

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

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

**September 26, 2011**

**PRESENT:**

Michael J. Retzky, Vice Chairman  
Cynthia J. Chaston, Member  
Brian S. Nadler, Member  
Patricia M. Carey, Director  
Karen A. Peirce, Assistant Director

**ABSENT:**

Thomas M. Jacob, Chairman  
Andrea L. Shorthose, Member

The meeting convened at 7:00 PM in the Charles River Room located at the Public Services Administration Building

1. **Minutes of Meeting of September 12, 2011:** Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2011 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Nadler and the motion was approved.
2. **Director's Report:** Submitted in writing prior to the meeting. Ms. Carey noted the departments scheduled to move back to Town Hall have been busy packing up offices. On October 7<sup>th</sup> the departments will move and Park and Recreation, Planning and Conservation Departments will remain in the PSAB. Mrs. Chaston asked about the field testing being done by the Health Department. Ms. Carey reported the last testing of the synthetic turf was done in September 2010 and the testing tests the crumb rubber infill to see if anything has been released into the ground water. Needham 300 Beautification Committee presented the Needham Park and Recreation Commission with a Needham 300 Beautification certificate.
3. **Assistant Director's Report:** Ms. Peirce reported:
  - ☀ Ms. Peirce and Recreation Supervisor Nicole DiCicco attended the MRPA Regional Meeting on September 15<sup>th</sup>. The MRPA members were very pleased with the Summer Staff Training offered to all the regions. Over 100 summer supervisors/directors attended this worthwhile training.
  - ☀ On September 15<sup>th</sup> Ms. Peirce walked the Town Forest bike trails with 2 members of the New England Mountain Bike Association Barry Fleischer and Joe Pansire. The NEMBA is interested in being a part of the trail steward program reporting on trails in the Town Forest.
  - ☀ On September 17<sup>th</sup> Ms. Peirce attended a very enjoyable Fins and Ferns nature walk at Hemlock Gorge. Some of the members of this group may be potential trail stewards.
  - ☀ In the past month Ms. Peirce walked through the Newman School, the Pollard School and the Needham Town Hall renovation sites with members of the

- Disability Commission to make recommendations for accessibility. A few minor issues in all 3 buildings were noted and corrections were made promptly to be in full compliance with all the accessibility codes in order for buildings to open as scheduled.
- ☼ On September 19<sup>th</sup> Ms. Peirce met with Parks and Forestry Superintendent Ed Olsen to look at possible improvements at Perry Park for an Eagle Scout Project. Ms. Peirce met with Scott Groux on September 21<sup>st</sup> to discuss the projects suggested by Mr. Olsen. Scott is interested in removing the asphalt path that leads to nowhere and plant grass in its place to match the rest of the park. He is also interested in painting the basketball court and 5 benches. He will write up a proposal and then schedule another meeting with Ms. Peirce.
  - ☼ On September 21<sup>st</sup> Ms. Peirce attended the Eat Well Be Fit meeting and the Needham 300 Committee meeting. The Needham 300 Beautification Committee has scheduled a Clean Up Day to be held on October 15<sup>th</sup> from 8:30-11:00AM at various parks and fields around town.
  - ☼ On September 23 the Needham Trails Advisory Group met to review the draft materials Ms. Peirce compiled for the Trail Steward Program. Once the materials have been approved a campaign to spread the word about the program will begin and Trail Steward interviews and volunteer trainings will be scheduled in early 2012.
  - ☼ The Eco Explorers Growing Up Wild, Exploring Nature with Young Children Workshop will be held on October 1 and Ms. Peirce will attend.

**4. Discussion Items:** Discussed Later in the Meeting

- A. Cricket Building Feasibility Study:**
- B. Greene's Field:**
- C. Field Scheduling Update:**
- D. Special Events:**
- E. Community Preservation Update:**

**5. Action Items:**

- A. Special Event Request Needham 300 Gala:** Mr. Bill Tilburg and Mrs. Valerie Herman Co-chairs of the Needham 300 Committee attended the meeting to request permission for a permit for Greene's Field, and to erect a 120 by 140 foot tent on Greene's Field for the November 5<sup>th</sup> Needham 300 Gala. The tent will be delivered on October 31 and will be erected that week and removed on November 7, 2011. An architect and the party planner will coordinate the installation of the tent. Attendees will check in at Powers Hall located at the newly renovated Town Hall and will be shuttled over to Greene's Field. The Needham 300 Committee is seeking permission to use private parking lots for the event in addition to the public parking lots. Portable toilets will be provided. Electricity will be provided by 45 KVA ultra silent generators. If permission is granted to use Greene's Field they will contact the abutting neighbors. They have been working with the many Town departments including the Building Department and the Police department to work out the logistics. They

expect to attract 1000 guests to the Gala. Ms. Carey was able to rearrange and coordinate the field use with the user groups to lessen the impact on their schedules. Mr. Nadler made a motion to approve the request from the Needham 300 Committee to use Greene's Field and to erect a 120 by 140 foot tent on Greene's Field from October 31- November 7<sup>th</sup> for the Needham 300 Gala to be held on November 5, 2011 under the direction of the Park and Recreation Director Ms. Carey. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Chaston and the motion was approved.

