

PARK COMMISSION
OCTOBER 18, 2010

The regular monthly meeting of the Park Commission was held at 7:30 p.m. at Town Hall with the following in attendance:

Robert Ferrigno (Presiding)
Tony Chmielewski
Diane Mayo

Kevin Bellows
John Scippa
Ken Martin

Also,
Park Superintendent Dmitri Paris

Guests:

Stu Needleman, 16 Squire Court, Trumbull Babe Ruth
Mark Fritz, 133 Fernwood Road, Trumbull Babe Ruth
Paige and Zaina Minty, 522A Iroquois Lane, Stfd., Abraham Nichols Park Permit
Aaron Leo, News Reporter, Trumbull Patch.com
Scout Alex Gooden, 7193 Old Turnpike Road, Eagle Project

Guests:

Stu Needleman and Mark Fritz, Trumbull Babe Ruth:

Mr. Needleman introduced Mark Fritz as the newly elected Babe Ruth League President. Mr. Needleman will serve on the Board as Town Relations Liaison. As they move forward, all communications with Babe Ruth should be directed to these two individuals.

Prior to their discussion, for Park Commission information, they distributed copies of a letter being circulated to ball playing households from Andre Liscinsky, Triple Play in Trumbull instructor who is advertising lessons for young players out of Triple Play and at Unity Park and Trumbull High School. without having permission to run these for-profit lessons.

Babe Ruth League would like consideration given to the installation of a Batting Cage at the left side-line of their Unity Park field area for the upcoming 2011 season. They have been talking about adding a batting cage for several years. It is something that is needed to train players. Little League and THS both have batting cages. They circulated photographs of the only level location they could identify near their field as well as a photo of a similar full-net cage. Several trees would need to be taken down. They are looking to the Park Commission to fund this project. They will accomplish the construction and maintenance of the cage. Estimated cost of the cage is \$4,000 which has a 10 year warranty. Netting would have to be replaced periodically. Poles stay in place. Cage can't be locked.

Babe Ruth is exploring the option of adding a "Cal Ripken" baseball program in the upcoming 2011 season. They will be requesting field scheduling for this new group. Cal Ripken Program is for 10/12 year olds on a bigger field than Little League size. They have received much feed back from parents who want kids to be able to play major league type play. As a Board they have thought that Spring Hill Field could possibly be established for multi-use.

Superintendent noted that Spring Hill is currently closed and will be for some time as we are working at a long-range land fill project to correct and expand the facilities at that location possibly allowing for an additional field in the future. He suggested that they could possibly get the size they need with a modified skinned-softball field somewhere in the system. Both Mr. Needleman and Mr. Fritz stated they have no problem with a skinned infield for this Cal Ripken Program.

**PARK COMMISSION
OCTOBER 18, 2010**

PAGE 2

Upon question they indicated they are planning four no-cut teams of 10-12 year olds. Babe Ruth is 13-18 year olds. They are talking with Little League about this. They have indicated some concern with competing ball playing units. Mr. Needleman stated Cal Ripken is going to be the future because they play on a bigger field and with big league rules. Little League is decreasing. Some kids today are too big for Little League size fields. This gives kids the opportunity to play the game the way they see it on TV.

There is a "post season" for this group. They only need to schedule 10 games this season. It will be no cut and their own funding to get it started. Other communities in our area have now established Cal Ripken programs. Mr. Needleman said he feels that in the long range, Little League won't be in business five years from now. They are hoping the First Selectman will call the parties together to address this proposal.

Superintendent interjected that use of park facilities is under the charge of the Park Commission. There is currently a Field Use Committee comprising the Park Commission Chairman and Superintendent, BOE Maintenance Supervisor and Athletic Director and Board of Recreation Director developing a unified policy on field use and scheduling which is soon to be finalized which will provide equanimity of core leagues propriety scheduling and then scheduling of all others. His feeling is that a soft ball size field will be best for the Cal Ripkin Program. Scheduling requests will be considered under that policy.

Paige and Zaina Minty:

Paige is interested in having a Wedding Reception at the Abraham Nichols Park Orchard either May 22 or June 12, 2010. They were referred to securing a permit which includes all requirements for use of the area through the Recreation Department.

