

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**  
**OCTOBER 20, 2014**

The regular monthly meeting of the Commission was convened at Town Hall at 7:00 p.m. with the following in attendance:

Robert Ferrigno (Presiding)	Kevin Bellows
Nancy Walsh	Marie Petitti
Richard Moore	Michael Travisano
Lee DeFusco	Nicholas Bragano

Also,  
Dmitri Paris, Parks Superintendent  
Mary Markham, Recreation Director

Guests:  
Dave Bjorklund, Spath Bjorklund Assoc, 592 Main Street, Monroe  
Atty. Dave Quatrella, Attorney, Post Road, Ffld. for the MGM Properties  
Doug Imri, 32 Ridgeview Avenue, Babe Ruth League  
Steve D'Agostino, 34 Plumb Road, Babe Ruth League  
Gerry Brady, 11 Tait Road, Rail Trail Trash  
Pam Roman, 27 Marigold Road, Rail Trail Trash  
Dan Pechtoll, 10 Trailwood Lane, Pickleball Request  
John Braun, 355 BoothHill Road, Pickleball Request  
Greg McDonald, 57 Raven Road, Trumbull Little League

**Public Comments:**

Dave Bjorklund, Spath Bjorklund Assoc., Long Hill Green Sidewalk:

This request is concerning a Planning and Zoning approved proposed development between Marisa's Restaurant and Whitney Avenue...the Long Hill Green. The Town's deed to a narrow strip of land along Whitney Avenue came over from the State of Connecticut as parkland (distributed a map of the property showing what the State of Connecticut gave to the Town of Trumbull as parkland) and the remainder of land that came to the Town of Trumbull was for highway purposes between Long Hill Green and Whitney Avenue. In essence you have this little strip of land between what was formerly the Marisa's parcel and now of MGM Properties. That deed from the State came to us with what is called a Reversion Clause. And that clause says that if it is not used for parkland now or in the future the State can step in and take this land back.

So, if you wanted to build a building on it you couldn't do it. The P&Z Commission asked them to construct a sidewalk from the proposed retail building (just approved by the P&Z Commission last week, as well as Wetlands Approval) from their planned building to Long Hill Green to promote pedestrian access. There is also a new development going on where the former Luigi's was and the whole idea of the sidewalk is to promote pedestrian access.

The only problem is a small five-foot strip of this proposed sidewalk access which goes over the State deeded 'parkland'. It ties the commercial center into parkland. Hopefully this Commission will agree that this is a good idea and then the next steps are to move on to the Town Attorney and have a conversation with the State of Connecticut.

Dave Quatrella, Attorney, Post Road, Ffld. for MGM Properties, the applicant. This Board is the first step of the process. He had copies of the deed.

Superintendent stated he had a broad-sweeping conversation with them about how this project was planned and how it will enhance pedestrian flow into the park. Apple trees will be removed and replaced with a new landscape planting.

Doug Imri, 32 Ridgeview Avenue, Trumbull Babe Ruth and Steve D'Agustino, 34 Plumb Road:  
They are presenting a request to host a Regional Tournament here in Trumbull for next July.

Mr. D'Agustino: Babe Ruth has been honored to host the 15U 2015 Babe Ruth New England Tournament last week of July, 24<sup>th</sup> through 30<sup>th</sup>., THS Varsity Field with the JV Field as a warm-up. The Trumbull 14 team last season will be the 15 team next season...they won the District, the State Championship, New England Regional made the championship game and lost in the bottom of the 10<sup>th</sup> inning. There will be 8 teams in this tournament...the winner of each state...VT, NH, (2) Mass, Maine, (2) CT (Trumbull being a host championship team will get to play). There is a cost of \$3,000 to get this New England Tournament which is paid to the U.S. Babe Ruth Commission. Babe Ruth would have fund raisers for this. Food vendor for every game (15 games); welcome dinner Thursday before the games start (350 people dinner); hotel reservations with the Trumbull Marriott; T-Shirt sales; Ticket Sales, Programs Booklet with promotional businesses; would like to hang sponsorship banners on the fence during the tournament according to parks policy; web site; admission charges; announcers; score keepers; umpires 50/50 raffle; also there is field maintenance with their current contractor; 25 volunteers per game to handle parking, admission, garbage, etc. Potentially anyone in the 15 year old core could participate on this team.

