

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

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

January 25, 2013

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

SOCCER CLUB TOURNAMENT

Representatives of the Soccer Club will attend the meeting to give an overview of the annual Memorial Day Weekend Soccer Tournament. The Commission asks them to come in every few years for a review.

WALKER-GORDON

The contractors began working on Walker-Gordon in mid-January. The split rail fence was taken down along the road, and Town staff removed a couple of trees along the fence line that were declining. Parks and Forestry will plant some new trees and add in some boulders along that section. The contractors removed the trees that would be in the athletic field area, and the sod and top soil were removed with a special machine. Grading began and will take a while to get done, as some days weren't available for work due to the snow and wet conditions. A staff person from Parks and Forestry is on site each work day, and Superintendent Ed Olsen is overseeing all the work.

When the project was bid, there were separate projects that companies could bid on and one company did not have to bid on all projects. One category was to make improvements to the playground area with some new equipment, but the two bids were from companies who don't normally install playground equipment and were well over the amount. We'll work on that project, again, after Greene's Field is designed and ready to go. One neighbor contacted DPW Administration and said he might be willing to gather some donations for the project, too, so we might be able to provide additional play opportunities.

GREENE'S FIELD

Parks and Forestry will be reviewing all the brush and trees along the fence line that extends behind the homes on Warren Street and the side of the YMCA. Some might be removed in order to keep the fence in the same location, which is approximately two feet into the Town's property. Design work continues, with Engineering working on the overall park design, and I am working with the playground designer. Both plans will be incorporated together.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PROJECTS

The CPC has appointed liaisons to each project proposal, and the liaisons have been meeting with project contacts. I have met with Gary Crossen and Conservation Director Patty Barry on the Open Space and Recreation Plan request, and the Newman fields and Eastman Conservation request. Patty and I have also met with Lita Young on the request for design funds for the Reservoir Trail and the Ridge Hill loop. I met Reg Foster at

Mills Field and we walked through each part of the project request. The projects will be reviewed at the Wednesday, January 30th meeting.

POSSIBLE RAIL TRAIL

The Bay Colony Rail Trail Association (BCRTA) has sent out their RFQ to three local firms with experience in designing rail conversions to trails. They will review the submittals in late January, and the project should be ready to move forward in mid-February. One issue to be explored by the Town and BCRTA is any possible easements from NSTAR along the recreation trail route. Rep. Denise Garlick will work with us in the discussions with NSTAR.

On February 5th, I will attend a Planning Board public hearing on the rail trail. Though they do not have a formal role in the discussion, the members had promised the proponent of an alternate rail trail in Needham the opportunity to discuss his proposal at one of their meetings in a public hearing format. I suggested to the Planning Director that it would be appropriate to have representation from the Town and the Bay Colony Rail Trail Association at the hearing to give an update on the actual Town project, to avoid confusion.

NEEDHAM CULTURAL COUNCIL

Park and Recreation has received notice that \$470 is being granted to the department for the Arts in the Parks program.

PATRICK FORDE GOOD PERSON AWARD

Reminder: The Youth Commission sponsors this annual award. Former Park and Recreation Commissioner Bill Dermody was a recipient a few years ago. This year, Bob Timmerman will be honored on Monday, January 28th at 5 PM at the Library. Bob grew up in Needham, and he and others in the Timmerman family have been active volunteers in town. Bob has been a guiding force behind the 5th Quarter program for Needham High students.
