

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

**Minutes of Meeting
September 28, 2015**

PRESENT: David C. DiCicco, Chairman
Matthew M. Toolan, Vice Chairman
Cynthia J. Chaston, Member
Christopher J. Gerstel, Member
Patricia M. Carey, Director

ABSENT: Michael J. Retzky, Member
Robyn G. Fink, Assistant Director

GUESTS: *BH+A:* Joel Bargmann, Tom Scarlata
Community Center of Needham (CCN): Arthur Cantor, Jo-Anne Ochalla,
Georgiana Ruetenik, Yasue Keyes, Gary DeMaria, Amy Hurley, Nancy Sterling
YMCA Board: Connie Kaufman, Janet Jankowiak
Resident: Bob Boder

Mr. DiCicco called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM in the Charles River Room at PSAB.

1. **Minutes of Meeting – September 8, 2015:** Mr. Toolan made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of September 8, 2015. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Chaston, and the minutes were approved unanimously.
2. **Director’s Report:** The Commission reviewed the written report. Ms. Carey asked if a representative of the Commission would be available to attend the dedication of the scoreboard and bleachers on October 10th in honor of Coach Don Brock. Mr. Toolan will attend with Ms. Carey.
3. **Program Report:** Ms. Fink will provide a report at the next meeting.
4. **Discussion Items**
 - A. **Rosemary Pool Design:** Mr. DiCicco gave a brief overview of the process that has been followed over the past few years, including a feasibility study and opportunities for resident input. He stated the Commission had voted on a set of goals for the new pool(s) in 2014, and the hope was to approve a design that would also be supported by the Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee and Town Meeting. Though there are many goals, one to keep in mind is the cost for construction and operations. He noted a recent letter in Hometown Weekly, from a coach he truly respects, that felt that information had been ignored in the process, but Mr. DiCicco felt that all information had been reviewed. He praised current and past members of the Commission for their work on the lengthy review. Mr. Toolan noted that the decision will also need

to be determined by what was feasible on the site and what would be accepted by permitting agencies, and not create a lengthy delay for construction. Mr. DiCicco welcomed Joel Bargmann and Tom Scarlata from BH+A to provide updated information. Mr. Bargmann provided written copies of his presentation, as found in Appendix A. He noted that the Needham Conservation Commission had given some input to help guide them on design decisions, but that a meeting with the DEP and Army Corps of Engineers still needed to be scheduled. ConCom had indicated they were willing to work with a design within the already disturbed areas, but that information is still needed from DEP and Army Corps, who will also look at flood plain implications. Option 1 would utilize the current structure as a construction foundation. The new pool would move in 18' and be at the level of Tier 1. The cost of the fill needed to raise the structure would likely be balanced with the savings on not having to demolish the current pool structure. Raising the pool to the level of Tier 2 would likely add a major cost with the additionally required fill. Option 1 has two pools: an 8 lane 25 yard length pool with a diving well at one end, and an alcove entering the area, and a second pool would have zero depth entry, various areas of depths 4' and less with play features, shade, slide(s), and an area for water walking and other fitness activities. The combined square footage would be 14,860 square feet. Option 2 would flip the locations of the competitive pool and recreation pool, moving the competitive pool closer to the current building. It would provide an opportunity for enclosing the competitive pool and add a diving pool. It would also create a bathhouse adjacent to the indoor pool to meet health requirements. In Option 2, the competitive pool could be 8 lanes, and the recreation pool would be reduced in size and not have as many features. If this pool was moved up higher in the hill, adjacent to the current building, there would only be room for 6 lanes and a reduced spectator space. Mrs. Chaston asked if two pools were less expensive than three pools. Mr. Scarlata felt that there was not a dramatic difference on having 2 or 3 outdoor pools. Mr. Scarlata outlined the design decisions that are needed for an indoor pool vs. an outdoor pool. Mr. Bargmann used some information from the recent study provided by Community Center of Needham that showed the base cost for converting an outdoor pool to an indoor one exceeded \$2 million, with an additional set of requirements that were not given a financial estimate. This estimate would just be for the pool. Mr. Toolan asked how many toilets and showers would be needed in the new bathhouse for the indoor pool. Mr. Bargmann estimated that at 8 fixtures for each room. Mr. Toolan estimated the cost of the new bathhouse at about \$8 million. Mr. Toolan asked if it was less expensive to build a pool within the hillside. Mr. Bargmann explained that it could cost more to build, but would be balanced with savings from building near the lake, and would require less permitting. In Option 1, Mrs. Chaston asked what the view would be from the far side of the lake looking towards the pool site. Mr. Bargmann stated that people would see a grassy

