

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

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

March 24, 2016

*Background notes for Monday, March 28th
Park and Recreation Commission Agenda*

LAND SWAP

At the meeting, the Park and Recreation Commission will discuss the plan to change the jurisdictions of some parcels. The Board of Selectmen, School Committee and Park and Recreation Commission have discussed the jurisdictional change, and if all three boards formally approve, the exchanges will be placed on the Town Meeting warrant in May 2016. The Park and Recreation Commission will obtain jurisdiction of Greene's Field and all the field space at DeFazio, not currently under their jurisdiction. The School Committee would be given jurisdiction of the DeFazio parking lot, currently under the Board of Selectmen, but with a Memorandum of Agreement that the lot would be administered by Park and Recreation until such time the lot may need to be rebuilt with a school built within the lot. The parcel on Greendale Avenue known as "Parcel 74" would be transferred to the Board of Selectmen. The Commission will be voting on the transfers, as well as on their support for the individual warrant articles. A third vote supports the request to the state legislature to remove "Parcel 74" from its parkland designation, so that it can be used for possible municipal use in the future.

EVERSOURCE

At the Commission's last meeting, there was a presentation from Eversource representatives regarding the Reliability Project, separating transmission lines between West Roxbury and the Chestnut Street station, primarily going underground in Needham. A public open house will be held at Broadmeadow Performance Center, starting at 7 PM, on Wednesday, March 30th. Residents with questions are welcome to attend to gather information.

FOOD TRUCKS

This continues to be a dialogue in the community. The Selectmen recently held a public hearing on the standing regulations. A resident has placed a citizens' petition on Town Meeting floor to allow for two trucks in the Town Center (Great Plain Avenue, adjacent to the Common; Admiral Gracey Way) and Needham Heights, near Avery Common. Some residents oppose having the trucks in the center, but would like them to be at athletic fields.

As a reminder, there are two by-laws that place restrictions on uses at the parks. For food trucks/ice cream trucks, there is a local by-law that restricts these vehicles from being within 1,000 feet of an active recreation site or school in use. With the exception of the commons, all parks are located in residential zones, and there is a zoning by-law restricting sales. When the Carleton Pavilion was being built, there was a lot of work to determine how the concession area could be used under zoning by-laws. The agreement was that volunteer non-profit organizations could run the stand for their events. The

original primary user was the Needham Booster Club who ran a regular concession stand for several years, but eventually struggled to get enough volunteers and to cover all the costs. It is currently only used for a small number of special events.

Some of the special events are still able to handle the concession for their events with volunteers. Most of those groups try to do simple, pre-packaged food, or bring in something pre-made, i.e. pizza. Others are challenged to get volunteers, so as a compromise, they are able to hire a company to help for their event, but the company needs to work under the non-profit's permit and cannot be set up for other events.

At times, residents approach the department to request permission to do fundraising sales at parks: yard sales, lemonade stands, cookie sales are examples. Typically, these are not connected to an actual event at a park, so they are not permitted under the zoning by-laws. If the activity is part of an approved special event, it can be done, but not as a stand-alone activity.

TREE CITY USA

The DPW Parks and Forestry Division has been notified that the MA Division of Conservation and Recreation has forwarded their application for Tree City USA to the Arbor Day Foundation, as Needham receives its 21st award as a Tree City USA. The parks have been recipients of many of the recent tree plantings, including Cricket Field, Avery Field, Cusick Diamond, Perry Park and Walker-Gordon. This year's Arbor Day plantings will be at Riverside Park, and along the entry way to Newman fields, adjacent to the tennis courts.

TAKE A HIKE

Three spring walks are planned: Rail Trail on Saturday, March 26th at 10 AM; Newman/Eastman on Saturday, April 9 at 10 AM; Rosemary Trail on Saturday, April 30 at 10 AM. Hope you can join us on some of these – there are always some interesting residents joining us!

TOWN-WIDE CLEAN-UP

The annual spring event is scheduled for Saturday, April 2, between 8 AM and 12 Noon. Groups, not available on that morning, can schedule another time with Assistant Director Robyn Fink.
