

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

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**May 23, 2008**

*Background notes for Tuesday, May 27<sup>th</sup>  
Park and Recreation Commission Agenda*

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**MEETING DATE CHANGE**

As a reminder, the Park and Recreation Commission regular meeting date was changed from Memorial Day to Tuesday, May 27 at 7 PM. The meeting will be held in the Newman School Conference Room.

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**FIELDS CONSTRUCTION**

Work is progressing at Memorial Park. A question has come up about the copper maples along Highland Avenue. Gale designed, on paper, the new wall to fall outside the drip line of the trees, but in reality, some of the roots are in the same area. A DPW Forestry staff member can clean cut the roots, to help preserve the trees. The secondary issue came from that discussion. The pathways that need to be built to bring people to the stairs are each designed between two trees. Parks and Forestry Superintendent Lance Remsen is concerned that four trees would now have roots cut on two sides each. The potential of losing those trees in the near future would dramatically increase. Lance has suggested that the pathways and stairs be moved to take the place of two standing trees. The surrounding trees would not be damaged, so two trees would be lost rather than 4 trees in the near future. The Board of Selectmen will discuss this issue at their meeting on Tuesday night, and the Memorial Park Trustees will be asked to make a decision at their meeting on Wednesday night.

We are working on determining the actual start-date at DeFazio. Obviously, the earlier the work begins, the earlier the synthetic turf fields will be ready in the fall, and the more growing time the natural turf fields will have.

Commissioner Nadler will be working with me on a field scheduling summit to be held in June. We'll need to work with the organizations on fall scheduling issues, any additional regulations for use of synthetic turf fields, and the addition of athletic field lights and how they'll be scheduled and used.

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**SUMMER UPDATE**

The five supervisors are back at work organizing pre-season tasks and preparing training sessions. On Tuesday, the summer staff helping with registration will begin their work. So, if you stop by the office, expect some crazy moments!

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The DPW is into their final days of work on the pipe replacement project (Water/Sewer) at the pool as well as the cleaning and painting of the interior (Parks/Forestry). The DPW Highway Division will then do an asphalt overlay inside the complex for us.

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### **PLAYGROUNDS**

Town Meeting approved new asphalt overlays in the play areas at Mitchell and Hillside, with work to be done this summer. We'll have some programs at Mitchell that will coordinate around the asphalt schedule, as we did last summer at Newman when that lot was done. It's a bit more of a challenge in the play areas, but can be done. All of the painted play elements will be covered over, so I'll have to work on getting those events repainted.

The Exchange Club will work on some projects at Claxton over the summer and in the fall. The project committee did not get as much funding as they had requested (\$5,000) but enough to do the important tasks.

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### **INTERN**

We have had a 3 week intern in the office this month. Caroline Crawford is graduating from Ursuline Academy in early June, and as part of their curriculum, they have the seniors spend the final weeks of school interning in a field of interest to each of them. Caroline has numerous interests, which has made her a perfect match for our department. She has walked all of the Town trails, except the Town Forest, with the prepared maintenance maps. She has added some new maintenance tasks that need to get done, and marked up the maps to show where she had difficulty following the trails. This will be a huge help as we move forward with implementing the Trails Plan when it is completed. Caroline has also helped each of us with other tasks, and learned about Town Meeting and other functions of government. We are sad to have Caroline leave us, today, but pleased that she has accepted a summer position with us at one of the programs!

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### **IMPORTANT ISSUES**

The Commission set five major areas of important issues last year: Funding, Open Space, Fields and Facilities, Recreation, and Operations and Communication. The Commission will begin reviewing progress in each category and begin the process of setting its goals for the next fiscal year.

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### **SUMMER HOURS**

Town Hall will, again, change its hours over the summer, starting the week of July 7<sup>th</sup>. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, Town Hall hours will remain at 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM. On Tuesdays, Town Hall will open at 8:00 AM and close at 7:30 PM. On Fridays, Town Hall will be open from 8:30 AM to 1:00 PM. The Friday hours are not easy for our department, but we put a notice in the Summer Brochure so all residents would be aware, and will do the best we can to provide customer service. Last year, Nikki and Nicole were able to leave at 1 PM on most Fridays. Karen and I worked through most Friday afternoons as the pool and programs were still in operation.