



**Board of Parks & Recreation
Meeting Minutes**

September 27, 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 October 25, 2017.

Board Attendees: Nancy, Caplan, Frank DiVincenzo, John Hartwell, Thomas McGarrity, Gary Dell’Abate, Scott Johnson, Patrick Slyne, and Hans Christian Thalheim

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

Ex-Officio Attendees: None

Guest Attendees: Leslie Yager, Bruce Angiolillo, Lyle Gibbons, Jessica Del Guercio, Dustin Gray, Cindy Reily, Melinda Thielman, Ken Tulloch, Sigrun Baldvinsdottir, Linda Tulloch, Renee Seblatnigg, Vin Dimarco, Eric Bleile, Michael Scotti, Sue Baker and Dean Gamanos

- I. Ms. Caplan called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Keegan Conference Room. Ms. Caplan opened the meeting by thanking Mr. Dell’Abate for conducting the July meeting while she was on vacation.
- II. A motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. DiVincenzo to approve the Board Minutes from the July 26, 2017 meeting. 6-0-0
- III. **Lia Fail Way, Bea Crumbine/Frank DiVincenzo**
Mr. DiVincenzo reported since the last meeting, he and Ms. Crumbine followed through on obtaining a plan for where the monoliths will be placed. They engaged with Landscape Architect, Eric Rains to draft up a preliminary plan. Mr. DiVincenzo had the plans displayed.

Ms. Crumbine reviewed a bit of history; 1934, the year that Horton O’Neil (architect) decided to create an outdoor theater for he and his father’s personal use. They obtained a number of acres of land in Cos Cob and created a stunning outdoor 800-seat amphitheater of marble. In 2017, the property had been sold and the amphitheater was to be demolished by the new owner. Ms. Crumbine advised that she had been contacted to see if anything could be done to preserve the remaining 6 monoliths. Ms. Crumbine stated that she, Mr. DiVincenzo and Mr. Spaman looked at possible sites for the monoliths and the Montgomery Pinetum was an appropriate place as it has an elegant space and is tranquil and placement here would equate to the original space. The large bird bath would be the centerpiece. The monoliths would enhance the Pinetum by adding prestige and lovely landscaping. The monoliths would remain in the center of Town by staying in Cos Cob.

Mr. Johnson inquired how the monoliths will be secured; Ms. Crumbine replied that there will be a 3ft concrete foundation. the monoliths will sit on the foundation 9ft above grade.

Mr. Johnson further inquired if there was any consideration to a patio in front of the monoliths. Ms. Crumbine replied that there could be, but as of right now, the goal is to save them and get them installed and cleaned. There is a lot of potential with the landscape.

Mr. Slyne asked if there was any opposition, Ms. Crumbine, replied “no”, the fact that the monoliths were saved was key.

The tentative cost to complete the plan is \$45,000-50,000 which includes landscaping. One member of the public questioned if the monoliths will require any regular cleaning. Mr. DiVincenzo stated that he does not see the need for regular cleaning. They are only in the current condition (which requires cleaning) because they were left in a damp tree overgrown area and the mold took over onto the stone, which takes a damp environment and many years. Mr. DiVincenzo suggested the stone may need to be cleaned every 5-10 years. Ms. Caplan stated that funds can be raised through the P&R Foundation for the maintenance and upkeep.

Mr. Johnson inquired if there was an alternate site that was a close second. Ms. Crumbine stated that the Pinetum satisfied all the criteria.

Mr. Siciliano added that a gentleman put together an alternative proposal at the Pinetum site, Mr. DiVincenzo replied that he has spoken to him and he would like for him to be involved in the landscape phase.

RESOLVED, that after a detailed presentation of the proposed installation of the Lia Fail Monoliths by Bea Crumbine and Board Member Frank DiVincenzo at a site specifically described on a detailed site plan therefor presented at the meeting and located at Montgomery Pinetum Park, the Board unanimously approved said proposal and to accept the gift relating thereto.

Mr. Siciliano stated that the next step would be to get an endorsement by the Board of Selectmen, (BOS). The BOS’ endorsement will include approval of the Pinetum as an appropriate location, approval to proceed with the administrative work through P&Z, and authorization to raise funds.

IV.

