

**TOWN OF ARLINGTON**

**Recreation Department**  
Joseph Connelly, Director of Recreation



**Recreation Department**

**PARK COMMISSIONERS**

Shirley Canniff  
Leslie Mayer  
Jen Rothenberg  
Phil Lasker  
Scott Walker  
Josh Fenollosa - Associate  
Sarah Carrier- Associate

**MEETING NOTICE**

The Park and Recreation Commission  
Tuesday, May 16, 2023  
7:00 PM

Second Floor Main Meeting Room Community Center, 27 Maple Street

**AGENDA**

- 1) Robbins Farm Playground Design Review
- 2) Menotomy Rocks Playground Discussion
- 3) Comments and Items for Future Meetings:

Correspondence Received: Menotomy Rocks (Colins/D'Amour), Off Leash Dogs (Gray/Greenwald/Marshall/Pannesi),  
Hills Hill (Mathews)

- 4) New Business
- 5) Approval of Minutes – 2/28/2023
- 6) Public Comment

# *Reale Associates*

## *Incorporated*

### *Complete Playground Services*

*P.O. Box 2316  
Ocean Bluff, Mass. 02065*

*Tel: 781.837.6136  
Fax: 781.837.48  
Realeassoc@aol.com*

### *Playground Safety Check*

*Playground/Park: Menotomy Rocks Park  
Location: 129 Jason Street  
Arlington, Mass  
Owner: The Town of Arlington  
Equipment Type: Playground Environments  
Age of the Users: 5-12 yr & 2-5 yr (Fully enclosed seats)  
Surfacing: There is NO Safety Surfacing  
Reviewed By: Jody E. Reale, CPSI  
Date of Inspection: April 19, 2023*

*Definitions Playground Hazard Priority Category, PHP*

*Priority 1- Any condition that is life threatening or can cause permanent disability, loss of vision, speech, or limb*

*Priority 2- Any condition that can cause serious but non disabling injury*

*Priority 3- Any condition of the playground which can cause minor injury*

*General Playground Concerns:*

<i>Signage: Name of the Playground</i>	<i>Y</i>
<i>Age Appropriateness</i>	<i>N</i>

*Playground Rules* Y  
*911 Number* N

*Other: The structure is located in wooded and serene setting, however, is located quite a Distance from the main street. The concern here is an accident and the potential Inability to communicate the need for help. The installation for a call box would be Prudent.*

<i>Labels</i>	<i>Manufacturer Identification Warning Label (Hard &amp; Hot Surface) Draw Strings, Age Appropriateness &amp; Adult Supervision is recommended</i>	<i>Labels should be installed to advise the public of the age appropriateness of the structure, and to communicate the messages regarding hard surfaces, that surfaces can become hot, and that draw Strings helmets, and draw strings and Accessories around the neck should be Removed prior to playing on the Playground equipment and that adult Supervision is recommended. ASTM Sec 14 &amp; 15</i>
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*The structure has age appropriate, hot surface, adult supervision and drawstring labels. The structure has no manufacturer identification, ASTM F 1487-21 Sec 15.1*

*1- The structure DOES NOT have a Hard Surface Warning Label which advises the public of the hazard of playground equipment installation over hard surfaces may result in serious injury or death from falls. ASTM F 1487-21 Sec 14.2.5*

*Over hanging Branches* N

*Barriers between and around the equipment –*

*2/3- The wood perimeter edging shows cracks, uneven edge to edge timbers, heavy rot, Exposed nails, and holes which could trap a foot or create a potential trip and fall Hazard. Due to the age of the structure, the use of CCA Pressure Treated Lumber Is Suspect. CCA Pressure Treated Lumber is not recommended for use in Public Playgrounds. CPSC 2.5.5.1*

*Use Zones- There is a large tree, with exposed roots within the 6' use zone of the structure.*

*Use Zone- The surface under and around a piece of equipment onto which a child falling from or exiting from the equipment would be expected to land, CPSC 1.8 definitions.*

*1 - Potential trip and fall hazard onto and into a hard non forgiving surface.  
The use zone for stationary equipment shall be no less than 72" from all sides of the play Structure. ASTM Sec 9.2.1*

*The swing use zone is compliant*

### *Surfacing*

*1- There is NO SAFETY SURFACING Under the structures and swings or within the Use zones. Exposed Tree roots, filter fabric, and an exposed concrete footing were Evident. The creates a potential fall hazard onto a hard surface.*

*There shall be a use zone for each play structure which consists of obstacle free Surfacing that conforms to ASTM F 1292 appropriate for the fall height of the Equipment. ASTM F 1487-21 Sec 9.1.1*

*ASTM F1292- Specification for Impact Attenuation of Surfacing Materials within the Use Zone of Playground Equipment*

*CPSC 2010 recommends no less than 9" of loose fill beneath the structures and within The use zones, SEC 2.4.2.2, # 7*

### *Equipment & Structures*

*Equipment is free of rust and chipping paint*

*all structures*

*Age, wear and rust was noted and would be anticipated Of 20 +-year-old structures. See below*

*SLIDES 5-12 yr*

*72" Spiral Slide- 1 the are gaps at the slide sections which creates a potential entanglement Hazard.*

*1/2 There are exposed bolt projections (more than 2 threads exposed) At the slide deck. Potential entanglement hazard.*

*Any accessible bolt end projecting beyond the face of the nut is an Entanglement hazard, ASTM Sec 6.4.3*

*2/3 - There is missing hardware at the deck/slide both sides.*

*1- The slide exit height is 22 ". The slide exit height for elevated surfaces greater Than 48 "should be between 7-15". ASTM Sec 8.5.5.3. See above*