From this years numbers. 15 games, 2 games a day, 60/75 people in attendance per game, as it gets to semi-finals it got to about 500. The parking at THS is more than enough. Westfield didn't have police on hand, didn't have EMS. Obviously everyone would be on notice for this event. All volunteer. They hosted tournaments at Unity, so the parents of the Babe Ruth League have been very helpful to volunteer in the past. This is elevated a little more because it's a New England tournament.

Upon question would Unity be used at all. Not planned. Only with weather-related issues. Usually no other events on the THS baseball field at that time.

Chairman questioned how soon they need an answer because normally we take our requests for the new year after January. Response, the fee is due sometime around November 1<sup>st</sup>. Prefer an answer tonight.

Recreation Director stated that Sr. City and the Travel Team may still be on the fields at that time.

They felt that Senior City is generally done before that time and would be willing to work around them. They have to play within a certain week because then the World Series starts. If it rains, they have time to push forward a little.

In addition to the request, Babe Ruth submitted a Receipt for reimbursement for locks on the doors at their Ranger Station storage area damaged by Town employees which needed to be replaced.

Superintendent explained that the Town was looking for some transfer space for relocation of the Counseling Center. The utilities supervisor in Public Works was looking to potentially use the Ranger Station. Superintendent contacted Michael Curley to see if there was a key to get into the main building and gave that key to Facilities Manager unaware that there were three different locks. He gained access to one room, took it upon himself to bore out the other two locks. Nothing to do with parks.

Gerry Brady and Pam Roman, Rail Trail Trash and Signage:

Ms. Brady: We're here regarding the trash on the trail. We've written several emails to Tim Herbst and Chief of Staff and talked to many people about it and all we're asking for are signs to tell the people to take their waste home with them, don't leave it all over with dog feces in plastic bags all over the trail; and, they put a black bag on the end of the fence on Tait Road at the entrance and people throw their garbage from home there, if there's no more room in the bags they pile it up outside... neighbor picks it up and puts it in his own trash that he pays for. So, they would like some help from the Town.

Ms. Roman: Corresponded with the Parks Superintendent and read his letter back and forth a couple times and, they are here to request trash and recycling bins as well as signage along the trail. She sent a number of emails to the Supt. of Parks as well as to the state on this matter. The response was cost concerns and doubts as the efficacy of the bins and signage. She presented some "key take-aways" from a 98 page study Keep America Beautiful that refutes most of the concerns...four key things to consider:

- Littered environments attract more litter. The presence of litter suggests the acceptability of the act.
- Clean up efforts such as volunteerism and community clean-ups are proven to be short-lived without infrastructure changes to support them. Without requested solutions, you will be right back where you started which is why the complaints of the trail users keep coming.
- The study strongly suggests what they call "behavior affordances" (which is accessible means for proper disposal), are crucial in cutting back litter.
- Awareness and motivational campaigns are strongly recommended.

She said, they are local and want people to understand that when you walk on the trail you take out your stuff. No sign at all on Tait Road. She feels this should be something that the Town helps with....at least some signs that are very clearly marked. Here to ask that we find a solution for this. It's a beautiful piece of property and they really appreciate having it and wish to make it better for everybody.

Chairman thanked them for their comments.

Dan Pechtoll, Pickle Ball Request:

Represents a group of Trumbull residents and supporters, some with him this evening, who are interested to having access to pickle ball facilities within the town of Trumbull. Pickle ball is a cross between badminton, ping pong and tennis played with wooden paddle and wiffle ball, generally played on a court that's about 1/3 the size of a tennis court. Realized that about a year and a half ago it was presented to the commission and they didn't have quite enough support and they're here tonight to ask again and in addition put together a Petition signed by about 75 Trumbull residents who are asking for these kind of facilities. Seen a tremendous growth in pickle ball and players and that growth is really driven by older adults. Pickle Ball has been named the fastest growing sport in the United States by NBC News. About 70% of members over the age of 60. 2010 Census data for Trumbull is 8,557 residents over the age of 60 in Trumbull. That age demographic is what's driving growth. There are limited opportunities for older adults. This is one of the things we can provide for them. They play in other towns - Fairfield, Shelton, Milford, Orange, Ridgefield. In Trumbull they play on a retrofitted old parking lot at Pinewood Lake. Specifically he requested Nothnagle Park two courts, one court each

at Unity Park and Tashua. Can certainly co-exist with tennis players. No reason why a court can't be lined for this as well as tennis. They would also like to see it a part of a Recreation Program, the size is the same as a Badminton court, some of the schools are already lined in their gyms, could establish a program for winter play.