Scout Alex Gooden, Troop 67 United Methodist Church:

He presented his proposed Eagle Project to repair and paint the Shelton Road Gate to Abraham Nichols Park and general area. Gate is rusted. New sign needed which the Historical Society will provide. Clearing and planting the roadway edge is suggested. He requests donated top soil and mulch from the Town compost area.

Superintendent commented that repair to the gate will be a major project as it needs to be re-anchored within the stone pillar and the pillar itself may have to be rebuilt as well. However, continued clearing and planting of that location could be considered. Superintendent will review initial project plan with Scout Gooden.

Aaron Leo, Editor Trumbull Patch:

Aaron introduced himself to the Commission and the new Patch web site. He will attend town meetings for reporting on the site.

MOTION by Mr. Chmielewski, second Mrs. Mayo, unanimously passed to close Guest portion of the Agenda and return to the order of the Agenda.

MOTION by Mrs. Mayo, second by Mr. Scippa, unanimously passed approving the minutes of the September 20, 2010 meeting with a change to paragraph two, page 4 "...if the Commission is going to proceed with this course of action, it needs to be thought out thoroughly and *then make a decision.*"

**PARK COMMISSION
OCTOBER 18, 2010**

PAGE 3

Eagle Scout Project Nichols Park:

Discussion: Superintendent wishes to establish parameters of Scout Projects approved making certain that projects have an approximate begin and finish date, that there is an adult or scout leader present to supervise actual work and that scout masters review projects to make sure that the scouts have the physical skills to complete the project. We have worked with Eagle Scouts for many years, some achieve their goal but others are lacking direction.

MOTION by Mr. Scippa, second Mrs. Mayo, unanimously passed to approve Troop 67 Scout Alex Gooden's request to complete a beautification project in the vicinity of the Abraham Nichols Park Shelton Road Gate at Abraham Nichols Park once details are reviewed with the Park Superintendent, an approximate begin and completion date is established and only with project supervision by an adult or scout leader.

NEW BUSINESS:

Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation 2011 Barn Grants:

Commissioner Martin presented information on behalf of the Historical Society with regard to seeking a Grant Award for improving the Abraham Nichols Park barn. The Superintendent indicated his enthusiasm to apply and seek this type funding. He commented that the barn is in great need of a new roof and numerous other renovations.

MOTION by Mr. Scippa, second by Mr. Chmielewski, unanimously passed that Commissioners Martin and Mayo will work with the Park Superintendent to obtain and complete application for grant consideration for improving the Abraham Nichols Park barn.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Martin updated the Commission on the Historical Society's October 23rd Valley Hike beginning at 11:00 a.m. They have indication of a large turnout. They have arranged for Senior Shuttle Busses from end of Tour back to Commuter Parking Lot. There is still litter at the historic ledge area in Indian Ledge Park. Superintendent will try to get help in there to pick-up prior to the event which is this coming Saturday. Mr. Martin will try for some youth help as well.

Superintendent commented that all our interior trails having now been discovered are being abused. Mr. Martin has been in contact with one of the "Rider" groups who have expressed interest in assisting us with a bikers' self-monitoring program.

Andre Liscinsky Triple Play letter:

MOTION by Mrs. Mayo, second Mr. Chmielewski, unanimously passed requesting Chairman to contact the Town Attorney to have a Cease and Desist letter issued to Mr. Liscinsky as he is circulating without Park Commission approval a letter advertising for-profit lessons in Unity Park which is in violation with Park Ordinances.

Babe Ruth Cal Ripkin Program:

All scheduling of fields will be accomplished through the soon to be finalized Field Use Policy. Mr. Martin said he does not agree with Mr. Needleman's comments that Little League is being diminished by other programs.

**PARK COMMISSION
OCTOBER 18, 2010**

PAGE 4

Babe Ruth Batting Cage Request:

Superintendent feels this is a substantial project; a lot of work to construct a batting cage. It is a much bigger project than thought. This is not a project that his Department could undertake as a Capital Project. Superintendent feels the Leagues should get back to their mission to care for their assigned fields, keep up facilities in good condition before they talk about expansion which adds more responsibility and maintenance.

Dr. Bellows commented that the Babe Ruth field is a beautiful field absent a batting cage.

