



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
730 Massachusetts Ave., Arlington, MA 02476
Phone: 781-316-3000

webmaster@town.arlington.ma.us

Recreation Commission Minutes 7-10-2011

Park and Recreation Commission

Minutes

Tuesday, July 19, 2011

Approved

The Park and Recreation Commission came to order at 7:50 PM on the first floor of the Arlington Senior Center on Tuesday, July 19, 2011.

Members in attendance included: Leslie Mayer, Don Vitters, Jen Rothenberg and Jim Robillard. Also in attendance was Director of Recreation Joseph Connelly.

Members of the public included: Andrew Leonard, Alan Jones, Elizabeth Carr-Jones, Sue Doctrow, Lisa Bielefeld, Oakes Plimpton, Dave Cerrato, Paul Carroll and Bill Reilly.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Vitters motioned to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2011 meeting. Motion was seconded by Ms. Rothenberg and approved 3-0-1 with Mr. Robillard abstaining.

Open Forum – Public Comments

No comments from the public.

Robbins Farm Community Garden Proposal

Ms. Jones reviewed the request to keep the garden open year round so that the volunteers could plant different types of crops.

Ms. Jones reviewed the different types of crops that needed the garden to be functional during the late fall and winter season.

Ms. Mayer discussed the size of the garden with the group asking if the new size was appropriate. The gardeners agreed that the new size was working out very well.

Mr. Robillard and Ms. Jones discussed the membership and availability to new gardeners. Mr. Connelly said that there was still plenty of room and until he heard from the volunteer group that it was full all are welcome. Mr. Connelly stated that if the demand was greater than the amount of openings a lottery would be held.

Ms. Rothenberg discussed the educational component with the gardeners. Ms. Rothenberg suggested sending out a town wide alert.

Mr. Connelly and Mr. Jones will work together on the write-up. The group also discussed possible youth programming in the future.

Mr. Robillard motioned to approve the proposal to keep the garden open this winter and to be evaluated before next winter season, seconded by Mr. Vitters and approved 4-0.

Rain Garden Proposal for Spy Pond

Ms. Glushko of the Planning Department reviewed the proposal for the rain garden site at Spy Pond. Mr. Connelly and Ms. Mayer stated that the area chosen would not interfere with any other park activities. Mr. Vitters discussed the species of plants selected. Ms. Nish explained that the plants proposed were drought tolerant and could survive with minimal maintenance. Mr. Vitters asked that the Commission receive the final proposed plan before planting.

The Commission discussed the placement and anchoring the proposed boulders.

The Commission discussed the maintenance plan with the proponents. Ms. Glushko stated that there was no long-term maintenance plan. Ms. Glushko stated that they may do something like the adopt an island program. Mr. Connelly stated that this was concerning to him due to the maintenance issues that the park already has. Ms. Mayer stated that the Friends of Spy Pond Park already have their hands full with numerous other maintenance concerns.

Mr. Vitters pointed out the issues with the multiple different types of signs and he requested the single bollard at the boat ramp be removed.

Ms. Mayer asked Ms. Glushko for the timing of the project. Ms. Glushko stated that they would like approval to begin the project at the end of August and into early September. Ms. Mayer stated that the next Commission meeting was not until 9/13/2011 so that the Commission may take a vote on conditional approval pending the submission of a detailed planting plan and maintenance plan. Ms. Glushko stated that this information should be available by the end of August.

Mr. Vitters motioned to approve the proposal based on a detailed planting plan and long term maintenance plan being submitted to the Commission prior to construction. The motion was seconded by Ms. Rothenberg and approved 4-0.

Buck Field Light Amplification - Review of complaint received

Mr. Connelly reviewed the complaints received regarding the lights and noise at Buck Field this past season. Ms. Mayer stated that the Commission invited both youth baseball and Mr. Young to the meeting to discuss the issues. Ms. Mayer stated that Mr. Young was unable to attend the meeting but read a statement from Mr. Young to the Commissioners.

