

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

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

March 20, 2009

*Background notes for Monday, March 23rd
Park and Recreation Commission Agenda*

SENIOR CENTER EXPLORATORY COMMITTEE

Unfortunately, the meeting for public input sponsored by the Senior Center Study Committee is being held at the same time as the Park and Recreation Commission meeting. It will be at 7 PM at the Stephen Palmer Senior Center.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING

The CPC will hold its annual public hearing on Tuesday, March 31 at 7:00 PM at the Community Room of the Needham Public Library. Public input is being sought on the seven projects that are under consideration. The CPC will make their funding recommendations in mid-April. For anyone just interested in a presentation on the Town Hall project, the Selectmen will sponsor a presentation by the architects at their April 21st meeting. The information session will be held at the Broadmeadow Performance Center at 7 PM.

ATHLETIC FIELD LIGHTS TESTING

MUSCO Lighting will perform several hours of testing at both parks in the upcoming weeks. Previous scheduled test times have been cancelled due to snow on the ground. A grid will be set up on each field and is used for testing points. We will also ask them to test the lights from specific nearby homes. DeFazio will be tested on Monday, March 23rd. I'll stay at DeFazio as long as possible before returning for the Commission meeting. Memorial Park will be tested on Monday, March 30th. The testing does not begin until it is dark, though MUSCO will be on site earlier than that.

SECOND APRIL MEETING

The Commission meets on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month. On April 27th, the League of Women Voters holds its annual Warrant Meeting. I need to confirm the time, but I believe it is 7:30 PM. Though the election will be held on April 14th changing the make-up of the Commission, we still need to plan ahead of a change in time or a change in date. I've put this item on the agenda, so please bring your calendars.

SIGNS AT DeFAZIO

I have included recommended language for signs at DeFazio Park and included these in the Commission packet. I have limited the amount of text on each sign, to encourage people to read them. I have also tried to be positive and informative, avoiding negative terminology and scare tactics. Education will be the most important component for

creating responsible use of all the new fields...natural grass and synthetic. The signs are just one avenue of this education campaign.

TOWN FOREST USE

I read an article last week in the Boston Globe about a canine rescue team practicing in the Needham Town Forest. I have contacted the Needham Police Department to see if they have any information on this program. Though it is a worthy effort, both Park and Recreation and the Police Department should be involved in the decision to have this use. The Commission has approved night Geocache, and it does not seem appropriate to have canine rescue training occurring at the same time.

REMOVAL OF TREES

The Parks and Forestry Division have found two red maple trees located near the irrigation building at DeFazio that need to come down. They have temporarily done some trimming work, but found the trees have hollowed out, which is not uncommon for this type of tree. They will remove them before the heavy use of DeFazio begins in April, to avoid any problems with the trees coming down and hurting someone.

CITIZENS' PETITION

One of the proponents of a citizens' petition on the May Town Meeting warrant will attend the Commission's first meeting in April. I have asked Susan Abbott to come and discuss the article and what she hopes to achieve. She presented information to the Finance Committee this week, and it appears that she is looking to create an exploratory committee to look at Wellesley's Natural Resources Committee and determine if something similar should be set up in Needham. She is recommending that a member of the Park and Recreation Commission be on the study committee, along with a member of the Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission and four people appointed by the Moderator. As the article includes a request for funding, the Finance Committee asked if she had a recommendation on how it should be funded. She wasn't sure what the appropriate recommendation might be but suggested the three boards represented on the committee might be willing to fund the study.