Mr. Scippa felt that a proposal for a batting cage is appropriate for any ball field program. If the proposed location is not right then more study is needed and whether or not they can take care of it properly must be determined.

Chairman indicated great concern for liability with an unlocked batting cage and the long-term maintenance which the Town is finding more difficult to perform.

MOTION by Mr. Chmielewski, second Mrs. Mayo, unanimously passed that the Babe Ruth League's request to have built a full-net batting cage for the Babe Ruth Field at Unity Park is **DENIED** as presented. The proposed batting cage should be planned as a fully-funded League project with comprehensive plans including long-term management, maintenance and future rehabilitation of this proposed facility. The present proposed location may not be suitable. Control and liability of an unlocked facility is an issue. A detailed construction plan and cost projection must be presented to the Commission for any future consideration.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

- Over seeded two Little League fields.
- Indian Ledge I looks good.
- We lost Indian Ledge 4 over-seeding which was followed by two weeks of extended rain and then soccer play.
- Kaechele looks good. Soccer players are staying off the reseeded areas as requested.
- Unity I had a grub problem with birds and skunk digging problem. Now fine.
- In process of re-painting the Teen Recreation Barn at Indian Ledge.

- Outer railings of Viet Nam Bridge have been vandalized.
- We have Valley Trail trees down which are being removed.
- We are getting beat up throughout the trail system. Lot of biking, blazing of new trails. Trails are heavily utilized and abused. We now have miles and miles of trails. Very difficult to catch vandals. Mountain Cyclers Club has indicated a willingness to help police trails. Mr. Martin and Superintendent will reach out to them and invite them to one of our meetings to discuss their offer to help promote respect for our woodland trails.

Mr. Martin commented that we should seriously consider more control points within our Park System and accomplish more Rangers visibility in our next budget proposal.

Chairman reminded everyone of the upcoming boards and commissions meeting, November 4th at THS at 6:30 p.m. which includes a tour of the High School Renovations.

MOTION to adjourn at 10:00 p.m. by Mr. Chmielewski, second by Mr. Scippa, unanimously passed.

Respectfully submitted: Joan E. Plouffe, Clerical Adm. Assistant

PARK COMMISSION

OCTOBER 18, 2010

MOTIONS

MOTION by Mr. Chmielewski, second Mrs. Mayo, unanimously passed to close Guest portion of the Agenda and return to the order of the Agenda.

MOTION by Mrs. Mayo, second by Mr. Scippa, unanimously passed approving the minutes of the September 20, 2010 meeting with a change to paragraph two, page 4 "...if the Commission is going to proceed with this course of action, it needs to be thought out thoroughly and *then make a decision.*"

MOTION by Mr. Scippa, second Mrs. Mayo, unanimously passed to approve Troop 67 Scout Alex Gooden's request to complete a beautification project in the vicinity of the Abraham Nichols Park Shelton Road Gate at Abraham Nichols Park once details are reviewed with the Park Superintendent, an approximate begin and completion date is established and only with project supervision by an adult or scout leader.

MOTION by Mr. Scippa, second by Mr. Chmielewski, unanimously passed that Commissioners Martin and Mayo will work with the Park Superintendent to obtain and complete application for grant consideration for improving the Abraham Nichols Park barn.

Andre Liscinsky Triple Play letter:

MOTION by Mrs. Mayo, second Mr. Chmielewski, unanimously passed requesting Chairman to contact the Town Attorney to have a Cease and Desist letter issued to Mr. Liscinsky as he is circulating without Park Commission approval a letter advertising for-profit lessons in Unity Park which is in violation with Park Ordinances.

MOTION by Mr. Chmielewski, second Mrs. Mayo, unanimously passed that the Babe Ruth League's request to have built a full-net batting cage for the Babe Ruth Field at Unity Park is **DENIED** as

presented. The proposed batting cage should be planned as a fully-funded League project with comprehensive plans including long-term management, maintenance and future rehabilitation of this proposed facility. The present proposed location may not be suitable. Control and liability of an unlocked facility is an issue. A detailed construction plan and cost projection must be presented to the Commission for any future consideration.

MOTION to adjourn at 10:00 p.m. by Mr. Chmielewski, second by Mr. Scippa, unanimously passed.