



Board of Parks & Recreation

Meeting Minutes

March 29, 2017

Please be advised that these minutes are in DRAFT form and will not become "Public Record" until they are formally approved by the Board of Parks and Recreation at their next regularly scheduled meeting planned for April 26, 2017.

Board Attendees: Nancy Caplan, Gary Dell'Abate, Frank DiVincenzo, John Hartwell, Patrick Slyne, Rick Loh and Scott Johnson

Staff Attendees: Joe Siciliano, Tom Greco, Susan Snyder, Bruce Spaman, and Jeff Freidag

Ex-Officio Attendees: None

Guest Attendees: Leslie Yager, Dean Gamanos, and Tom McJarrity

- I. The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. in the Keegan Conference Room.
- II. A motion was made by Mr. DiVincenzo seconded by Mr. Dell'Abate to approve the Board Minutes from the February 22, 2017 meeting. 7-0-0
- III. **Greenwich Point Master Plan, Tom Greco**
Phase one of the project is to develop a comprehensive plan of conservation, utilization and improvements for Greenwich Point Park.

Phase I includes documenting the history and generation of a GIS layered mapping of the park, evaluate and document existing conditions, develop itemized capital improvement & maintenance recommendations for the development of or improvements to picnic areas, shelters, playgrounds, bird and wildlife management, parking facilities, Fishing, swimming, bicycle and Pedestrian Paths, management of invasive species, dunes, gardens and groves, paved and unpaved trails, restrooms, provisions for Persons with Disabilities, boating, shell Fishing, wetlands, erosion control, causeway. Provisions have been made in the RFP to include sessions with key people; including the public. The report will address all aspects of the park and will be used to help with the design work, however, this does not mean all the work will be done.

Mr. Greco reported that the Request for Proposal for the Master Plan for Greenwich Point resulted in 7 responses. There is a team comprised of Mr. Siciliano, Mr. Spaman, Mr. Freidag, and Mr. Greco who reviewed the submittals. The team has made a selection; the selected company's proposal came in below budget, the Town has experience with them and they included comprehensive samples of similar work they have done. Purchasing has been asked to draft the award and the contract will go through the formal bid acceptance process. The hope is that the Master Plan will be completed in 6 months.

IV. **Field Improvements, Bruce Spaman**

Mr. Spaman reported that the ball fields came out of the winter looking great, this year covers were placed on the infields which were removed last week, they came out better than ever before.

Mr. Spaman reported that the following work was completed:

Re-sodded soccer fields; one at Eastern Middle School and two at Binney Park
Total infield reconstructions; North Mianus School (little league field), Central Middle School (softball field)

The Organic program over-seeded all grass athletic fields at least twice, 3 times in some cases

Over-seeded all baseball infields and parameters at least twice; while this is labor intensive, it is working out well.

New artificial turf has been installed at Cardinal Stadium.

Three major fields are currently in limbo; New Lebanon, Hamilton Ave. and Western Middle School.

Mr. Siciliano stated that there has been a commitment from the New Lebanon Building Committee that they cannot execute a contract for the school until they receive the results from the CT Bonding Commission, this has held everything up; it doesn't make sense to invest a significant amount of money into the field, the field will be the staging area/parking lot for construction if/when the school gets built.

Mr. Siciliano reported that the Board of Education(BOE) went before the Board of Estimate and Taxation (BET) for approval of \$800,000 to renovate Hamilton Ave. school field, it was turned down. There are two alternate plans out there for less money. Mr. Siciliano added he is unaware if and when the BOE may bring the proposals to the BET. The department supports the renovation of the field.

Mr. Hartwell has agreed to work with the parents at Hamilton Avenue to get their concerns to the Department regarding Hamilton Avenue Field Maintenance.

Mr. Greco added that further soil testing at Western Middle School is required by the state.

