

SPECIAL
PARK COMMISSION
January 18, 2011
(Rescheduled from January 10, 2010)

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

Robert Ferrigno
Kevin Bellows
John Scippa

Ken Martin
Vin Lipinski
Diane Mayo

Also:
Dmitri Paris, Park Superintendent
Mary Markham, Recreation Director

Guest:
Mark Fritz, 13 Fernwood Road, Babe Ruth League

Visit:
Trumbull Patch Reporter

GUEST:

Mark Fritz, Babe Ruth League:

Here to follow up on Batting Cage for Babe Ruth field. They have tried to address all the items discussed at the December meeting. He provided three-dimensional layouts to show exactly where the cage would be placed contiguous with the Little League cage. He met with the Building Official who indicated no building permit is required. He did verify footing depths with him. Plan differs from original proposal. Now a chain link metal cage (11 gage, 12 year warranty).

Mr. Martin commented that he too spoke with the Building Official and determined that because the cage is higher than 6 feet, a building permit would be required.

Mr. Fritz indicated he is an architect and Babe Ruth League would have no problem with meeting this requirement.

Questioned if the chain fence is also on top of the cage. He stated that there is a soft cage inside and on top. They did not plan for page fencing on top. The size is 26 feet wide, 72 feet long and 12 feet high.

Question on Supervision. They plan for no out-side use. Cage will be locked. Each coach will have a key for the season, with the lock changed each yea as a controlr. Cage is easily viewed for ease of access by Rangers and emergency services. Cage is away from pedestrian traffic.

They are planning for artificial turf base, either used or new, for easier maintenance. All maintenance will be provided by Babe Ruth League.

They have a landscape architect preparing the specs for field maintenance, day-to-day and long range. Once reviewed by the Park Superintendent and Commission, they will request three quotes for maintenance.

Storage Trailer has been moved out of the park.

Chairman thanked him for providing this information and asked that he proceed with the Building Permit.

MOTION by Mrs. Mayo, second by Dr. Bellows and unanimously passed to close guest portion of the agenda.

MOTION by Dr. Bellows, second by Mrs. Mayo, unanimously passed accepting the minutes of the December 13, 2010 meeting as distributed.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Rich Coffey, Trumbull Trails Coalition. Attended the January 10, 2011 cancelled meeting. Introduced himself that time.

Superintendent reported that this group is a volunteer biking group using the trails in the Pequonnock Valley. From time-to-time they will remove fallen trees and brush along the several trails. The practice has been that they notify the DEP forester, Jim Beshley, and himself prior to any clearing project.

Mr. Martin felt the Rangers should be made aware of projects happening in the Valley as well to accommodate neighboring residents who may call inquiring about activity in the Valley. Police and Rangers could respond more quickly with this knowledge. Superintendent indicated that he will pass this information on to the Rangers when he is so notified.

Discussion on authority in the Valley. The State DEP is the official authority. The Town commits labor and resources for maintaining the Rail Trails and the Superintendent and Rangers are point contacts for activities within the Valley proper. The Superintendent and DEP Forester work closely on maintaining rules of conduct within the Valley parcel.

Nature Commission – 2011 Forestry ‘Trails Days’, request for June 4th and 5th.

MOTION by Mr. Martin, second by Mrs. Mayo, unanimously passed to approve the Nature Commission sponsored 2011 Forestry ‘Trails Days’, June 4, 5, 2011 beginning at Indian Ledge Park with no parking at the lower-level Sprinkler Park parking area and only at top of park or at the Park Street Commuter Lot, with a monitor required at the begin of the walk at the lower level Sprinkler Park heading participants to the upper level.

From American Legion Post 141: Spring Scheduling request. Request will be reviewed with others once the new Field Use Policy is finalized and adopted.

Nature Commission – Inquiry, Ranger Station Property:

Nature Commission inquiry as to whether the Ranger Station building on White Plains Road was included in the dedication of the Aldo parcel as open space parkland. It was determined that the whole parcel was dedicated as parkland under the jurisdiction of the Park Commission. (TC Resolution TC19-188, 03-24-2003)

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Martin reported that he submitted an initial Grant Proposal for restoration of the barn at Abraham Nichols Park. He now has the expanded application forms to submit for grant purposes. He has found that this would be a matching grant. \$5,000 for restoration, \$3,000 for consulting fees, and \$5,000 matching funds from Town. They would require a public use following restoration to be identified. As the Commission's intent was structural preservation of this historic barn and the current storage it provides, he questioned if the Commission wants to continue to pursue funding and the necessity to request the required matching funds.

CONSENSUS of the Commission is not to pursue funding for restoration of the barn at Abraham Nichols Park as the current storage location must continue with no public use area.

It is noted that because the Commission doesn't want this historic barn to deteriorate, and any Historical Society fund-raising programs which could be dedicated toward structural restoration of the historic barn would be appreciated.

Nature Center/Ranger Station Proposal:

Chairman noted that a tour of parklands would not take place until weather conditions allow.

The Commission was provided with a town of Ridgefield newsletter containing an article about a group of Ridgefielders who decided to form their own nature center in town and ultimately utilized current parks and facilities within the town as "their nature center". This is a different version of a coordinated activity but within existing Town facilities.

It was also noted that the State is currently proposing a new magnet school in Fairchild Wheeler Park, a Bridgeport 17 acre park within the boundaries of the town of Trumbull. It may be that space for the nature center could be provided in that proposal.

Budget:

Chairman indicated that all items discussed at the December meeting have been incorporated in the Budget Proposal.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman indicated he would like to appoint a Sub-Committee to review security in the parks system and ranger assignments. Current ranger assignments are flexible depending upon the season. The Commission is increasingly concerned with security and have included a request to fund a pilot program of park patrols to improve security within the parks system. This program will need to be incorporated into the current ranger program. Sub-Committee would meet with the Rangers, Superintendent and Chief of Police (or his designee) as to how we can improve security within the parks system.

MOTION by Dr. Bellows, second by Mrs. Mayo, unanimously passed that the Commission agrees with appointing a Sub-Committee to meet and prepare a recommendation on improving security within the parks system.

Those who volunteered to serve with Chairman Ferrigno are Kevin Bellows, Diane Mayo, and Kenneth Martin. Chairman will begin with them to commence their review as soon as possible and in time for the upcoming summer season if funding is approved for the 2011-2012 budget. The Committee would sit in on summer ranger interviews for the upcoming season.

Superintendent noted that the current parks system is far beyond what security measures can be accomplished. Our parks are spread throughout the town, over many acres, and diversified activities.

Recreation Director commented that there are many variables with park permits ie. caretakers, nannies, leased vehicles vs. registered vehicles, grandparents, visitors. Pool control is easier. One gate, required license for adults.

Recreation Director said she would be available to Commission members to review the Field Use Policy proposal which will soon come to the Commission for its approval.

MOTION by Mr. Martin, second Mrs. Mayo, unanimously approved to adjourn at 11:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Joan E. Plouffe
Clerical Administrative Asst.

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JANUARY 18, 2011

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