Harbor Management, Bruce Angiolillo/Lile Gibbons

Mr. Johnson provided some background; the Board reviewed the initiative behind the Waterways Vision report conducted by Geoff Steadman which was ultimately approved. The Waterways Vision recommended study and preparation of a Harbor Management Plan and Commission which was then acted on by the Selectman. The Harbor Management Plan, (HMP) is a sophisticated, complex document a lot like the Plan of Conservation and Development, (POCD) but for the waterways.

Mr. Johnson added that Bruce Angiolillo and Lyle Gibbons from the Harbor Management Commission, (HMC) were the workhorses for the plan, which is to be voted on by the Board of Selectmen on September 28, 2017 and then it will go before the Representative Town Meeting, (RTM).

Mr. Johnson stated that he has reviewed the plan very carefully and he feels good about it. The plan is not meant to answer all the questions, but rather be a framework.

Mr. Angiolillo reviewed the bases for the plan. After several years of hard work. He is happy to be at this point.

Mr. Angiolillo reported that the Harbor Management Commission is comprised of 9 members (7 voting members, 2 alternates) nominated by the BOS and approved by the RTM for 3-year terms. Additionally, there are 11 ex-officio members including Mr. Freidag who is the Parks and Recreation representative.

The Harbor Management Plan was drafted by a group led by Lile Gibbons with the assistance of an outside consultant, Geoff Steadman. Mr. Steadman is universally recognized as the most knowledgeable person in this area and has participated in every Town’s HMP that has been approved to date. Mr. Steadman is invaluable. The plan can be found on the Town’s website: http://www.greenwichct.org/government/commissions/harbor_management_commission/harbor-management-plan/

The HMC brought a whole variety of backgrounds to the process.

In September of 2013, the RTM approved the ordinance to create the HMC and charged the committee with the task to create a plan. The purpose in doing so was to take advantage of the 1984 CT State Statute, that the general assembly passed, which created the CT Harbor Management Commission. This statute provided local communities on the shore to increase their authority to control the matters pertaining to the use, management, and condition of their harbors. As a result of Special Acts, one from the late 40's, one from the early 50's specifically gave Greenwich home rule over its waterfront.

Decades later, the state assembly created a broader act called the CT Harbor Management Act, which was effectively enabling other communities to have what Greenwich already had and covered additional areas. This Act enables Greenwich to have the full scope of effective home rule. The fundamental reason the HMP is so essential is because the consensus is Greenwich would like to have control over its own destiny as much as possible.

Mr. Angiolillo reported the Commission is one step away from completion. Currently have State approval, Board of Selectmen approval (re-affirmed tomorrow), consideration of the plan will be on the RTM's October agenda.

Mr. Angiolillo reviewed the approval process:

The HMP drafted by the HMC and approved by the committee → Board of Selectmen reviews and approves → State of CT through DEEP reviews/comments/approves, if satisfactory → BOS final approval → RTM to approve

The first draft went to a public meeting in the fall of 2015, then reviewed by the State, Spring of 2016, the state concluded that while they liked much of the plan, it needed more work. Additional meetings took place with local stakeholders as a result, a new draft was circulated in the fall of 2016 which led to a second public meeting. With all open issues resolved, a period of time was left open for additional comments. The HMC had a unanimous vote on the plan on December 15, 2016. The plan went forward to the BOS and with their endorsement, it was presented to the state. The following six months the HMC went back and forth with the state and hammered out a document that would be acceptable to the state. The big issue was the state's resistance to acknowledge Greenwich's full scope and authority as a result of the Special Acts. They finally acknowledged that the Special Acts continue in full force and effect. The second area that was difficult to get negotiated and resolved was how much deference they need to give to recommendations of the HMC, once the plan is in place. The report has strong language, an express statement with respect to recommendations from the HMC regarding matters that the state has a say in, they have to show a really good cause they have to follow and respect the recommendations of the HMC. On August 21, 2017 the state approved the plan, subject to the approval of the RTM.

The HMC believes they have successfully discussed and resolved issues that have been raised by all constituencies. The plan is intended to set forth the goals that are the consensus goals (11) and identify the priority issues that need to be addressed in the near term (8). The report covers each of the harbor areas of Town, with specific thoughts and recommendations for each. Greenwich has the longest coastline in Connecticut, it's a very complex, unique and magnificent. The HMP will be reviewed annually providing for opportunities for changes; however, with each change requires the approval processes again.