Mr. Siciliano further added that the Parks and Recreation Department has asked for \$100,000 in next year's capital appropriation for engineering work on an artificial surface. There is a good argument made for artificial surface at Teufel Field because there are lights on that field. A representative of Musko Lighting Company toured the sight and provided feedback on upgrades to the current lighting system so that the field may be used for a multitude of sports which will relive other regulation sized fields for other sports. The BET voted 10-2-0 in favor of moving the funds forward to the full Representative Town Meeting (RTM) for approval.

Mr. Siciliano noted that there is a need for consistent playable field space, artificial surface will provide this.

Mr. Siciliano referencing the artificial surface at the High School Stadium, stated that he thinks people like crumb rubber better, but the surface at the high school is environmentally friendly which was a selling point. He has not heard any major complaints. Although it has a different feel, it is working out well.

Mr. Siciliano reported that the Byram park pool project is moving along, it was a good winter for construction. A significant amount of the framework for the pool is up. Hoping to open Memorial Day 2018.

V. Binney Park Dredging Project, Joe Siciliano

Ms. Caplan stated that the Board and community organizations have sent letters of support for the dredging project. Mr. Siciliano reported that the \$3.5M for the dredge was approved by the BET.

VI. Sub-Committee Reports - EGCC, Gary Dell'Abate

Mr. Dell'Abate reported that the committee met, it was a productive meeting and the discussion is moving along. It was agreed that the committee will reach out to a facility planner who will make a presentation on the needs for the site. Mr. Dell'Abate stated he and Mr. Johnson will work with the planner to provide the necessary information for the presentation. Mr. Siciliano stated that there is money appropriated in the Department of Public Work's (DPW) budget for the design phase.

VII. Sub-Committee Reports - Dorothy Hamill Rink, Susan Snyder

Ms. Snyder reported the committee had their first meeting. In attendance were representatives from the staff, Board, Greenwich Skating Club, The Blues, Greenwich High School and interested community members. The mission is to have the Dorothy Hamill Skating Rink reconstructed in the 2021-22 fiscal year and to stay on target. The attendees shared some good ideas. Going forward, the committee will meet once per month.

Mr. Loh stated that the idea of having a temporary surface came up at the meeting and it was suggested that the user groups identify how much money they spend at other rinks to accommodate their requirements. It was suggested to test the concept out by providing an alternate surface that can accommodate these users and the expense of it can be funded by them. Committee members will research companies that build temporary rinks and obtain information to help make a case with the hopes that one winter we could give it a try.

Mr. Siciliano added that the most difficult part will be finding a location, the logistics are significant and include restrooms and parking, etc. Mr. Loh stated in terms of location, the baseball field next to Hamill Rink would be idea and there are many companies that include sod repair.

Upon discussion, Mr. Slyne suggested a temporary rink could help with the overflow at other facilities and could be profitable. Mr. Loh suggested that the test case could help determine what is required in a new facility.

Mr. Slyne suggested the facility could also be used for other activities year-round. Mr. Siciliano added that turf is installed at the rink once the ice melts, this provides an opportunity for other activities. Ms. Snyder added that lacrosse is the biggest user of the turf.

VIII. Director's Report, Joe Siciliano

Mr. Siciliano reported that there were no additional cuts to the budget by the BET, the budget will go to the RTM. Mr. Siciliano provided an update on the status of the processing of beach cards, more people are utilizing the online renewal system.

Mr. Siciliano reported that there have been more dog complaints and issues than ever before, not just at Greenwich Point. Residents have asked to post signs "no commercial dog walkers". Greenwich has become a haven for commercial dog walking businesses. Mr. DiVincenzo stated he sees it every day as he is a neighbor of Mianus River Park.

Ms. Caplan stated that the Board received a letter from the Friends of Greenwich Point regarding the Leash Law and enforcement at Greenwich Point. (**ATTACHMENT A**)

Upon extensive discussion, Mr. Siciliano stated he is researching the regulations.

Mr. Freidag added that the gate will be manned at Greenwich Point as of April 1.

Mr. Siciliano advised that he and Mr. Greco will meet with the Chief of Police about some issues including dogs, parking, traffic, enforcement etc.