Mr. Carroll stated that youth baseball was trying to work with the abutters and is willing to do what they can to help the situation. Mr. Connelly stated that since last year a light monitor was in place and that there were no night games on Sunday. Mr. Connelly also stated that Mr. Reilly has sent the light schedule to Mr. Connelly on a weekly basis.

Mr. Connelly reviewed the three situations that occurred this year and discussed them with the Commission and Mr. Carroll.

Mr. Cerrato stated that the lights were there illegally and that he wanted a copy of the abutter notice that went out. Mr. Cerrato stated that the noise from the field was unbearable and that the quality of life since the lights went up has been horrible. Mr. Cerrato invited anyone to come stand on his deck during a game and hear the noise. Mr. Cerrato and Mr. Connelly discussed the increased time the lights made the field available for play.

Mr. Cerrato and Mr. Carroll discussed their opposing views on the subject. Mr. Connelly stated that he did not get one complaint from Mr. Cerrato this season. Mr. Connelly stated that although Mr. Cerrato does not like the players cheering it is not a rules violation.

Mr. Cerrato asked for a noise meter. Mr. Connelly suggested calling the Board of Health. Mr. Cerrato also stated that he was not alone and that other neighbors felt the same way. Mr. Connelly again stated the only complaint he received was from Mr. Young.

Ms. Rothenberg suggested that Mr. Cerrato have anyone with a complaint send their concern to Mr. Connelly for tracking

purposes. Ms. Mayer stated that the Commission and Mr. Connelly “only know what they know” and have to make decision based on the information at hand.

The Commission thanked both baseball and Mr. Cerrato for their feedback and stated that they would try to obtain the information requested by Mr. Cerrato.

Capital Improvement Project Update

Robbins Farm Slide – Mr. Leonard stated that the project was still out to bid.

Wellington Tennis Courts – Mr. Connelly stated that Mr. Leonard and he met with Heimlich and the project was moving ahead on schedule.

Thompson School Basketball Court – No report.

Thorndike OLRA – Mr. Leonard reviewed the changed incorporated into the plan from the last meeting. Mr. Leonard stated that the meeting with the Conservation Commission was in early August. Mr. Leonard and the Commission reviewed a preliminary schedule for bidding the project

Mr. Connelly and Ms. Mayer reviewed their meeting with representatives from the Capital Improvement Committee. Ms. Mayer stated that the meeting was very positive and that the initial steps have been taking to use Park and Recreation as a pilot for capital maintenance funding

Off leash Implementation (Article 36) Monthly Review

Mr. Connelly quickly reviewed the comments with the Commission.

Rink and Recreation Update

Mr. Connelly stated that the Summer recreation programs were going very well and that the ice rink was scheduled to open the second week in August.

Special Requests

August 28, 2011 – Thorndike Field – Walk for Child Rights – Commission approved use of the field for table set-up but stated they needed more information on the request for a band to play. The Commission stated that no amplification should start prior to 12 noon on a Sunday.

New Fall Adult Softball League (HUB) Buzzell – The Commission discussed this request and suggested that Mr. Connelly contact the league and offer them a few hours during the day on a Sunday for the fall. The Commission discussed this would be a trail permit for this organization.

Moving of Red Maple Tree from Private Property to Robbins Farm – The Commission discussed this request. Mr. Connelly stated that he was becoming more and more uncomfortable with these types of requests and that the system for planting donations was currently outlined in the gifting policy. The Commission agreed and asked Mr. Connelly to discuss this with the Friends of Robbins Farm.

Other Business

The Commission discussed the Spy Pond Park playground signs related to off leash dog activity. The Commission decided to at this time not change any rule or procedure regarding leashed dogs.

Mr. Connelly reviewed with the Commission the correspondence from the Spy Pond Condominium Trust. Mr. Connelly stated the request was for protective netting to stop foul balls from hitting the cars parked along Hamilton Road. The Commission discussed the request. Mr. Connelly will investigate signage possibilities with Town Counsel.

Ms. Rothenberg motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Vitters and approved 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 10:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:
Joseph Connelly, Director of Recreation