*– There are exposed tree roots at the exit – see above*

*2/3 The support post shows age and heavy rust- typical of age*

*DBL Slide - 2-/3 the top of the slide entry is above the deck that it serves, it should sit flush With the deck. Potential trip and fall hazard.*

*1- The slide exit height is 16". The slide exit height for elevations 48" or less Is 0-11". ASTM Sec 8.5.5.3*

*Spiral Slide- show gaps between the sections and at the slide/hood Which create potential entanglement hazards. All slides have drawstring warning Labels at the slide entrances. Slide materials can move, expand, contract, and Shift, due to age, wear, and temperature changes*

*Climbing Equipment*

*Both Climbers show age wear and missing paint- typical of the age*

### *Chain Ladder*

*The upper chain wear is approx <50-50 wear see below*

*1- There are roots growing in the lower chain, lower right side*

*See above*

### *Clatterbridge Bridge*

*1- The space between the bridge and the barrier fails the head entrapment test Both sides. The opening allows the small torso probe through but does not Allow the head torso probe through the opening. ASTM Sec 6.1.2.1 CPSC Sec B 2.4 Potential head entrapment hazard.*

*1- The space between the front post and the barrier fails the head entrapment Test, typical of the barriers throughout the structure. See above*

*Entrapment- Any condition that impedes withdrawal of a body or body part that has Penetrated an opening: CPSC Sec 1.8 definitions.*

*- Any completely bounded opening that is not bounded by the ground may be Potential head entrapment hazard: CPSC B2.4.1*

*2/3 The chain wear at the bridge/deck attachments show approx wear Of 50%- typical of age*

*2/3 The bridge chains show age, rust – typical of age*

*2/3- There is hardware at the below the deck bridge /deck attachment, That's creates a hook, Potential entanglement hazard.*

*Roofs 2/3 The wood Roofs show heavy age and mold.*

### *Upper Body Equipment*

*Horizontal Ladder- the height is compliant*

*3 Rust is evident at the upper hand ladder sections- typical of age It appears that this has been repainted since the installation.*

*OH Rings*

*3 – Rust and age are evident at the chains; hand holds and SHooks,  
Typical of age*

*Stairways NA*

*Transfer Platforms-the heights are 16" & 26" the height should be between 11-18"  
DOJ ADA, see note above regarding the EWF surfacing.*

*Decks*

- 1 – The space between the posts and the deck barriers fail the head entrapment  
Test, aprox 12 locations and at every deck but 1. See above  
Potential head entrapment hazard*
- 1- The space between the first 2 decks fails the head entrapment test, see above  
Potential head entrapment*

*Note – the space between the other decks allow the small torso probe to enter  
4", with limited depth*

*Below the deck play features*

*Crawl Tunnel exit is aprox 22" from the underlying surface, see above*

*Swings - 2 Bay Swing*

*1- There is no safety surfacing, potential fall hazard onto a hard surface.  
Note: The fall height for the swing is 8'.*

*1- The belt seats have open S Hooks. There shall be no gap greater than 0.04 in  
Potential entanglement hazard: ASTM Sec 6.4.5*

*1- on the day of inspection during testing at the Belt Seat, left side, the swing chain  
Slipped out of the open Shook, the seat was left hanging Potential fall hazard.*

*Upper Hangers- show age wear and rust- typical throughout*

*Belt Seats- 2/3 The eye bolt and upper bolts show >50-50% wear*

*Tot Seats All upper clevis bolts show wear and age*

*2/3 Chain wear at the belt seats show aprox 50% wear  
Shook & Clevis wear at the belt seats is <50%  
3- The belt seats show sharp edges – typical of age*

*Chain wear at the tot seats is <50%  
3- The tot seat, left side is cracked*

*The Menotomy Park appears to be a very well and consistently attended park, by the community of Arlington*

*The subjects are approximately 20 +-year-old 5-12 yr structure & 2 Bay Swing by Playground Environments. Playground Environments is no longer in business, so replacement parts are unavailable. To date, there is NO Safety Surfacing under the structures or within their use zones, and there is an exposed concrete footing by the Overhead Ladder. On the day of inspection, a swing chain became unattached from the swing seat / Shook, leaving the swing seat hanging. There is a large tree and its exposed roots, within the structures 6' use zone. Potential Head entrapment hazards were evident throughout the barriers. The perimeter timbers, although out of the 6' use zone show exposed nails, rotten lumber, and holes large enough to entrap a foot.*

*Public Playground are designed, installed and inspected per the ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials) Standards and the CPSC ( The Public Playground Safety Handbook) Guidelines and are Considered The Standard of Care for Public Playgrounds.*

*The Possibility and Probability of a Serious Injury is Certainly Foreseeable.*

*Having said that, the 5-12 yr structure & Swing were closed for play on the day of inspection. A plan should be put into place to remove and replace the structures. If the new Structures are to follow the same footprint, then the tree and its roots should be removed as well.*

*Please feel free to contact me with any questions or, if I can be of any further service to you*

*Thank you  
Jody E Reale, CPSI  
President*





*Exposed Concrete beneath  
Overhead Climber*



*There is NO Safety Surfacing*





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Playground  
Safety Inspector