slope leading to the pool, and then the hillside. He suggested putting the slide near the current building side, so it was not a dramatic impact on the view. Mr. Toolan asked if a recommendation was ready for location of the filters. Mr. Bargmann said that they would not fit under the pool if built at the Tier 1 level, so that a separate building will need to be located on the site. Mr. DiCicco asked about a timeline for deciding on the preferred pool option. Mr. Bargmann asked that it be sooner rather than later, so that they can provide options to DEP and Army Corp of Engineers early on to determine what possibilities can move forward. Amy Hurley from CCN asked if a competitive pool built in the hillside could be turned to create more room for an 8 lane pool. BH+A will review. Ms. Carey reviewed Option 1 to show that the design enabled the pool to still provide many of the features that patrons have, today, including: (a) space for multiple swim lessons at same time; (b) swim lessons and swim team occurring simultaneously in the morning, as well as a swim meet and general swim at same time; (c) a diving board which allows a child to sequentially develop stronger skills; (d) a separation of fitness swimmers/walkers and children playing; (e) features for swimmers and non-swimmers; (f) sand play areas. Mrs. Chaston asked if Option 1 might cost less to operate than the current pool. Mr. Bargmann said that some features would be less expensive, but others like the slides would be more. He noted that water would need to be purchased since it would not be coming from the lake, and he suggested that covers be purchased for covering the pool in the offseason. The Commission reviewed a small sampling of pools surveyed by Ms. Carey. Mr. Toolan asked that some additional information on fees be gathered. Ms. Carey noted that some pools charge non-residents a greater fee, but since the Rosemary site had partially been built with federal Land and Water Conservation Funds, it was likely the rule would remain that non-residents had to be charged less than double what is charged to residents. Mr. Toolan and Mr. Gerstel would like to review tonight's information with the Rosemary Pool Advisory Committee prior to the Commission making a decision. Mr. DiCicco stated his general support for the Town having an indoor pool, but felt that there were too many compromises trying to site it at Rosemary with an outdoor pool. He asked if a small competitive pool that could be used for practices but not meets would be utilized. Nancy Sterling from CCN asked if revenue from swim meets would help with concerns for costs. Mr. DiCicco noted that the operating costs would also increase, and the space available at Rosemary would limit the number of spectators as well as the available parking. Ms. Hurley asked if space could be saved for a future indoor pool. Mr. Toolan noted that it could, but there would be challenges in retrofitting the site. He noted that Community Preservation Funds would be an option for the outdoor pool, but was not intended to be spent on indoor recreation sites, including indoor pools. Jo-Anne Ochalla from CCN asked if the Town was open to private funding. Mr. DiCicco said that they would listen to any serious offers. Arthur

Cantor from CCN asked about the number of parking spaces. Hearing that a minimum of 80 were being requested, he noted that was not enough and asked if the adjacent medical complex would provide parking. Ms. Carey state that the complex owners had frequently refused permission, for liability reasons. Ms. Sterling asked if there were parking requirements. Ms. Carey stated that she did not believe Needham zoning specified parking requirements for a pool, but the Planning Board would require a review of national standards for input. Mrs. Chaston suggested the Commission tour some pools. Ms. Carey will work on a schedule. The suggested locations were Weston, Belmont and Holden. The Commission reviewed the 2015 attendance information. Mrs. Chaston was concerned with the reduction in attendance, but Mr. Toolan felt that it helped to show the need for a new pool. Ms. Ochalla noted that young swimmers were not joining Needham Sharks, so that it might be possible for the department to collaborate to help revive the younger age group.

- B. Rosemary Pool Advisory Committee:** Mr. Toolan and Mr. Gerstel would like to schedule a meeting on Wednesday, October 14th. Ms. Carey will reach out to the committee.
- C. School Feasibility Study:** Ms. Carey reported that the School Committee and PPBC are holding a public hearing tonight on four options: a new school at Hillside, a new school at Central Avenue site still to be purchased, a new elementary school at DeFazio, and a new 6th grade school at DeFazio with renovations at High Rock for an elementary school. If the Commission is meeting with the PPBC on October 19th, a Commission could be held prior to PPBC to vote on a recommendation to PPBC.
- D. Projects Update: Newman, Eastman, Mills, Rail Trail:** Ms. Carey reported that the sod has been put down on the Newman multi-purpose field. Mr. Gerstel was able to see some of the work and noted how impressed he was with the process and quality of work. Most of the Eastman trail is completed, with the stone dust surfaces to connect sections of boardwalk to come, and the completion of the deck at the pond which had three helical piles that need to be installed differently in order to be secured. Contracts are being signed for the Mills parking lot work and sodding of diamond so that work can be done this fall. The next bid to work on will be the bathroom unit. The Newman/Eastman contractor, Cataldo Construction and Landscape, will do the next phase of work on the rail trail, beginning in mid-October.
- E. FY'17 Operating and Capital Budgets:** Ms. Carey has October deadlines on both sets of documents. She has been approached by a neighbor of Avery Field who is willing to donate \$3,000 if a half basketball court can be installed at Avery prior to the spring. Ms. Carey noted that the cost well exceeds \$3,000 and there were no current funds. The Commission expressed concern

that there was not adequate space to safely put in a half court without impacting the current park uses. At this time, a half basketball court will not be installed at Avery.

5. **Action Items:** None presented.
6. **Topics for Future Agendas:** Mr. DiCicco stated that the Trustees of Memorial Park are not requesting a joint meeting to review the joint Field Permitting Policy at this time.
7. **Motion to Adjourn:** Mr. Toolan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 PM. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Gerstel and the meeting adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Carey, CPRP
Director