



**Board of Parks & Recreation  
Meeting Minutes**

June 28, 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 July 26, 2017.***

**Board Attendees:** Nancy Caplan, Frank DiVincenzo, John Hartwell, Rick Loh, Gary Dell'Abate, Scott Johnson and Hans Christian Thalheim

**Staff Attendees:** Joe Siciliano, Tom Greco, and Bruce Spaman

**Ex-Officio Attendees:** None

**Guest Attendees:** Dr. Jennifer Mattei, Leslie Yager, Jessica Del Guercio, and Sue Baker

- I. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Keegan Conference Room.
- II. A motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. DiVincenzo to approve the Board Minutes from the May 31, 2017 meeting. 7-0-0

**III. Director's Report, Joe Siciliano**

Mr. Siciliano reported that the Byram Pool is progressing quite nicely; one can see progress from the overhead shots from the security camera footage. The project is very much on time with the target date of May 2018. Mr. Siciliano stated that he met with the new Junior League fundraising committee. Mr. Siciliano suggested the Board members take a tour of the pool site.

Mr. Dell'Abate inquired what the fees will be for use of the Pool. Mr. Siciliano replied that residents will have access with their beach pass, guests of resident pass holders will be charged \$10.

**IV. Binney Park Project, Joe Siciliano**

Mr. Siciliano reported that members of the Department and Board met with the Department of Public Works, (DPW) and the contractor to discuss the Binney Park project. There is a schedule for the dredging, which will commence on July 10. The security fencing will go up, the bypass dewatering pumps will be placed shortly thereafter and a work zone will be setup. The pond will be dewatered; it will start at the two tributaries at the north side of the pond and bypass the water and pump it over. There is a plan to handle the turtles. After the pond is dewatered, the material will be moved from the north end of the pond to the south end of the pond. The workstation for the dredging will be at the south end of the pond. Across from the tennis courts will be a drying area for the material.

There are two location options to transport the sediment; one in upstate Connecticut and the other in New Jersey. The last round of samples will determine which location the sediment will go. It is a controlled substance not a hazardous one. The Town has contracted with AECOM to oversee the environmental aspect and there will also be an onsite project manager to oversee the work. The budget is \$3.5M which includes; collection chambers, dredging, disposal, restoration of the perimeter of the pond and any ground restoration necessary.

Mr. Johnson inquired if there is a re-planting plan. Mr. Spaman replied, not in the water, just upland.

Mr. Siciliano reported that the Town fireworks are scheduled for July 1 at both Greenwich Point and Binney Park with a rain date of July 2.

**V. Jennifer H. Mattei, Ph.D., Sacred Heart, Professor of Biology**

Ms. Caplan advised that she wanted to bring in an expert to provide some insight regarding beach erosion control as the department embarks on a Master Plan for Greenwich Point.

Dr. Mattei provided an introduction stating that she has been working in restoration ecology for 22 years. She has been working on a project in Stratford, CT at the old Lordship Gun Club. Dr. Mattei proceeded to present a slide show on the theory behind her work and the options other communities are undertaking to control beach erosion.

Upon concluding the presentation, Ms. Mattei entertained questions from the Board.

Ms. Caplan requested feedback as the purpose of inviting Dr. Mattei was speak was to touch on different topics to be considered throughout the process of a Master Plan for Greenwich Point.

**VI. Greenwich Point Master Plan, Tom Greco**

Mr. Greco reported that he received the fully executed contract earlier in the day. Mr. Siciliano stated the next step is to collectively put together a committee which will include, staff, Board members, volunteers, and other boards/commissions.

**VII. Chairman's Report, Nancy Caplan**

Ms. Caplan reported she's been working with Mr. DiVincenzo and Bea Crumbine on finding a new home for the monoliths from the O'Neil property. Ms. Caplan stated that they've discussed a possible location and will provide details to Mr. Siciliano for review. Ms. Caplan advised that Ms. Crumbine has individuals who are willing to fundraise.