Page 7



Tree & Tree Roots Within  
The 6' use Zone



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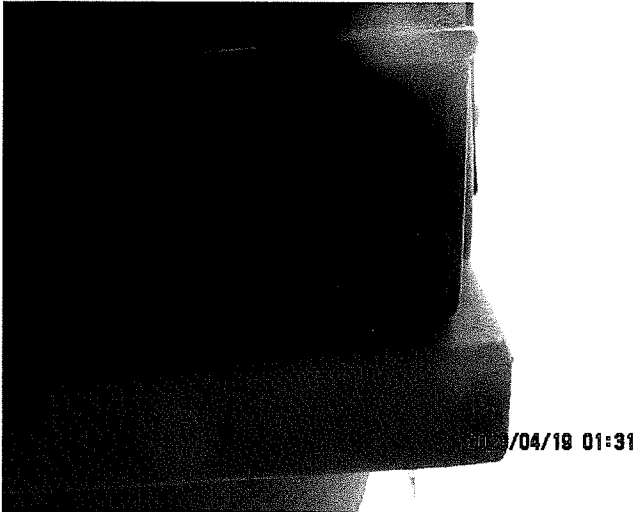




*Open S Hook- the chain.  
Became unattached during  
Testing page 8*

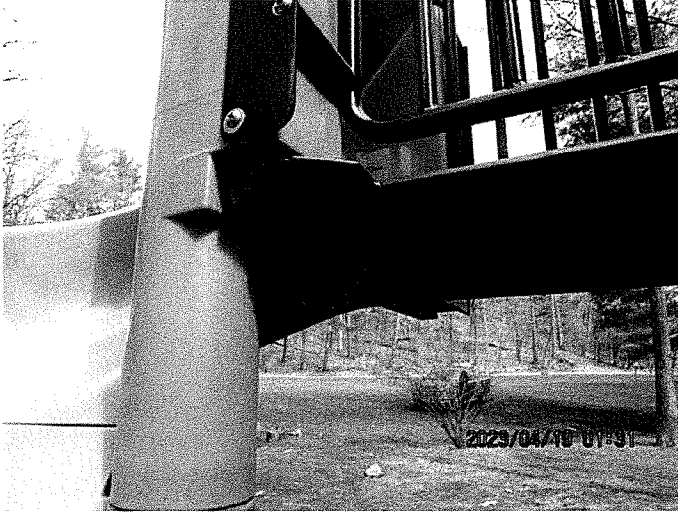


*Missing Hardware Spiral Slide /Deck*



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*Head Entrapment At Barriers*



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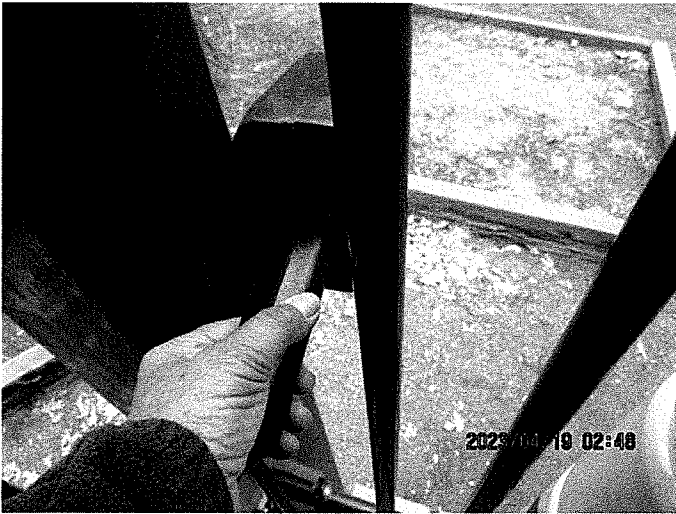






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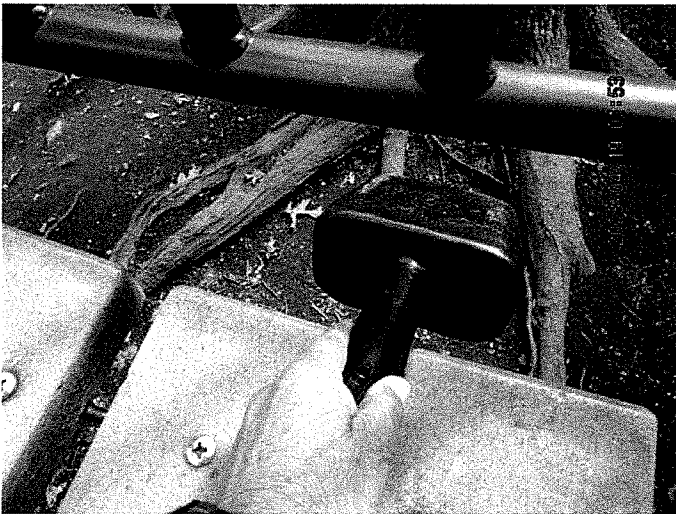