In summary what they are asking is a modest and reasonable proposal, relatively low-cost to the Town and the Recreation Department, find some existing facilities for them. They would be willing to paint lines on the tennis courts; but, if that's not what you want to do as a Town you might want to have the company who installed the tennis courts paint the pickle ball lines on so that there is no issue about liability or warranty.

Chairman questioned if painted lines on the surface is the only change to the court. He responded that the net height for tennis is 36", pickle ball is 34" - they clip a bungee onto the net and it pulls down two inches.

Mrs. Walsh questioned if there is a club in Trumbull?

No, number of people who do play. Programs established in Shelton, Fairfield Senior Center very active program, and Milford. Drop-In Pickle Ball. Doubles, social aspect of older adults. Make friends while sitting on the side-lines waiting to play.

Recreation Director stated this type program would follow the same protocol used for Tennis permits.

Superintendent questioned if there is possibility of doing any fundraising for the lining of the courts if the Commission saw fit to introduce this This would be budgetary for us and could expedite it through a fund-raising once we get a number from our courts contractor because we have composite courts.

Mr. Pechtoll said estimates for lining a pickle ball court are between \$200 to \$400. As the ambassador for the PB Association grant program, we can generally get up to \$250 to start up a program like this. Some of organizations charge a drop-in fee, \$5/\$6 to play for that night.

Recreation Director noted that there's not a lot of use time of gyms. For winter, we are stretched to the limit, not all the schools have the badminton lines, when the high school renovated the gym the lines were removed and players moved to Middlebrook on a Friday nights and were scheduled from middle of October less than twice a month.

Chairman questioned if the group is willing and receptive to raising money to cover the cost of the lining? If we clear the installation of lining with the construction company warranty, do we have an understanding that you will try to solicit funding for the lining?

Mr. Pechtoll said he is willing to do the application for the US Pickle Ball Assoc for the \$250. He would personally be willing but can't speak for others.

John Braun, 355 BoothHill Road: If we do this, we would like to allow other towns to come in at the same time. Has faith in people they play with. Sure if they went to those outside of Trumbull as well as residents, they would be able to raise funds for these courts.

Chairman stated the Commission would be hesitant about including other towns for use of Trumbull courts because of residency policy.

Mr. Pechtoll said they would certainly look at some kind of fundraiser or fees for the courts.

Greg McDonald, President, Trumbull Little League:

Attended to address the issue raised at the September 8<sup>th</sup> meeting with regard to the Little League Rule and the 100 percent residency policy. Following the communication that was sent and the minutes of the meeting, they interviewed all the coaches and didn't have any of their coaches trying to solicit for a kid to come to Trumbull to play. A family from Bridgeport did approach our treasurer and inquired about the Little League Policy. It was revised in 2014 in which the residency policy was changed to include a piece about school attendance. Yes, there's a new policy. Checked with Williamsport if they are mandated to follow that policy; NO, they do not have to comply. It's something nice to have if they wanted to offer that to a child who goes to a parochial school so they play with their friends. But, if Town Policy is 100% residency, they will turn those players away. Concern is we also have the rule within LL that if there's no program being offered in surrounding towns, that you could accept an out-of-town player to play in town. His concern is the Challenger Program...there no program in Bridgeport, Easton, Stratford, or Monroe so we have Special Needs Kids that are inquiring about playing in the town of Trumbull because we do have a Program that has been funded privately through donations. They also have teachers in town that have their children go to school in town. Question to the Commission is what would they do with exceptions or is the policy 100% residency, black and white?

Chairman said 100% is pretty much black and white. Don't think we have any flexibility with that. Commission did make exceptions with the Challenger Program and with Top Soccer because these are such special programs.

Recreation Director stated that with the basketball and swim programs, teachers have made requests and we deny every time because it's Trumbull residents only with no exceptions other than with Special Needs Programs.

Challenger Program offered similar to Tops. All for Special Needs kids. They play one game on a Sunday for 6/7 weeks. They have all volunteers from the high school or the older levels of Trumbull Little League helping out as 'buddies', have ice cream after games. Get an opportunity to play ball for about two hours. All proceeds from their anniversary event went toward the Challenger Program. FOCUS group makes donations between \$1,500 and \$2,000 each year to cover costs...so no cost to kids who play in the program. He clarified that they provide the Challenger players full uniform including pants, hats, socks and Angels MLB team shirts as well as transportation and food. In addition, they have T-shirts printed up for the volunteers. They play in the spring, April and May, Sundays 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. Can't change, everything structured. Total 40 players; don't necessarily get 40 every Sunday. Usually get enough to play.