- B. Special Event Request: Little League Try-Outs:** Needham Little League has requested the use of Mills Field on Saturday, October 1 for Majors Tryouts and Sunday, October 2 for AAA Tryouts from 9:00AM - 3:00PM. Ms. Carey explained that Little League has had a temporary permit for Mills this fall, as it is scheduled for work, including the replacement of the backstop and outfield fence. The contractor has said he plans to start the week of October 3<sup>rd</sup>, so there is no conflict for this weekend, but a raindate would not be possible at Mills. Mr. Nadler made a motion to approve the request from Needham Little League to use Mills Field on Saturday, October 1 and Sunday, October 2 for baseball tryouts held from 9:00AM-3:00PM. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and the motion was approved. Mr. Nadler noted that many requests have been submitted at the last minute and would recommend that groups be reminded that all special event requests be submitted earlier, by the stated deadlines.
  
- 4. Discussion Items:**

  - A. Cricket Building Feasibility Study:** Ms. Carey reported that Hank Haff from PPBC will coordinate this project. Because the feasibility study will be less than \$10,000 it can be added to an existing contract. Bargmann, Hendrie and Archetype is being recommended to do the feasibility study. BH + A did the Rosemary Pool feasibility study in 2000. The scope of the project will be to renovate the building and grounds looking at 3 possibilities: a) winterize the current structure with ADA improvements to the building and site, b) install ADA accessible parking and entrance but not winterize, c) redesign the layout and install modular buildings. The Commissioners officially appointed Mr. Retzky and Ms. Carey to represent the Park and Recreation Commission on the PPBC Cricket Building Feasibility Study Committee. The final BHA report will provide options for the Commission to review.
  
  - B. Greene's Field:** Ms. Carey attended the Greene's Field Committee meeting to review the different ideas being proposed for the park. One option that is not best suited for Greene's Field is a spray park which requires a chlorination system. Possible amenities suggested are a gazebo, which could be built by the community, benches and picnic tables. There was some discussion about moving the basketball court but moving

the court to another location would require a high fence. An irrigation system was suggested as well as an asphalt overlay to the basketball court to improve the surface. Ideas for playground themes are nature, and a castle. The current swing set will remain in the same location. The Exchange Club could do a simple installation such as a gazebo but the playground would need to be installed by a playground installation company. The project will potentially need to raise \$100,000-\$200,000 for the renovation.

- C. Field Scheduling Update:** Ms. Carey reported that the user groups are having difficulty coming to terms with the limitations of the fields available for use. There are more groups wanting more time on the fields. Ms. Carey is working with Mr. Jacob and Mr. DiCicco on scheduling issues. Mrs. Chaston has received a few questions from residents about the safety at DeFazio Field after 9:00PM when the lights turn off. Apparently coaches are keeping the children on the fields until exactly 9:00PM when the lights go out making it difficult to see in the parking lot. Ms. Carey will remind soccer officials to end practices and games 5-10 minutes prior to the lights turning off at 9:00PM. Another issue being reported is speeding and confusion at change over times due to no designated route to follow once in the parking. Mr. Nadler suggested notifying the Police Department to try and be in the parking lot at 7:30PM when the earlier practices end and the later practices begin.
- D. Special Events:** Ms. Carey reported the number of special events requested from the High School and community groups continues to grow along with the number of groups using the fields. Due to the Newman School renovation the Relay for Life Committee has requested DeFazio Field for their May event. Mr. Nadler suggested the Commissioners look at the impact special events have on the fields and user groups. He suggested asking the Relay for Life Committee representatives to attend a Commission meeting to discuss options such as scheduling the event in the summer instead of the spring. Ms. Carey will contact the Relay for Life Committee to discuss.
- E. Community Preservation Update:** Ms. Carey spoke to State Representative Denise Garlick to get an update on the legislation concerning Community Preservation regulations. Mrs. Garlick reported the bill is still in the Ways and Means Committee for review and that an amendment to the Casino Bill could push the CPC bill move forward as it would resolve the additional funding questions.

**6. Topics for Future Agendas:**

- Field Scheduling
- Special Events
- Rosemary Pool Study
- Draft Policy
- Walker Gordon Project

**7. Adjournment of Meeting:** Mr. Nadler made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 PM. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Chaston and the meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen A. Peirce, CPRP  
Assistant Director