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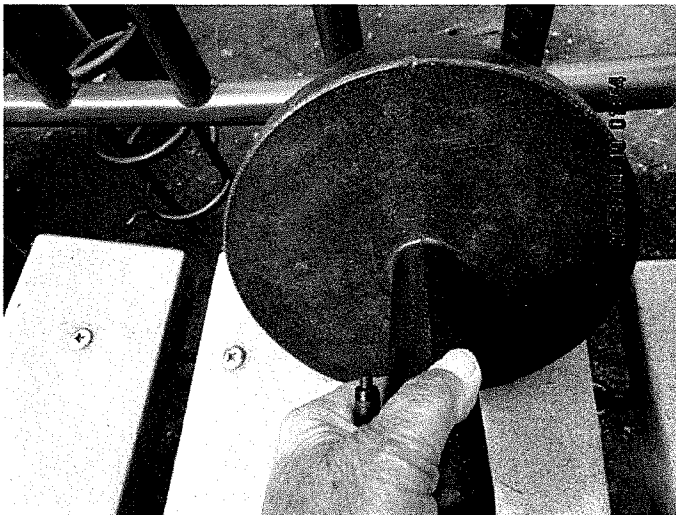
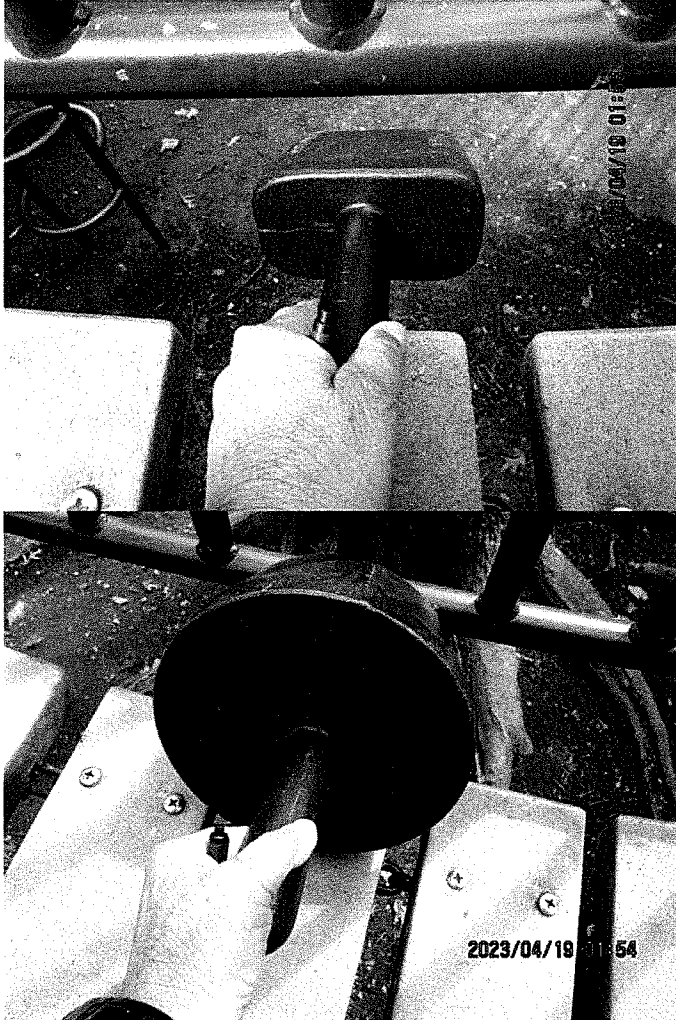


*Head Entrapments at Bridge  
Bridge/Barrier Page 16*



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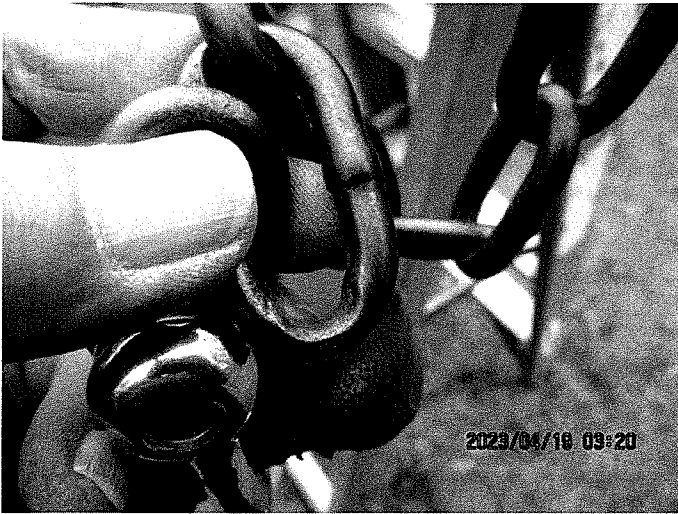


