

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

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

April 7, 2016

*Background notes for Monday, April 11th
Park and Recreation Commission Agenda*

ELECTION

The Town elections will be held on Tuesday, April 12th. Wishing all the best to Cynthia Chaston and Michelle Geddes on the election, and looking forward to moving forward with the “new” Commission.

The Commission was originally an elected Recreation Commission, starting in 1938. It was then a combination elected Commission and appointed Committee; followed by Board of Park Commissioners and in 1959 becoming the Park and Recreation Commission with five elected members.

Some “famous” names from the past...Asa Small, Sr. (*the coach – the field is named in memory of his son*), Lester Hollis (*DPW building is named for him*), Henry Hersey (*Selectman, and commuter rail advocate*), Helen Richwagen (*her family sold the parcels to Town now known as Memorial Park*), John Dolan (*Pollard diamond named for him*), John McLeod (*DeFazio 90' diamond named for him*), Lloyd Remsen (*his nephew Lance was later Superintendent of Parks and Forestry*), Charles “Red” Rizzo and Gary Petrini (*major advocates for what is now Rosemary Pool*), Phil Robey (*longest serving member at 19 years*). In most recent years, also serving were Bill Dermody, Chris Dollase, Brian Nadler, Tom Jacob, and Mike Retzky, to name a few. The first director, appointed in the 1930's, was Phil Claxton. He was the Needham High Athletic Director and the Director of Park and Recreation until 1969 – and his job also included running Little League!! His job then became three full-time positions: Director of Park and Recreation, Athletic Director, and DPW Superintendent of Parks and Forestry (*John Cusick held this original position – Cusick Field!*)

EVERSOURCE

Representatives from Eversource held an open house on March 30th. Many attended and met informally with the representatives to gain a better understanding of the project concepts and goals. There is a concern with the location of the last pole, prior to moving wires underground, as it is very close to a home on Valley Road. The engineers will look for additional solutions.

On the tree removal project, the concept plans for mitigation at DeFazio and along the rail trail are being developed and are expected to be provided to Parks and Forestry Superintendent Ed Olsen in April.

NORFOLK COUNTY MOSQUITO CONTROL

The Director of the program recently met with the Board of Health, and I sat in on the presentation to get an update. Norfolk County Mosquito Control is a part of the MA

Department of Agriculture. <http://www.norfolkcountymosquito.org/> Under their Integrated Pest Management Program (IPM), they (a) do surveillance; (b) work on source reduction; (c) perform larvicide; (d) and as last resort, perform adulticide. The mosquito carrying the Zika virus is not prevalent in Massachusetts. A few individual mosquitos have been seen in MA, but at locations with tires that came from southern states. The current mosquito doesn't "overwinter" well in this climate, so is not seen as a current risk. The Needham environment is not conducive to the mosquitoes that carry EEE. The major issue for Needham remains West Nile Virus. Surveillance is underway, and throughout the winter, work has been done to reduce breeding areas, including beaver management and water management. Educational campaigns are year-round to insure that homeowners are able to reduce breeding areas in their yards, too. The larvicide work is about to commence, with an aerial spray that only targets mosquitoes, as well as "bricks" placed in catch basins. A biorational larvicide Bti is used – trade name VectoBac GR (EPA Reg. # 73049-486). This "brick" product is available at hardware stores for people to use in bird baths or other water features in their yards.

SAVE THE DATE – APRIL 30th

This is the Take a Hike date for the Rosemary Trail. We'll do the trail walk at 10 AM and then for those with interest, can walk the pool facility to explain the project concepts.

SAVE THE DATE – MAY 1st

There are two events on Sunday, May 1st. Needham Baseball and Softball will hold their annual Opening Day Celebration, marching from Greene's Field to DeFazio, with opening ceremonies at 11:30 AM at DeFazio Asa Small diamond. From 2-4 PM, the Bay Colony Rail Trail Association will host a celebration on the rail trail, in the area between Fisher Street and Charles River Street.