Ms. Caplan inquired if there is a monument committee or an art committee that has to approve a new site for these monoliths. Mr. Siciliano replied that the Arts Council had a committee who oversaw the maintenance of monuments but has turned the responsibility over to the Town. However, there is a process to have this approved. Mr. Siciliano offered his guidance through the process. The first step is a conceptual site plan. Ms. Caplan stated when the concept is put together, they will meet with Mr. Siciliano to review.

Ms. Caplan advised that she was contacted by the Old Greenwich Association who asked if they can have the trees pruned on Sound Beach Avenue. Mr. Spaman replied that he was looking at them last week.

Ms. Caplan reported that more than 200 people attended the Binney Park fundraiser at Images in Old Greenwich. Ms. Caplan advised that she showed the participants the planting plan and they were excited.

**VIII. Eastern Greenwich Civic Center, Scott Johnson**

Mr. Dell'Abate reported that user groups (OGRCC, Riverside Association, OG Association) interviewed three consulting firms for a price quote on a needs assessment. The user groups have been very thorough and put a lot of work into it. Quotes were obtained from all three firms; on the low end the cost is \$47,000 on the high end the quote is \$68,000. The scope of work includes; project overview, market analysis, citizen participation plan, programming, site analysis, operation analysis, economic impact, project capital costs, partnerships, project funding, and a final report.

Mr. Dell'Abate stated he met with Mr. Siciliano and members of DPW to discuss how this type of report can be funded. Mr. Dell'Abate expressed his opinion that this type of report is a smart idea and a small price to pay. Mr. Siciliano added there is funding in the budget for the 2018 fiscal year, and in order to obtain the funding, the request would have to go before the BET and the RTM. Utilizing Town funds for this report would require that the Town's Request for Proposal, (RFP) process be followed for the selection of a consultant.

Mr. Dell'Abate added that he proposed to the user groups that they fund all or portion of the report fees. They were not against the idea. They have a fear that if they fund the report, and the Town is not otherwise invested (non-financially) the Town would claim that the report is theirs and pushes their agenda. Mr. Dell'Abate further added that the user groups want departmental/Board input. The user groups are confident they can come up with the funds.

Mr. Siciliano added that the budgeted funds are specifically for 30% site plan approval and the description for the funds does not include this report.

Mr. Siciliano suggested that there needs to be an upfront understanding either in writing or directed by the First Selectman on the arrangement. There needs to be representation from the Town and Board, so that the report is not a one-sided. Mr. Dell'Abate added that is what the user groups want, they don't want the report to be perceived as a one-sided report.

Mr. Dell'Abate expressed concerns that the process of hiring a consulting firm for a needs assessment could move a lot quicker if the user groups fund the report because then the Town's RFP process will not be required. Mr. Siciliano added the RFP process could take up to 8 weeks.

Mr. Johnson added that these consulting firms are all professionals with different expertise in different areas. Mr. Johnson suggested they could be a big help.

Ms. Caplan suggested that the town split the cost of the assessment to ensure buy in from the Town.

Upon discussion, Mr. Siciliano stated there needs to be some direction with a possible financial obligation from the Town to move forward.

**IX. Dorothy Hamill Rink, Sue Snyder**

Mr. Loh reported that the committee met to discuss ideas for improved scheduling efficiencies. The committee will research outside user groups who utilize other facilities to find out if they'd be interested in using Hamill Rink, if/when a new facility is built. Mr. Loh reported that Ms. Snyder has contacted Planning and Zoning to see if a tent/bubble can be used during construction. The preliminary response, was that there wouldn't be a problem as it will be temporary.

Mr. Johnson provided the scenario if something were to go at the Rink, which would be more important; the Rink construction or a new Eastern Civic Center? Mr. Johnson stated the Rink project would be more of a priority over the Civic Center, others agreed. Mr. Johnson further added from a budgetary standpoint, should one project be pursued now, so they are not in competition with each other?