Att. DeFusco indicated that he has attended many of those games and it is a wonderful, wonderful program.

**MOTION** by Mr. Moore, second Atty. DeFusco, unanimously passed to close meeting to guests.

**MOTION** by Dr. Bellows, second Mr. Bragano and Mrs. Petitti, passed (Mr. Moore abstained), approving the Minutes of the September 8, 2014 meeting as distributed.

Correspondence Received:

From Director Health regarding our inquiry as to the closure of the Trumbull Farmers Market indicating that the Health District created a "conditional cooler use policy" for the remainder of the 2014 market season, in line with other health departments. In the meantime, they are gathering information from all health departments in Connecticut on their policies, inspection frequency and violation history so that they can create a policy for the next market season that reflects the best practices from across the state. They look forward to working very collaboratively with our market masters to ensure food safety in our community and appreciate the Commission's interest and concerns on the issue.

Mr. Moore noted that the Farmers Market will continue next season; but, will move to a location at the Nichols Improvement Association. Still under Board of Health requirements.

Old Business:

Att. DeFusco reported he received the plate for the Chmielewski's to be installed on the Memorial Stone at Twin Brooks Park. A tree has been planted by the Superintendent and family contacted who will place a marker at the tree on a date to be determined in the spring. Superintendent will alert the Commission when the date is set by the family.

New Business:

Spath Bjorklund Assoc., Long Hill Green Sidewalk Request:

**MOTION** by Mr. Moore, second by Atty. DeFusco, unanimously passed that once Local and State approvals are received concerning a Deed Reversion Clause of State designated Parkland contiguous with Long Hill Green, the Commission agrees for use of approximately a 5 foot portion of that State designated parkland for sidewalk purposes in conjunction with the Planning and Zoning Commission approved retail building with sidewalk to Long Hill Green.

Babe Ruth Request to host a Regional Tournament

**MOTION** by Mr. Bragano, second by Dr. Bellows, unanimously passed to approve use of Trumbull High School varsity field for the purpose of hosting the 2015 - 15U Babe Ruth New England Regional Tournament, July 24 – 30, 2015 with use of the JV Field for warm-ups; banners to meet the Town standard for banners; will be responsible for any and all costs for maintenance before, during and after tournament or repair as a result of the tournament; with displaced teams to be alerted to this scheduling of facilities and with use to be in accordance with the Facilities Use Policy and scheduling through the Recreation Director.

Rail Trail Trash Control and Signs Request:

Superintendent reiterated that the State and Town Policy is that "users must take out what they bring in". Double checked with the state this past week, they have never changed their policy and it will remain consistent. Residents should not put garbage bags out because what they are doing is ineffectual. There does need to be more signage. The Regional Rail Trail State Agency is about to provide a series of signs funded through the Rail Trails Project to be installed along the whole Rail Trail corridor.

Pickle Ball Request:

**MOTION** by Dr. Bellows, second by Mr. Moore and Mrs. Walsh, and unanimously passed that the Superintendent will investigate with the tennis courts contractor the cost to line a tennis court for pickle ball play.

Superintendent's Report:

- We have begun shutting down all restroom facilities.
- We had a minor issue at Unity Park. Contractor did some damage to one of our main irrigation lines. Will be restored so they can get the last of their games in at Unity.
- The 'Pit' is fully germinating. Well on its way to being a top-notch field.
- The same goes for Bill Property. Germinating quite well.
- Beach Pool Filter House excavation completed. Floors to be poured in another week, then contracted block work will begin. We're doing all the roof work and all the mechanicals.
- Sledding hill at Twin Brooks will be open this season. Remediation 60/70% successful. Still have some re-immersion of what we want to get out. Not unusual. It's a multi-year process. Will do a partial over-seed this fall to lock-up and crowd-out the invasive weeds. Whole area will be mowed.

Rec. Director's Report:

- Almost finished with registration for basketball. Now we have those who didn't register wanting to have registration extended which we are not doing this year. Last year when we extended registration, we had too many teams for the gym space and had to play less games.
- Pisces comes back in Jan/ Feb for pool space. Program working out well.
- Our Recreation Assistant has resigned. Before we fill that position, looking to restructure the department. The most important part of that position is the Teen Program which all happens at night so it would be beneficial to have that position part-time. We need more clerical time.

**MOTION** to adjourn at 8:40 p.m. by Mr. Bragano, second by Mrs. Petitti, unanimously passed.

Respectfully submitted:

Joan E. Plouffe  
Clerical Adm. Asst.

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