

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

**Minutes of Meeting
December 21, 2015**

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

GUESTS: *Public Facilities Project Manager:* Hank Haff
Community Center of Needham: Amy Hurley

Mr. DiCicco called the meeting to order at 7:13 PM in the Highland Room at Town Hall.

- 1. Rosemary Pool Design:** Project Manager Hank Haff reviewed the different building concepts that have been developed by BH+A. Option A would consist of a new single story building with 6,800sf of space that would support the reconstructed pool and upgrades to the existing parking lot. The seasonal building would replace the existing seasonal building and update the existing parking, access, and terrace infrastructure to be code compliant. . The Town Engineer has suggested that raising the elevation of the pool might require that compensatory space be developed on the property to replace the flooding capacity of the pool. The terraces would be upgraded adding in guardrails to bring them up to code. With Option A, the parking lot would be re-graded and paved with 94 spaces, the fencing would be replaced to enclose the pool, and landscape improvements would be made. Option A would be a seasonal facility only and would cost roughly \$12.2 million.

Option B includes a seasonal pool with required facilities on the bottom level of a new building as well as a 3,000sf year-round multipurpose room on the upper level with 1,500sf of support spaces totaling 4,500sf. The parking lot would be reconstructed to include a new access road from Rosemary Street, reducing the grade from the existing 14% to an improved 6% or 7% grade with the lower level of at-grade parking expanded to 80 spaces and reconstruction of the upper level of parking for 26 spaces with a 10ft planted buffer along Rosemary Street. Option B would cost roughly \$14.6 million.

Option C includes the pool and site improvements from Option B, but assumes that the upper level of the new building would be fully built out as a year-round space (7,300sf) accommodating a multipurpose room (2,300sf), offices for Park and Recreation and a second Town department, and support spaces (5,000sf). Option C would cost roughly \$15.8 million.

It is possible the options would not require stairs or an elevator between the levels as ramping would be used. There would be no inside connection between the two floors. Mr. Toolan asked why the cost per square foot seemed higher than anticipated. He wondered if reducing the size of the pool could also reduce building costs. Mr. Retzky expressed that the Town Manager needs to be the one to make the decision about the town offices. He does feel that by adding the town offices to the building it could draw more votes and support for the project. Mrs. Chaston voiced that the Town could find other places for offices and she feels the community would still see the site as Rosemary Pool. Mrs. Chaston would like to review some value engineered options to reduce the costs. Mr. Retzky noted that some of the costs are related to the sloped site.

Community Center of Needham Co-President Amy Hurley suggested that having offices at the building would make it more welcoming and vibrant, and bring in more daily uses. Mr. Toolan asked that BH+A look at making reductions to the pool size, to possibly 12,000 sf to determine if cost savings could be found. Mr. DiCicco stated that operating costs would be shared with Option C. Member of the Commission weighed in on which option they feel is best. Mr. Retzky supports teaming up with other departments to complete the project and go with Option C. He would like the pool to be downsized to 12,000sf, the deck space around the pool increased, the terraces decreased, and the pool elevated. Mr. Toolan supports Option B with an elevated pool, reduced pool size, and more deck space. He is concerned with the costs related to Option C. Mr. Gerstel would support either Option B or C with a smaller pool size that is elevated. He went on to say that Option C would be used by more people than a seasonal pool and could bring in additional support for funding, so Option C was slightly more preferred. Mrs. Chaston supports Option A with a smaller pool that is elevated. She says it should be a basic building and the Commission should ask the Town Manager to find another location for the multipurpose area. Mr. DiCicco prefers a smaller pool size, that is elevated, and Option C. He thinks the collaboration with other town departments would work. He also sees the value in spending the extra \$2 million on a multipurpose space. Park and Recreation would be helping the Town by adding the office spaces. His fallback option would be Option A.

- 2. Adjournment of Meeting:** Mr. Retzky announced that he had accepted a job with the Town of Needham and would no longer be able to serve on the Commission. He has enjoyed his time on the board, and looks forward to working with the Commission on projects. The Commission expressed their gratitude to Mr. Retzky, for his years of service. Mr. Toolan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gerstel and the meeting adjourned at 9:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robyn Fink, CPRP
Assistant Director