*Head Entrapment deck/deck*

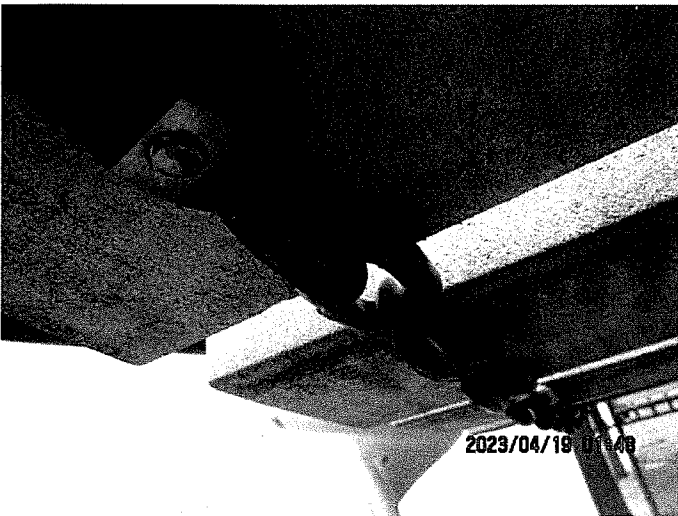


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*Belt Swing Chain Wear*

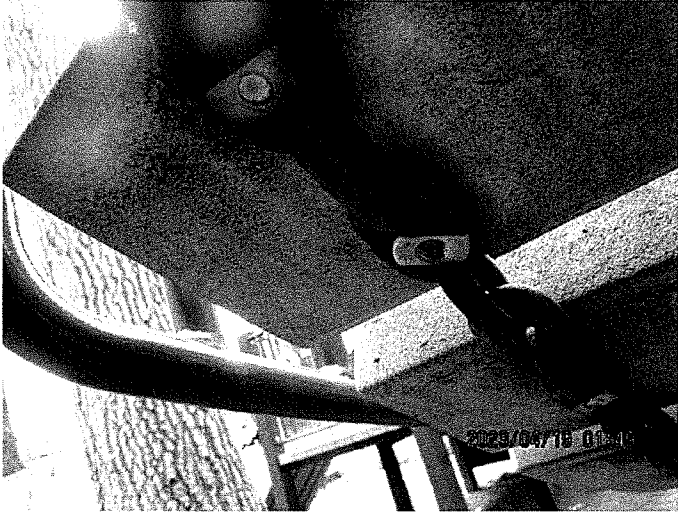


*Clatterbridge Chains Page 19*



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*Overhead Ring Chains*



*Wood Roofs Page 20*



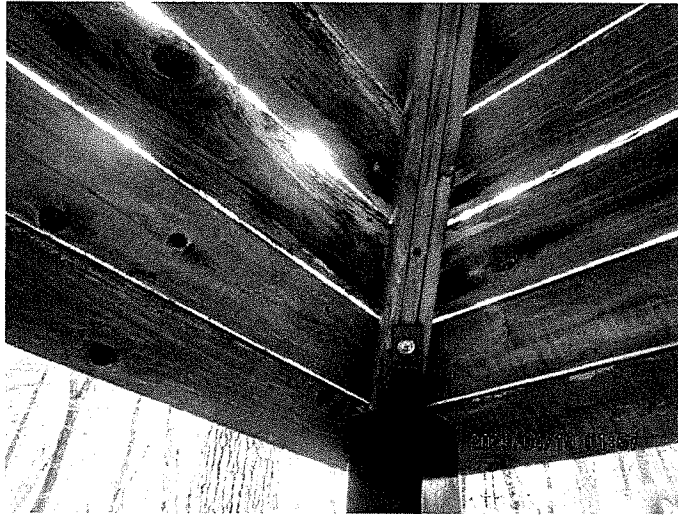
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**International Playground  
Contractors Association**







*Perimeter Edging p 21*



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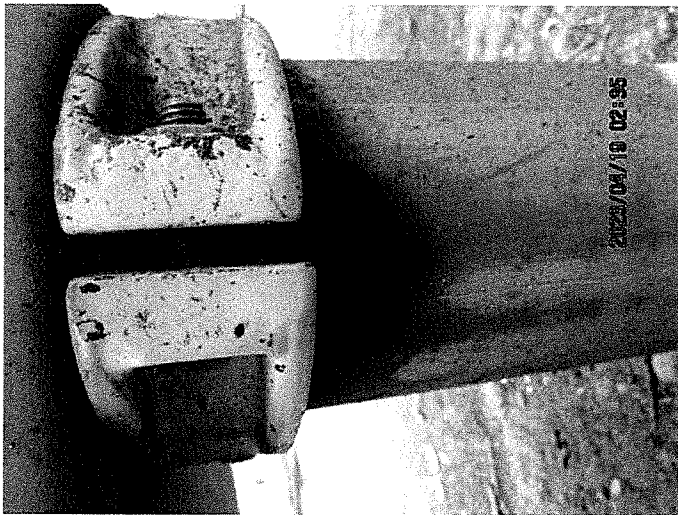


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*Spiral Slide Support Post*



# Reale Associates

Menotomy Rock Park Pictures  
APRIL 19, 2023



Unattached Belt Swing  
Chain. No Safety Surfacing



No Safety Surfacing page 1



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# **WARNING**

**Installation over a hard surface such as concrete, asphalt, or packed earth may result in serious injury or death from falls.**

115176-00



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*Examples of Playgrounds with Adequate ASTM/IPEMA certified safety surfacing*



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## ARLINGTON PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINTUES

*April 11, 2023*

The Town of Arlington Park and Recreation Commission came to order for its first in-person meeting in the second-floor conference room at the Community Center on Tuesday April 11, 2023 at 7:00pm.

**Commission Members:** Phil, Lasker, Leslie Mayer, Shirley Canniff, Jen Rothenberg, Josh Fenollosa and Sarah Carrier. Scott Walker was not in attendance. Recreation Director Joe Connelly was also present.

**Anticipated Speakers:** Cecily Miller, Rachel Oliveri, Juliette Bennett, Greta Mastro, Clara Schneider and Stewart Ikeda

**Members of the public:** Chris Carlsmith, Steve Kerlik, Barry Jaspen, Chuck Teroni

**Preliminary Matter:** Phil Lasker, Park & Recreation Commission chair, took formal attendance via a roll call and welcomed anticipated speakers and public attendees to the first in-person Park and Recreation Commission meeting since 2020.

### **AHS & Public Art Request Review**

Cecily Miller began by thanking the Commission for taking the time to hear the group's presentation. The group is requesting that the Climate Futures project be approved for six months as a pilot program rather than the initial request of three years.

AHS student interns Juliette Bennett, Greta Mastro and Clara Schneider shared a slide show presentation outlining the history of the Climate Futures project started by Tom Starr. The goal of the project is to show climate change is real, prompting questions, discussions, and change. The interns explained the extensive research each student conducted while creating the future markers. They also stressed the importance of installing markers in parks that would connect the predictions to the location, encouraging a feeling of reality within the community.

The Commission commended the interns for their passion, research, and presentation. The Commission requested more information on the proposed installation, location, and timeline as well as the QR codes and posts for the markers. It was noted that smartphone use cannot be assumed considering the demographic of park users. The group discussed a suggestion to post laminated notices on park bulletin boards to inform users about the project goals and future markers. Ms. Mayer stated that markers cannot be installed on trees as shown in the presentation slides.