Mr. Siciliano replied that both committees should keep working on both projects. The Civic Center was positioned in the Capital Project Plan as a placeholder knowing that there are other Town-wide projects ahead of it. With the latest influx of information from the state, the dynamics of how this plays out could change. Waiting to hear from the Bond Commission to see if they will fund the New Lebanon School project, depending on the outcome, the next five years' worth of projects will be moving around in the budget.

**X. Harbor Committee:**

Ms. Caplan inquired if Lyle Gibbons was still on target to speak with the Board in September regarding the Harbor Management Plan. Mr. Johnson stated that would be good timing. Ms. Caplan added that she will place Ms. Gibbons on the agenda for the September Board meeting.

**XI. Field Committee, John Hartwell**

Mr. Hartwell reported that the committee met. The committee approved a GYFL application for the summer. The results on New Lebanon and Western Middle School, (WMS) are expected to be available in a week. There is hope the WMS fields could be used in the fall.

Mr. Hartwell advised that the girls 14U Babe Ruth state tournament is set for July 1-2 at Greenwich High School.

Mr. Siciliano added that the High School committee for the Master Plan for the new stadium met, they are going to include feedback from the Department, Board, and user groups. The meeting will be scheduled in the next 6-8 weeks.

Mr. Dell'Abate added that the Field Committee has been amazing in terms of taking the weight off the shoulders of Don Mohr. There is now a committee to deal with issues versus rather than just Don.

Mr. Siciliano added that the committee has been an asset and it is a fair process for the users.

Mr. Hartwell reported he attended the Golf User Group meeting. Due to bad weather, the rounds are down. Mr. Siciliano added the expenditures are being adjusted to offset revenue. Ms. Caplan stated that the Board will meet at the golf course next month and will discuss the golf course further.

Mr. Hartwell reported that Ms. Dawn Fortunato has reached out to him to express her appreciation for the issues having been addressed at Hamilton Ave. School.

**XII. Unfinished Business**

None

**XIII. New Business**

None

**XIV. Public Comments**

Ms. Jessica Del Guercio expressed concerns about the upkeep of the dog park. Ms. Del Guercio expressed her desire to work with the Department and advocate for the community. Some concerns at the dog park are; limited shade due to a lack of trees, broken fence, and glass. Ms. Del Guercio stated her ambition is to make the Town more pet friendly.

Ms. Caplan replied that there have been other residents interested in improving the dog park, and unfortunately, they have not followed through which was disappointing.

Ms. Del Guercio spoke on behalf of dog walking business owners who have concerns for the enforcement of the Municipal Code as it relates to the commercial use of Town property for profit (dog walkers) that is being enforced at Mianus River Park. She was contacted by business owners who have used the park for their businesses for years, and now don't know what to do.

Ms. Del Guercio stated she has put together a proposal of compromises that would be helpful as a progression towards a more pet friendly community.

Mr. Siciliano indicated that the dog businesses brought this on themselves because they were not abiding by the rules. While they were not the only ones, they do have dogs off leads and are not cleaning up after them. Mr. Siciliano reported that he has visited the park numerous times and has experienced the dog walkers not following the rules. The neighbors initially wanted to live in harmony by compromising with the dog companies to follow the rules, but it didn't happen.

Mr. Siciliano added that he has reviewed Ms. Del Guercio's suggestions, however, the Department does not have authority over many of the items, it is bigger than Parks and Recreation. Mr. Siciliano stated he is open to the conversation, however there are other regulatory agencies that need to be on board.

Upon discussion, Mr. Siciliano added the Police have surveillance and enforcement at Babcock. The dog companies are now migrating to other locations in Town.

Ms. Caplan stated another look can be given to the dog park to see what can be done and committed to meet with Ms. Del Guercio.

**XV. Meeting adjourned 8:10 p.m.**