Ms. Gibbons stated that the HMP is really a P&Z document for the waterfront of Greenwich. The main reasons the committee has put so much time and effort:

- To preserve home rule
- Codify how moorings/permits are given
- Pier and dock review process
- Reinforce the care for water quality—an added voice
- Authority for dredging

Ms. Gibbons stated that the HMP is a policy document, and after three years, the committee has done as good a job as possible.

Ms. Gibbons opened the floor for questions and asked for help to push the HMP forward with the RTM.

Mr. Johnson inquired how the procedural format will go, how will applications be routed through the Land Use agencies? Ms. Gibbons replied that the HMC is now on the routing document. If you are on the waterfront and you want to build a dock, the application will also go to the HMC and the routing will need to be signed off.

Ms. Caplan asked what the anticipated volume of applications will be. Mr. Angiolillo replied that the HMC is automatically getting copied on dock, wharf and bulkhead, etc. applications. Averaging 12 this year. There is a standing committee that deals with permits.

Ms. Gibbons added that the committee has 30 days to act or it is assumed that they agree.

Mr. Johnson asked if the HMC will be in control of the mooring fees. Ms. Gibbons replied that it is complicated. The Town controls the mooring fees on all Town docks. Mooring fees will be deposited into a dedicated mooring fund of the HMC and is not returned to the general fund of the Town. The funds could go towards improving the safety and visual aspect of the signage on the waterfront. Ms. Gibbons indicated she does not anticipate any change in revenue (\$75/mooring/yr), going to an online system by 2018.

Mr. Slyne asked if someone makes an application for a dock and standards are not precise but, rather a judgement call is necessary to determine if the dock is suitable and the HMC says the application is not approved, is that a final decision? Mr. Angiolillo replied that docks are approved by the state. In the HMP, there is a list of considerations. Before the state will act on the permit application, they will look to the HMC for a recommendation. The recommendation of the HMC is then presented to the state and the state has an obligation to follow the recommendation, if they conclude that it is consistent with the plan that has been approved. Mr. Angiolillo stated that if the HMC were to make a recommendation that is not anchored in the plan, he would suspect the state would feel fairly free to take the HMC recommendation under consideration, but not necessarily follow it. This is a gray area, and will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Ms. Gibbons added that the biggest criteria in a dock, is what the neighboring docks look like and how the requested dock would fit in.

Mr. Thalheim asked for clarification on the fact that the HMP is a policy document but each situation is case-by-case. Mr. Angiolillo clarified by saying that the document is a policy document but it has specific criteria, however the criteria cannot cover all situations.

Mr. Siciliano added the foundation of the plan is solid. The plan does not address every issue. Some issues will need to be worked through.

Upon discussion, the Board motioned to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED, after review of handouts and a detailed presentation by Bruce Angiolillo, Chairman of the Harbor Management Commission and Lyle Gibbons, Vice Chairman, of the proposed Town of Greenwich Harbor Management Plan dated August, 2017 and approved by the State of Connecticut and Board of Selectmen, the Board unanimously approved a "sense of the meeting" conceptual approval of the proposed Plan as prescribed, but with recognition that most members did not undertake detailed reading and review of the Plan itself.

V. Courts/Playgrounds, Bruce Spaman

Playgrounds: The Byram playground has been online for one year. Working on refurbishing Pemberwick Park playground, adding new features. Adding onto the Binney Park playground to encompass the shelter at the S.W. end of the park. The Department has a comprehensive inspection program; annually and quarterly inspections. Playgrounds are on a 10-year replacement schedule for usually because of a change in regulations, not that they are worn.

Mr. Siciliano added that the department has an annual budget for playgrounds that covers maintenance, upkeep, and inspections. If there is a comprehensive replacement, it is in parks budget for parks and BOE, if at a school.

Tennis Courts: The department is responsible for tennis courts at schools as well as parks. There are 19 courts in schools, and 17 courts in parks. Courts are resurfaced on a 5-year cycle- this year 6 courts were resurfaced.

Basketball Courts: There are 32 units at schools (each back board) and 10 units in parks. This year the department has resurfaced Hamilton Ave. School court.

VI. Fiscal Year end, Open CIP

Mr. Siciliano asked to table the discussion until next month when Mr. Greco is back.

Ms. Caplan asked to have a review of open projects.

VII. Director's Report, Joseph Siciliano

Mr. Siciliano informed that Binney pond project is moving along quite progressively, despite some challenges early on. The pumps will be pulled out in the next couple of weeks. The stone work around the edging will begin soon.

