to make seasonal wages more competitive. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

6. Waban Hill Reservoir

- Mr. Clarke attended the joint meeting of the CPC and Planning Department on Waban Hill. The meeting was neighborhood driven and the neighbors are recommending the land remain open space. Mr. Clarke suggested at the CPC meeting that, if the property were kept as open space, it would particularly benefit the local area, and that those living in the area could be asked to provide an endowment for maintaining the property.
- Mr. Dunker asked if the land serves any purpose. Commissioner DeRubeis stated the area is a maintenance issue. Mr. Neville asked when it would become the responsibility of Parks & Recreation. Commissioner DeRubeis stated the acquisition has not occurred.

7. New Business

- Commissioner DeRubeis stated a presentation will be made during the December meeting , to Mr. Walter Bernheimer, former Ward 5 Commission member who retired last June.
- No update on Fran Rice.
- Commissioner DeRubeis reported the daffodil planting along the marathon route has been completed.
- Ms. Charkoudian is organizing a perennial plant exchange at the P & R headquarters next spring in partnership with the P & R Department. The purpose is to bring the community together. Mr. Kastner suggested involving the community gardens.

Meeting Adjourned 8:50 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Robin McLaughlin

OUTDOOR SKATING

2013 -2014

The following standards are used in determining sufficient ice thickness for safe skating:

Auburndale –	Ware’s Cove	6” Black Ice, 9” Snow Ice
Newtonville –	Bullough’s Pond	6” Black Ice, 9” Snow Ice
Newton Centre –	Crystal Lake	**6” Black Ice, 9” Snow Ice

Note: Due to the varying water depths, unevenness of freezing, and an inability to contain the skating areas, the entire Lake must be frozen in order for safe skating to occur.

**Black Ice is formed by the freezing of water without a snowcap on it; thus creating a non-porous ice that is strong in consistency. Snow Ice is formed when a snow covers, over a thin layer of black ice melts and re-freezes to form a white porous ice.

HOURS OF OPERATION

1. At the outset of the coming skating season, it is recommended that the hours of operation for Auburndale Cove, be as follows:

- Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 3:00 – 9:00 PM
- Tuesday 2:00 – 9:00 PM
- Saturday, Sunday, Holidays*, Vacations 10:00 AM – 9:00 PM

2. At the outset of the coming skating season, it is recommended that the hours of operation for Bullough’s Pond and Crystal Lake be as follows:

- Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 3:00 – Dusk
- Tuesday 2:00 – Dusk
- Saturday, Sunday, Holidays*, Vacations 10:00 AM – Dusk

3. If attendance does not warrant keeping the facility or facilities open during operation hours, it is then recommended that a cutback of program hours be instituted on an as needed basis with Managers approval.

*HOLIDAYS: Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year’s Eve, New Year’s Day, Martin Luther King Day and President’s Day. The facilities will open for regular vacation hours only if we are able to procure adequate staff for safe operation. If the facilities will be closed, notification will be made to the Public and Safety Personnel at least 24 hours in advance. Exception: All facilities will close at 5:00 PM on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year’s Eve.

Fees are no longer charged for outdoor skating as per recommendation of the City’s Law Department (2/5/92)

November 2013

To: Commissioner DeRubeis and Kathy Brearley, Principal Bookkeeper

From: Stephanie Lapham, Recreation Manager

Newton Parks and Recreation Department
Scholarship – 2013
Final Report

Money available for the summer of 2013 was \$74,161.00. The number of applicants increased from 2012 to 2013 by 11 with a total of 101 in 2013. Of the 101, 91 applicants accepted the scholarship at a total of \$57,233.00 and attended camp some going to two or more of our camps. The remaining 10 applicants did not qualify, declined or was not registered our offerings and did not attend. The amount awarded to each participant was based on need and number of weeks attending camp. Every applicant whom applied was awarded approximately 80% in scholarship per week toward their tuition. Below please note the list of camp offerings, scholarships awarded to each with the amount, and the amount of money raised by each camp for the scholarship program.

Camp	#of scholarship awarded	Amount awarded	Amount raised	Difference
Albemarle Acres	11	\$ 5,150.00	\$ 5,365.00	\$ (215.00)
Acres in the Falls/Overnight	3	\$ 1,040.00	\$ 1,245.00	\$ (205.00)
Auburndale Station	10	\$ 3,928.00	\$ 2,770.00	\$ 1,158.00
Camp Brunen Brook	10	\$ 5,673.00	\$ 2,340.00	\$ 3,333.00
Camp Echo Bridge	7	\$ 3,769.00	\$ 3,705.00	\$ 64.00
Centre Acres	27	\$16,266.00	\$ 4,290.00	\$11,976.00
CIT Albemarle	5	\$ 1,150.00	\$ 180.00	\$ 970.00
CIT Echo Bridge	5	\$ 1,900.00	\$ 190.00	\$ 710.00
Extreme/Outdoor Adventure	3	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,210.00	\$ (10.00)
Kids Korner	6	\$ 3,645.00	\$ 1,205.00	\$ 2,440.00
Next Stop/Overnight	18	\$ 9,731.00	\$ 1,355.00	\$ 8,376.00
Thundercats	0	\$ 0.00	\$ 1,085.00	\$ (1,085.00)
T-Ville Trails	4	\$ 2,804.00	\$ 2,785.00	\$ 19.00
Funtastic Summer	2	\$ 487.00	\$ 615.00	\$ (128.00)
Newton Adventure Camp	2	\$ 470.00	\$ 350.00	\$ 120.00
Vacation Camp at Burr Park	4	\$ 1,020.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 720.00
Totals	117	\$57,233.00	\$28,990.00	\$28,443.00

Please note that the money in the difference line should be awarded to the individual camps or the scholarship fund as noted. A positive number means that the amount of scholarship awarded exceeds the amount the camp made with the \$5.00 per person, therefore the dollar amount as indicated should be put into the camp account. Any amount with a negative () dollar amount means the amount raised exceeds the amount awarded for scholarship and this money should be taken from the camp account and put into the scholarship account.