

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

**Minutes of Special Meeting  
October 19, 2015**

**PRESENT:** David C. DiCicco, Chairman  
Matthew M. Toolan, Vice Chairman  
Cynthia J. Chaston, Member  
Michael J. Retzky, Member  
Patricia M. Carey, Director  
Robyn G. Fink, Assistant Director

**ABSENT:** Christopher J. Gerstel, Member

**GUESTS:** *BH+A:* Tom Scarlata  
*Community Center of Needham (CCN):* Amy Hurley, Maicharia Weir Lytle,  
Georgina Ruetenik  
*YMCA Board:* Paula Jacobson, Janet Jankowiak, Connie Kaufman  
*Town of Needham:* Christopher Coleman, Hank Haff  
*Needham Citizen:* Richard Carey, John Fountain

Mr. DiCicco called the Special Meeting to order at 6:33 PM in the Charles River Room at the Public Services Administration Building.

- 1. Rosemary Pool Design:** Mr. DiCicco let the public know that the meeting would be a deliberation meeting with no public discussion. Mr. Toolan gave an overview of the October 14, 2015 Rosemary Pool Advisory meeting. At the advisory meeting, Mr. Toolan gave a recap of the BH+A presentation. All advisory participants were asked to give their thoughts and opinions on the concepts that were presented. They narrowed down their selection to option 1 and a hybrid option 3, later called 3a. The hybrid option would remove the lower competition pool and only have a competition pool at the top of the hill to be enclosed at a later time. There was a 4-4 tie, with the understanding that the Advisory Committee was not giving a binding vote. Mr. DiCicco asked if there was a 3a drawing and if cost was discussed. Mr. Toolan said that at the Advisory Meeting, Mr. Hank Haff explained what it would take to put a pool at the top of the hill, but no money figures were given except the \$1.5-2 million to put the infrastructure in place to enclose the pool at a later date. Mrs. Chaston raised the question if the Advisory Committee supported the added cost to build 3a. Mr. Toolan commented that the committee was torn because they feel we should plan for the future but that cost would be a factor. Some members of the Advisory Committee tried to point out that there are area pools which do make a profit and the Needham pool could do the same. Mr. Toolan pointed out to them that we wouldn't have adequate parking or space inside the facility to be able to host a regional or big meet which would be needed to bring in necessary funds.

Tom Scarlata, with BH+A, described the new concept 3a. He pointed out that the new lap pool up on the hill would require a retaining wall. The fill which will be taken out of the hill could be used below in the lower pool. The upper pool would be doable as it is outside of all of the setbacks, however the costs that are currently given only cover the preparation for an enclosed pool and it doesn't address the challenge of the bathhouse. The building in its current state would have lots of limitations to use it as a year-round bathhouse. Mr. Haff pointed out that no test borings up into the hill have been completed at this time. If there is bedrock, blasting would be required.

Mrs. Chaston raised the question that if 3a was chosen, would the lap pool be now and prepped for future enclosure or would it be built at a later date. Mr. Haff answered that the lap pool would be built now with the ability to enclose it at a later date. Mrs. Chaston also raised the question about seating within the enclosure. Mr. Haff said that in order to include seating, the site would need to be over excavated now to prep for the enclosing in the future. He also suggested that if 3a was chosen, any permits needed for future construction be acquired now. Mrs. Chaston pointed out that she feels we would be shoehorning the indoor pool into a space and would we wouldn't be meeting the needs of the Town if we are adjusting the size of things to fit into the space.

Mr. Toolan asked if the pool was built up on the hill, how would it impact the filters and wouldn't water have to be pumped up the hill. Mr. Scarlata said that they wouldn't necessarily have to pump water up, but that the pool would have to be insulated now. Mr. DiCicco felt like the site was not economically feasible for an indoor site. Mr. Retzky asked the Commission to think back to the feasibility study as it pointed out that the most challenging part was the topography of the site. All designers who looked at the site said it would be challenging. There would be constructability issues at the site that could be done, but with a cost. He went onto say that the pool needs to be built for the community and what's best for the community. The site was never set up for an indoor pool and we would have to make adjustments and shoehorn an indoor pool into the space. As for the infrastructure cost, Mr. Retzky doesn't think the Commission can justify an indoor pool as it is a lot of money to spend for something that we might never enclose. He reminded the Commission that if we don't build a pool, it would still be \$1-\$2 million to decommission the site. If an indoor pool was built, he doesn't see a private entity wanting to come in to run a small pool. He doesn't feel Rosemary is the site for an indoor pool. It needs to be someplace else where a full complex with more aspects can go with it to offset the cost. Mrs. Chaston is concerned about building now for an unknown future. Mr. Toolan said that to have an indoor pool at the site, it would need to be built "just good enough". There would still be cost involved to run the facility and without extra amenities, there would be no way to cover the costs.

Mrs. Chaston made a motion that the Commission recommend option 1 to the Public Permanent Building Committee, which is a 2 pool option, but not to proceed with the additional work for a future enclosure. Mr. Toolan seconded the motion and the Commission moved into discussion. Mr. DiCicco pointed out that if they selected option

1, it might not be the exact pool as it is a concept only. Mrs. Chaston asked if the Commission would still have the option for a smaller pool. As it is just a concept, more in depth planning could be done going forward. Ms. Carey stated that she feels the project needs to be done correctly and that means not trying to shoehorn in an indoor pool at the Rosemary site. She feels that can be done at a different site. Mr. Toolan preferred option 1 as he felt it best fit the site and community needs. Ms. Fink echoed the same feelings as an indoor site would be better at a different location and option 1 would satisfy programming needs. The Commission voted unanimously for option 1.

Mr. DiCicco thanked the community members for their input and all of the questions that were raised to help the Commission reach their decision.

Mr. Retzky made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:17 PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Toolan and the meeting adjourned at 7:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robyn Fink, CPRP  
Assistant Director