Mr. Siciliano reported that the Steamboat Road Pier has been a hot discussion item. The pier has been built since 1896 and registered on land records since 1911. Since, the pier has been used as an open use area for sightseers, lunch goers, fisherman, etc. There is a \$600,000 appropriation to rebuild the pier. The pier has been repaired from time-to-time since 1911, but as a result of the wear and tear over the years, it needs more work for the structural integrity of the pier and including the installation of a railing. There is a debate on whether fishing should be permitted on the pier, or if the pier should be eliminated.

Mr. Siciliano added that the BET approved the funding to go to the RTM. Mr. Siciliano added that the Harbor Management Commission wrote a letter of support of the pier.

IX. Chairman's Report, Nancy Caplan

Ms. Caplan reported that two Burochoff skating awards were awarded this year. Ms. Caplan advised that she was contacted by the Burochoff's granddaughter regarding the skating awards as her grandparents have passed away.

Ms. Caplan asked if members had any additional topics that they'd like to add to the monthly schedule of discussion topics. Ms. Caplan stated that the department has done a phenomenal job on completing large projects.

Mr. Siciliano advised discussions are taking place for a new Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD).

X. Sub-Committee Reports - Dogs at Greenwich Point-Gary Dell'Abate

Nothing new to report. Mr. Dell'Abate reported that he has not heard back from the two women he met with several months back. Mr. Dell'Abate further added that he will gladly meet with them again when they are ready.

XI. Harbor Management, Scott Johnson

Mr. Freidag reported that the Harbor Management Plan is with the DEEP for review; Geoff Steadman reported at the last meeting it was close to having a final ruling. There is some question over who has ultimate jurisdiction, the Harbormaster or the Board of Selectmen. The Commissions standpoint is that it doesn't need to be one or the other that both entities can work together to solve issues and it has never been a problem.

Mr. Johnson added that the new Chairman is really great; open and flexible. Mr. Siciliano further added that he is very analytical, and knowledgeable.

XII. Sub-Committee Reports – Fields, Susan Snyder

The committee is scheduled to meet next week

Mr. Siciliano reported that two of the ferries have returned from the shipyard, the other is at the shipyard having engine repairs, the timing is good.

XIII. Unfinished Business

none

XIV. New Business

none

XV. Public Comments

Mr. Gamanos inquired if there are any plans for new parks. Mr. Siciliano responded that when the larger parcels of land become available sometimes the expense of subdivisions/buildouts is not worth it, parks are less expensive and there are tax advantages to the owner. Pomerance was the last acquisition.

XVI. Meeting adjourned 7:50 p.m.

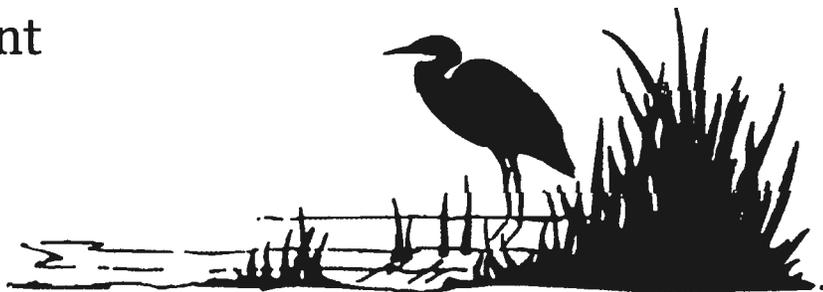
The Friends of Greenwich Point

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March 6, 2017

To: Board of Parks & Recreation

Re: Leash Law Enforcement at Greenwich Point

The Friends of Greenwich Point Board discussed at our last board meeting the need for enforcement of the leash law during the months that dogs are allowed at the Point. We discussed concerns regarding safety (dogs jumping up on people) and the environment (owners picking up after their dogs). Dogs have been observed on numerous occasions running loose not only on the beach; but, throughout the park.

There is a large flashing sign indicating a fine of \$117 for an unleashed dog, but there appears to be no consistent, if any enforcement.

We urge the Board of Parks & Recreation to continue their discussions on this topic and to implement a solution for leash law enforcement at the Point.

Thank you.