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Parks and Recreation Minutes 02/13/2001

Tuesday, February 13, 2001

The Parks and Recreation Commission meeting came to order at 7:45 PM in the Whittemore Robbins House. Commission members in attendance included Bernice Jones, Don Vitters, Joe Carabello and Mary Tegan. Also present were Superintendent of Recreation Joseph Connelly and Landscape Architect Andrew Leonard.

Also present were representatives from the Friend of Robbins Farm and Joe Hart of Arlington Little League.

Mr. Carabello asked Mr. Connelly to look into reserving parking areas for Commissioners on the evenings of meetings. Mr. Carabello went on record stating that the Park and Recreation Commission meetings are being delayed because Commissioners cannot find adequate parking.

Review of Robbins Farm Design and Estimated Project Costs

Mr. Leonard reviewed the Master Plan process and explained that the current plan was not as detail oriented as the construction design will need to be. Mr. Leonard reviewed the Master Plan hitting key elements and changes from the original plan. Some of these elements and changes included: a spray pool, hill slides, overlook, skating area and tennis courts.

The Commission discussed the placement of the tennis courts with Mr. Leonard and the FORF. Mr. Carabello expressed a concern over the suggested placement of the courts. Mrs. Jones expressed concern over the crowding of activity in the park and the loss of open space. Mrs. Tegan expressed a desire for active recreation space including tennis courts and basketball courts. Mr. Leonard addressed Mrs. Jones concerns over the amount of open space in the Master Plan. Mr. Chaput expressed the FORF desire to have courts on the site and explained that the new location would not impact the view. Mr. Chaput also stated that the FORF could contact the abutters to solicit their reaction to courts being placed in the corner of the park. Mrs. Jones expressed her interest to have the site remain unique. Mr. Leonard stated that he felt the site was unique and reviewed the archeological component, overlook and skating area.

Mr. Plimpton of the FORF asked what the FORF role would be at this point. Mr. Vitters stated that the FORF could support the Commission in their efforts to acquire funding for the project. Mr. Chaput suggested that funding might be available through historical grants.

The Commission and the FORF continued to discuss the Master Plan and ways to solicit feedback. Mr. Vitters reviewed the process from this point forward; stating that the design bids should go out during the fall of 2001 with construction starting in the spring of 2002. Mr. Vitters will put together a sequence of events. Mr. Leonard suggested that the Commission and FORF look at the path system on the Minuteman Trail to get an idea of the material that would be used at Robbins Farm. The FORF exited the meeting.

Thorndike Field Update

Mr. Leonard reviewed the current plan. Mr. Leonard stated that the original plan to raise the grade of the entire field was no longer feasible. Mr. Leonard stated the new plan was to regrade the area, bring in better topsoil and install a sub drainage system with interceptor drains that will tie up with an existing catch basin.

Mr. Leonard stated that the design of the field would include 2-full size soccer fields and 3 - youth size fields. Mr. Carabello asked if this would allow other fields around town, that are currently used as dual-purpose fields, to become single purpose fields. The Commission and Mr. Connelly discussed the use of Florence Field, North Union Field, Spy Pond Field and Pierce Field. Mr. Connelly

did state that the addition of Thorndike Field and Hills Hill Field should provide the opportunity for fields to be rested seasonally.

Mr. Leonard stated that he would like to be out to bid for construction by April of 2001 with construction beginning in the late summer. Mr. Leonard exited the meeting.

Arlington Little League's Request for Temporary Fencing at Poets Corner Field and Backstop Netting at the Three Major League Fields

Mr. Connelly stated that he would talk to DPW concerning the filling in behind third base at Poets Corner.

Mr. Hart reviewed the request and the situation that developed last year. Mr. Hart stated safety reasons for the fence including separating the soccer area from the baseball area. Mr. Hart supplied a sample of the mesh fencing via brochure. Mr. Hart stated that the request was for April 2001 and through July 4, 2001. The Commission and Mr. Hart discussed the fencing and the potential for vandalism. Mr. Hart stated that the fencing and backstop barrier would be green. Mr. Hart stated the reason for the backstop screen was to remove parents from standing behind the backstop. Mrs. Tegan suggested that the reasons for both requests made sense. Mr. Carabello motioned to approve Arlington Little League's request for mesh temporary fencing at Poets Field and backstop screens on the three major league fields from April – July 4th for the 2001 season. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Tegan and approved 4-0.

Mr. Carabello and Mr. Hart discussed policies to control parental behavior and fan violence. Mr. Hart stated that his organization would be willing to have the parents sign off on a policy. Mr. Carabello complimented Arlington Little League for their efforts.

FY 2002 CDBG Requests and FY 2001 Report

Mr. Connelly reviewed the submitted CDBG FY 2001 report. Mr. Connelly reviewed the requests for CDBG funding for FY 2002. The Commission asked Mr. Connelly to talk to Andrew Leonard regarding the dollar amount that should be requested for the Pierce School Playground based on his previous design and cost estimates. Mr. Vitters asked Mr. Connelly to add a request for a feasibility study for Spy Pond Shore in the amount of \$25,000. Mr. Vitters will contact Mr. Cole of the Permanent Building Committee to review the plans for Peirce School.

Discussion on Warrant Article Presentation

Mr. Connelly and the Commission discussed the warrant article as drafted by Town Counsel and submitted to the Board of Selectman for the Town Warrant. Mr. Vitters and Mr. Connelly will put together handouts to give to the Finance Committee and Town Meeting Members.

Field Permit Policy Amendments

Mr. Connelly reviewed the amendments to the policy.

Mr. Carabello motioned to adopt the policy as amended for a 1-year trial period beginning in the fall 2001. The motion included recommending the policies fee schedule to the Town Manager. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Jones and approved 4-0.

Field Article on Scannell Field

Mr. Connelly will call Mr. Moynihan of the Advocate and resubmit the Hills Hill article. Mr. Vitters will put together the article for Scannell Field

Other

Mr. Vitters and Mr. Connelly discussed the article that was in the MSRPA concerning The Town of Arlington receiving funding from the installation of cellular towers. Mr. Connelly will contact Mr. McLennan for more information.

Mr. Connelly and the Commission discussed the purchasing of a Border Collie for the purpose of geese control. The Commission suggested Mr. Connelly put an advertisement on the Town Web Site for someone in town who has a Border Collie who may want to earn a few extra dollars.

Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes of January 9th and January 23rd. Mrs. Jones motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Mrs. Tegan and approved 4-0.

The Commission adjourned at 10:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Joseph J. Connelly, Supt. of Recreation