Mr. Connelly stressed that the Commission does not determine what constitutes art. He expressed shared concerns about setting a precedent for message specific projects – "if the Commission says yes to one group, they must say yes to everyone". Previous conversations indicate that users do not want to see park spaces used for advertising, memorials, etc. These types of projects are typically met with resistance and the Commission does not permit these types of installations on Recreation property. Ms. Miller stated that the Arts Commission would be responsible for determining what is considered art. Ms. Canniff noted that users proposing projects with opposing viewpoints would have the same rights.

Mr. Ikeda shared statements of support and suggested that the pilot program be implemented as soon as possible so that the markers would be installed before EcoFest. He also recommended leaving the markers in place through Town Day to increase public exposure and awareness.

Ms. Rothenberg made a motion to approve the project as a pilot program for six months, to be revisited in October, with the following conditions; notice language to be reviewed and approved by Mr. Connelly, markers can be installed in the requested



locations but not attached to trees, an email blast will go out informing the public about the project. The motion was seconded by Ms. Canniff and approved by roll call vote.

Ms. Rothenberg – Yes

Ms. Mayer – Yes

Ms. Canniff – Yes

Mr. Lasker – Yes

**Bench Donation – Reservoir:**

Mr. Connelly received a bench donation request from David Morgan in honor of Open Space Committee Member Ann LeRoyer. The request does not require a vote.

**Capital Project Updates**

Spy 98% complete and Parmenter 98% complete

- PIP passed lab test.
- Rubber being installed this week.
- Handrails are installed.
- Parmenter paving work will be completed in the spring after PIP installation.
- Estimated opening in early May after inspections.

**Robbins Playground**

- Third Public Input Meeting was a success. Revisions have been well received.
- Mr. Connelly met with the agency today. Adventure Shed plans will be available for review before April 25, 2023.
- The project is budget is currently at the high end.

**Arlington Reservoir Phase II**

- Small punch list items remain. Mr. Connelly will reach out to Sumco. Planting replacement will take place in the spring along with path clean up.
- Landscaper will remove sand from grass areas.

Stratton, Peirce, Bishop ARPA Project –No change

- Bishop is open. Sealcoating will be done in the spring. Working on punch list now. It has been reported to Mr. Connelly that drainage issues are causing erosion between the basketball court and the third-base bench. A retaining wall will be built behind the bench to save the basketball court. The birch trees behind the wind chimes will be removed to allow for the mound to be graded and mulched. The trees will be replanted.
- Stratton is open. Working on punch list now.
- Peirce is open but will be closed this week and April vacation week so that the mulch can be removed. PIP will be installed next week.
- Mr. Connelly provided the School Department fencing options for Stratton but has received no response to date.

#### Hurd Field Project

- All base bid items are complete except plantings and electricity (Eversource). Expected opening Memorial Day weekend.
- All changes approved to date. Scoreboard will be installed in July.
- Next steps include installing irrigation and a generator, adding water bags for trees, removing temporary fencing to allow access to the path. Ms. Mayer noted that the hidden corners of the field are filled with empty containers and bottles. Mr. Connelly will look into security lighting.

#### Poets Corner

- Filing with ConCom on Wetland delineation on Thursday, April 13, 2023. Follow-up public meeting scheduled for next Thursday. Chuck Teroni stated the resource areas located on the parcel owned by the Archdiocese will require approval from ConCom.
- The Commission briefly discussed the potential impact Town Meeting Article 12 and potential substitute motions to remove the CPA request. Ms. Canniff noted that the Archdiocese has already indicated that if Article 12 and substitute motions are approved by Town Meeting, the church land will be sold to a developer.

Representatives from Arlington Youth Soccer and Ultimate Sports were in attendance to discuss the needs of user groups and potential field ideas. Ms. Rothenberg also stated the importance of building up the girls' softball program which currently uses only AHS and Buzzell Fields.

Mr. Lasker explained how the project would allow the Town to rest fields for at least one season, which is important to the regrowth and longevity of the fields. Due to constant use and limited fields, the Recreation Department is currently not able to rest any fields.

#### Arlington Court Needs Assessment

- First public input session was a success.
- A public survey is underway. Results so far indicate strong support for more tennis courts. Ms. Rothenberg noted that there is also a need for multiple full-size courts in a single location.

#### CPA Requests – Hills Hill

- Waiting on Town Meeting. The Select Board has voted unanimously to support Hill's Hill. Mr. Teroni requested more information on the land, questioning whether it was protected by Article 97. Ms. Mayer and Mr. Fenollosa explained the history of how the land was gifted/deeded to the Town specifically for youth recreation use and not protected by Article 97.

#### **Discussion of Town Meeting Warrant Article 12 – Artificial Turf Moratorium**

A forum which will be conducted by a facilitator and a panel of experts has been scheduled for May 2<sup>nd</sup> to discuss the pros and cons of turf fields. The citizen created warrant article demands a 3-year moratorium on turf projects to allow for additional studies. The TM moderator has stated that Article 12 will be tabled until after the forum.

Ms. Mayer noted that the Select Board has voted "no action" on the article but anticipates that substitute motions will be filed after TM begins.

Ms. Canniff made a motion to support the Select Board's recommendation of no action on Article 12, seconded by Ms. Rothenberg. Approved 4-0 by roll call vote.

Ms. Rothenberg – Yes  
Ms. Mayer – Yes  
Ms. Canniff – Yes  
Mr. Lasker – Yes

If the moratorium passes, all potential turf projects under the jurisdiction of ConCom would be stopped. Belmont Hill has paused all action on the Poet's Corner project. The Commission discussed the need for projects to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis rather than prohibited under a blanket moratorium. Ms. Canniff reiterated the Archdiocese's intention to sell their parcel to a developer if the project does not go through which would result in the loss of open space. Ms. Rothenberg noted that the school department has installed turf fields at Arlington Catholic and Arlington High School. Mr. Teroni noted that ConCom determined that the small area under their jurisdiction beneath the existing turf sites were not cause for concern.