Mr. Siciliano announced that Jeff Freidag, Superintendent of Marine and Facility Operations will be leaving the department in November; he has accepted another position at Riverside Yacht Club. Mr. Siciliano expressed that his departure will be a loss to the Department. Mr. Freidag's position will be posted shortly and the recruitment process will begin for his replacement.

Mr. Siciliano reported that the Department has contracted with Milone and MacBroom for preliminary engineering services; a survey and a cost estimate regarding artificial turf at the Byram Teufel Field location. This location is attractive because it is already lit, one less battle to fight. Looking into options to upgrade and improve the existing lighting.

Mr. Hartwell asked if artificial turf is being considered at Teufel instead of Western Middle School, (WMS). Mr. Siciliano replied that WMS is in discussion at the Board of Education. Part of the original \$40,000 that the Town gave Parks and Recreation was to look into turfing the middle schools and that was done. The information has been sent to the BOE Facilities Management group to look at the opportunities in outer years. There is discussion going on about WMS and whether it is more appropriate to artificially turf the field now because of the remediation or at another time.

Mr. Siciliano advised that the Parks Division spent significant time on school preparation; fields, courts, grass, turf, plantings, etc. Received many compliments from the BOE on the cooperation and work.

Mr. Siciliano reported that there has been a parking issue at the high school on Sundays as a result of the BOE allowing Trinity Church to use the student center for services on Sunday mornings. This has created a significant burden on the parking situation for the use of the athletic fields. There is a meeting scheduled with the BOE where he will ask that they address overuse of the facility and the associated safety concerns regarding parking.

Ms. Caplan thanked Mr. Siciliano and his team on all the hard work of the department from the various programming to the condition of parks/beaches.

Ms. Caplan introduced new Board Member, Tom McGarrity and thanked him for his patience with the appointment process. Ms. Caplan further stated Mr. McGarrity is already using his talents through working with the Skating Rink Sub-committee.

Ms. Caplan thanked Mr. Thalheim for his work and time serving on the Board, Mr. Thalheim will be moving to Washington D.C., thus resigning his position on the Board. Mr. Thalheim responded by saying this has been a tremendous experience.

VIII. Chairman's Report, Nancy Caplan

Ms. Caplan reported she has been fielding questions regarding the Binney Park project.

Ms. Caplan suggested the department look into meeting with the police to address the parking issues in the community surrounding Greenwich Point to see if signage can be improved as there have been complaints by the neighbors.

Ms. Caplan advised that she was talking with Animal Control to see if additional services can be obtained for Greenwich Point on weekends during the winter.

IX. Greenwich Point Masterplan, Joe Siciliano

Mr. Siciliano conveyed that the consultant met with various stakeholders. Focus is now on the Board of Parks and Recreation and Conservation to have dialog and begin to build information to work with. Ms. Caplan stated she and other members of the Board will be meeting with the consultant next week.

X. Dorothy Hamill Rink Sub-Committee, Susan Snyder

Ms. Snyder reported that she and Mr. Loh met with Katie Deluca of Planning and Zoning to show her the plan that was in the facility evaluation study of 2004, where there were several options proposed for a new Dorothy Hamill Rink, one of which was the possibility of two ice slabs at the current site. At first glance, Ms. Deluca felt it was feasible based on the area. This would mean removing the ball field. Ms. Snyder suggested that this be considered when contemplating artificially turfing that field.

At the committee meeting Mr. Loh suggested, if it is determined that the community does have a need for two ice surfaces, consideration should be given to one surface year-round and the other surface (similar to now) would be converted to multi-surface for alternate use in the off season. The committee also discussed where the Rink capital project is in the budget (DPW). Bill Drake asked to see budget statements for appropriations and revenue for the last couple of years. The goal is to get a survey out to the existing and potential user groups to determine future demand to support two ice surfaces. The committee is currently working on a timeline to accomplish this.

A member of the public suggested the committee take a look into allowing figure skaters to skate at an affordable rate. Upon discussion, it was determined that the rates in question were not that of the Rink but rather the club's rate which are not determined by the department.

XI. Field Sub-Committee

Mr. Dell'Abate reported that the committee has a meeting scheduled for the following week. This committee is one of the best committees it is a very fair process.

