

**PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
TOWN OF NEEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS**

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

November 20, 2009

*Background notes for Monday, November 23rd
Park and Recreation Commission Agenda*

GREENE'S FIELD

I've compiled background information for the Commission on Greene's Field, as residents may be approaching you and asking questions about the status of the land. A Letter to the Editor in this week's Needham Times infers that Park and Recreation has declared that Greene's Field is not a "park" but the writer was told that the deed did not include the legal term "parkland" in its text which is a protective status. Town Counsel has advised the Board of Selectmen that Greene's Field is not "parkland" and a copy of that legal opinion is in your packet.

The Board of Selectmen will discuss the removal of the Greene's Field playground at their meeting on November 24th. I am not sure, yet, if I will be able to attend, but Department Assistant Nicole DiCicco will attend. Nicole and I took the Town Manager for a tour of the playground earlier this week, and Nicole shared technical issues with the structure, as she is a Certified Playground Safety Inspector. It will clearly be stated at their meeting that the removal of the playground structure is a safety decision and that it has no connection to the future of Greene's Field as a park or as the site of a senior center.

COULTON PARK ICE RINK

The neighbors on Coulton Park would like to re-install the outdoor skating rink in the park. This was first approved several years ago, and the neighbors have handled all the work related to the rink, including installation, removal, and clean-up. There have been no problems with the use, and it has been a successful activity for the families in that neighborhood.

MUSCO LIGHT TESTING

MUSCO is still scheduled to do light testing, starting Monday, November 23rd. Tom Jacob will represent the Commission throughout the testing, and I will join the testing after it gets started, along with any other Commissioners who are able to attend.

DeFAZIO PARKING LOT LIGHTS AND TRACK LIGHTS

The parking lot lights have been installed at DeFazio. They will be on from about 4:30 PM to 9:30 PM through November, and then will likely be turned off for the winter, except for when the DPW is responding to winter storms and staff members' park in the lot. Once the Town Hall staff moves to PSAB, the lights near the salt shed will likely be put on, as some staff from Town Hall will park in the DeFazio lot.

The repair work on the track lights is completed. The wattage in each unit was reduced from 400 watts to 175 watts, and each unit was angled down. These lights will remain off until the spring.

RAIL TRAIL

The Board of Selectmen has joined the Medfield Board of Selectmen in asking for the MA Transportation Planning and Programming Committee to provide a feasibility study of the rail corridor between the two towns. The current operator is not using the rail, and it is the hope of some Needham residents that the tracks could be converted to a rail trail. The Selectmen in the Town of Dover will likely join in on the request. The Minuteman Rail Trail and the Cape Cod Rail Trail are two examples of successful conversions. There have also been discussions about using the line to extend public transportation through to Newton.

NEWMAN KINDERGARTEN PLAYGROUND

The Newman PTC officially dedicated the renovated Kindergarten playground this week. Nicole and I worked with the committee to help them choose some new equipment to add to the existing area. The new large sandbox is a huge hit! Nicole and I attended the informal dedication ceremony.