Mr. Carlsmith and Mr. Kerlik, Arlington Youth Soccer, inquired if there were any informational documents or blogs available to the public. They also asked about potential field sizes if the project were to move forward. Discussions have included a 90' baseball diamond, a condition of Belmont Hill, 11 v 11 soccer field as well as three 7 v 7s and one 9 v 9. This space would also allow for expansion of other user groups including Ultimate Sports.

Ms. Canniff made a motion to approve Chair Phil Lasker to draft a letter to Town Meeting members regarding Article 12 and related FAQ and to be reviewed by Ms. Mayer prior to distribution, seconded by Ms. Rothenberg. Approved 4-0 by roll call vote.

Ms. Rothenberg – Yes  
Ms. Mayer – Yes  
Ms. Canniff – Yes  
Mr. Lasker – Yes

**Town Public Forum on Artificial Turf Fields** – To be held on May 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Town Hall Auditorium. Mr. Connelly stated that the forum will be facilitated and will include a panel of experts to educate the public with facts and information.

**Approval of Minutes:** 2/28/2023

Ms. Rothenberg motioned to approve the minutes of February 28, 2023, as presented, seconded by Ms. Canniff. Approved 4-0 by roll call vote.

Ms. Rothenberg – Yes  
Ms. Mayer – Yes  
Ms. Canniff – Yes  
Mr. Lasker – Yes

**Comments and Items for Future Meetings:** N/A

**Correspondence Received:** N/A

**New Business:** N/A

**Open Forum – Public Comment:**

- Mr. Fenollosa - The Bike Park Group clean-up event at Hill's Hill was very successful. A large group of children/teens and a state senator participated.
- Mr. Jaspen - Recommended leaving the Climate Futures markers up longer than the approved six months to see if the predictions come true.
- Mr. Teroni - Learned a lot about the Poet's Corner project. The Archdiocese land is outside the jurisdiction of ConCom.
- Ms. Garnett – Will be moving out of state. Multiple ConCom members will serve as liaisons to the Park and Recreation Commission in her place.
- Ms. Rothenberg – Users are seeking more court use for Pickleball.

Ms. Rothenberg motioned to adjourn at 9:38pm, seconded by Ms. Canniff. Approved 4-0 by roll call vote.

- Ms. Rothenberg – Yes
- Ms. Mayer – Yes
- Ms. Canniff – Yes

- Mr. Lasker - Yes

The Arlington Park & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes were respectfully submitted by Deanna Stacchi.

April 13, 2023

Dear Arlington town officials,

We are writing in support of efforts to revitalize Menotomy Rocks Park Playground. What the town has deemed “dangerous” has always been a very safe place for our family, and we are heartbroken. We plead with all powers that be that the playground’s revitalization be of the highest priority.

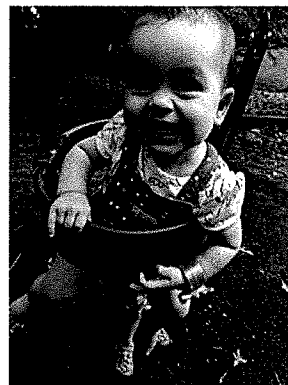
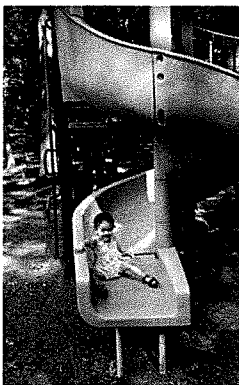
Our family moved to Arlington in June of 2020. We were grateful to find a home on Churchill Avenue, just steps from Menotomy Rocks Park. Imagining our children growing up with that park in the backyard was the reason we bought our house and invested so much into making a life in this town.

What we love most about Menotomy Rocks Park is that it feels like an escape into untouched nature. We love climbing the trees, looking for frogs and turtles in the pond, and exploring the trails. There is beauty in the untamed.

And we have cherished the playground, understated though it may be. Admittedly, it is not in perfect condition, but I have witnessed my older daughter grow immeasurably in her balance, strength, and confidence on that playground. My younger daughter has just begun to explore it, but she is already smitten with the swings and the tunnel. It breaks my heart that not only is the playground being taken away, but that there is no plan in place for its replacement.

Please understand the value this playground has added to my family’s life and the lives of thousands of families from Arlington and surrounding towns. It should be a high priority for funding allocations. If there is any way to reconsider its removal, please do.

Sincerely,  
The Collins D’Amour Family  
104 Churchill Ave  
Arlington, MA



## Meeting Request Off Leash Dogs

ebgray@gmail.com <ebgray@gmail.com>

Mon 4/10/2023 2:17 PM

To: Sandy Pooler <spooler@town.arlington.ma.us>; Julie Flaherty <jflaherty@town.arlington.ma.us>; Richard Flynn <rflynn@town.arlington.ma.us>; **AnimalControl** <animalcontrol@town.arlington.ma.us>; Jen Rothenberg <jrothenberg@town.arlington.ma.us>; Shirley Canniff <scanniff@town.arlington.ma.us>; Leslie Mayer <lmayer@town.arlington.ma.us>; Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

Cc: meggreenwald@verizon.ne <meggreenwald@verizon.ne>; 'Nancy Hoe' <nhoe@comcast.net>; 'Daria Pannesi' <dariapannesi@hotmail.com>; 'Ericka Gray' <ebgray@gmail.com>; 'Garballey, Sean - Rep. (HOU)' <Sean.Garballey@mahouse.gov>

 1 attachments (90 KB)

April 10 2023 Off leash letter Town of Arlington.pdf;

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Dear Town Officials,

As you will see from the attached letter, we are dog lovers and long term residents of Arlington who want to improve access to and the safety of our beloved parks and open spaces that have been impacted by off leash dog activity. Therefore, we want to schedule time to meet within the next two weeks, preferably in late afternoon, or, if necessary, early evening. Please provide several options so that we can coordinate schedules for a meeting.

Please also forward the letter to Commissioner Phil Lasker, whose email address was not listed.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

Regards,

Ericka Gray  
Mary Greenwald  
Nancy Hoe Marshall  
Daria Pannesi

Ericka B. Gray | *she/her*  
Arlington, MA 02474  
617.921.2506 Cell

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April 10, 2023

VIA EMAIL

Sandy Pooler, Town Manager, [spooler@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:spooler@town.arlington.ma.us)

Chief Juliann Flaherty, Chief of Police, [jflaherty@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:jflaherty@town.arlington.ma.us)  
Captain Richard Flynn, Arlington Police Department, [rflynn@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:rflynn@town.arlington.ma.us)  
Courtney Wilson, Animal Control Officer, [animalcontrol@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:animalcontrol@town.arlington.ma.us)

Jennifer Rothenberg, Parks & Recreation Commissioner, [jrothenberg@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:jrothenberg@town.arlington.ma.us)  
Shirley Canniff, Parks & Recreation Commissioner, [scanniff@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:scanniff@town.arlington.ma.us)  
Phil Lasker, Parks & Recreation Commissioner, no email address available  
Leslie Mayer, Parks & Recreation Commissioner, [lmayer@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:lmayer@town.arlington.ma.us)  
Joseph Connelly, Director, Director, Recreation Department, [jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us)

RE: Off Leash Dogs

Dear Town of Arlington Officials:

We love dogs and want responsible dog owners to be able to enjoy off leash activity with their canine companions as long as they follow the rules of Arlington's off leash bylaw. We want safe, accessible, and welcoming open spaces at all times for everyone to enjoy without fear of unwanted approach or injury by any dog or person.

We were shocked to learn that the Town is considering expanding approved off leash activity to new locations and times without any viable plan to address the current problems. The current problems include unlawful off leash activity all day, every day, and uncontrolled off leash activity during approved off leash hours.

We strongly oppose any such expansion unless, and until, the Town has a proven track record of effectively responding to complaints and significantly reducing the incidents of inappropriate and out of control off leash activity. Numerous injuries to people and dogs, verbal and physical altercations related to off leash dog activity, and rampant disobedience of the rules have caused residents to avoid using and enjoying our Town's parks.

The Town has been on notice of the concerns of residents since the bylaw was implemented. Two informal groups repeatedly met with Town officials in 2016 and 2020 to provide evidence of the severity of the problems and their impact on residents. Members of these groups have remained in frequent contact with various Animal Control (ACO) and Police Officers, and members of the Recreation Department about ongoing problems.

Both the 2016 and 2020 groups offered numerous suggestions for low or no cost and low impact methods of addressing the problem. The Town's position was that education and signage are the solutions. Since the problem has only continued to worsen, education and signage are obviously not working.



The groups were repeatedly told that the ACO is the only person designated and responsible for managing animal complaints. In one meeting, a police officer stated that the police have better things to do than respond to animal complaints. The ACO position appears to have been vacant more often than it has been filled in the past 13 years. Since a new ACO has been hired, we have been told things will change. We can only hope that this is true.

As long term residents of Arlington, we have enjoyed the benefits of living in such a beautiful town with great parks and open spaces. These offer wonderful wildlife habitats and recreational opportunities. We, including those of us with disabilities, wish to be able to use these again without incident.

We wish to meet with you to discuss our experiences and concerns in more depth and how the Town will address them. Our goal is to work with the Town to ensure that our parks and open spaces again become accessible and safe for all.

Sincerely,

*Ericka Gray*  
*Mary Greenwald*  
*Nancy Marshall*  
*Daria Pannesi*

cc: Rep. Sean Garbally, [Sean.Garballey@mahouse.gov](mailto:Sean.Garballey@mahouse.gov)

Fwd: Letter in support of Hill's Hill bike park

Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

Tue 4/4/2023 9:03 AM

To: Matt Curran <mjcurran@town.arlington.ma.us>

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**From:** Julia Matthews <matthewsjulia@yahoo.com>

**Sent:** Monday, April 3, 2023 8:11:58 PM

**To:** Jim Feeney <jfeeney@town.arlington.ma.us>; Julie Wayman <jwayman@town.arlington.ma.us>

**Cc:** Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

**Subject:** Letter in support of Hill's Hill bike park

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Greetings-

I am writing again to voice my support for the mountain bike park proposed for Hill's Hill. I listened with interest to the Select Board Meeting this evening.

Our community should be impressed and support an idea that came from Ottoson and AHS students during COVID - a positive contribution by our youth at such a challenging time for them and our community.

The original purpose for Hill's Hill was for youth recreation; returning this small parcel (half the size of a standard baseball field) to its original mission is in alignment with the town's values.

We know that exercise and access to nature are some of the best ways to improve the mental health of teens. Given the current crisis in youth mental health, Arlington has the opportunity to show its support for our youth in a visible way.

Finally, mountain biking is a low-impact way for all ages to enjoy nature. It doesn't cost a lot and allows kids to be independent by accessing it via the bike path.

Please vote in support of Hill's Hill and provide another healthy outlet for the children of our town.

Best,  
Julia Matthews  
parent of Ottoson and AHS students  
119 High Haith Road  
Arlington 02476