XII. Eastern Greenwich Civic Center Sub-Committee, Gary Dell'Abate

Mr. Dell'Abate reported that there is money in the budget for a survey assessment. The RFP should be out next week. Mr. Siciliano added that the hope is to get a consulting firm on board by mid-November to complete a survey and assessment. Mr. Dell'Abate stated he is happy with the progress.

Mr. Hartwell advised that he received positive feedback with respect to the work done at Hamilton Ave. School.

Mr. Siciliano added that the department resurfaced the basketball court, reconditioned the infield and surveyed and inspected the play area.

Mr. Hartwell further added that there was an article in the paper regarding that someone is pushing for a \$400k plan to help with the Hamilton Ave. field. This is half the cost of the original plan.

XIII. Dogs at Greenwich Point Sub-Committee, Gary Dell'Abate

Mr. Dell'Abate reported that the sub-committee was setup to look into the possibility of extending the dog season at Greenwich Point. Some of the dogs at the Point were off leash and out of control. There is a user group that wants to address this by handing out flyers at the start of the dog season letting users know that they need to follow the rules if they want to extend the season.

Ms. Caplan re-counted that the Board took a position not to extend the season for dogs at Greenwich Point.

Mr. Dell'Abate stated that everyone knows that they have to behave and the hope is that users do a good job and use this season as the example that it can be done.

Ms. Caplan added that the department reported that two seasons ago was one of the worst seasons for dogs at Greenwich Point and last season was even worse. The Board decided not to consider extending hours. Ms. Caplan advised she has been looking into dog wardens or some solution to prevent the situation from getting worse each year.

Mr. Dell'Abate stated that there are other issues that he doesn't feel fall under this committee; The commercial dog walkers in Town and the condition of the dog park.

Jessica DelGuerico stated she has formed a committee named Paws of Greenwich. Her committee would like to have a small educational event at Greenwich Point at the beginning of the dog season to hand out materials promoting responsible dog ownership along with complimentary pick-up bags. Mr. Freidag added the pick-up bags are already provided on site.

Ms. DelGuerico stated the committee understands the concerns regarding dogs off leash. But stated there are no healthy areas where dogs can exercise off leash. Ms. Caplan stated there are leash laws in Greenwich.

Ms. DelGuerico thanked the department for fixing the fence at the dog park and placing gravel. Ms. DelGuerico added that she has been picking up glass at the dog park. Ms. DelGuerico reported that there is a metal sticking out of the ground at the park. Mr. Siciliano thanked her for advising of the situation, a work order will be entered to have it removed right away.

Ms. Caplan suggested that Ms. DelGuerico provide a list of items they'd like to see at the dog park to the Board. Mr. Siciliano added that as the department receives work requests, when possible, they are addressed. The big issue is the surface, and the park is not in a user friendly location.

Ms. Caplan commended Mr. Siciliano for all the work that went into find a dog park. Mr. Siciliano stated the process went on for years, all other proposed locations (10) were protested by neighbors.

Mr. Siciliano reported he went through the dog park archives and recalled that the current dog park site was contested due to a court injunction, the judge ultimately ruled in the Town's favor. The dog park was built on a fill berm; the berm was built to screen the neighbors from the sewage treatment plant. There are inherent problems because it was fill. The dogs work the soil and material comes up. There have been attempts to grow grass, it gets worn out very quickly, there is an erosion problem.

Mr. Siciliano reiterated that there is a leash law in Greenwich. The only exception to the law is the dog park at Grass Island. The leash law is controlled by the Board of Health. All other public properties are subject to the leash law. Properties such as Babcock are designated as conservation land and it is highly unlikely that the Conservation Commission is going to give way to the leash law. These are the challenges that the department faced when searching for a site for the dog park. There are very few properties that do not have some other regulatory agency involved. The Board of Health would have to be convinced to relax the leash law.

Mr. Scotti reiterated that there are other surrounding communities that allow dogs off leash at their parks. Suggested certain trails at certain hours are marked for dogs off leash.

Mr. Siciliano advised that when the dog park was established 15 years ago, there was a member of the Board of Health that wanted to relax the leash law at the dog park only if dogs were restricted at Greenwich Point year round. Through negotiations this didn't happen. A requirement of the relaxed leash law at the dog park was supposed to be an educational program to teach dog owners etiquette a few handouts were provided the first year; by the second year the program fell off.

Mr. Scotti reported that the users have put together a petition signed by several hundred regarding the commercial dog walkers.

Mr. Siciliano stated that there are probably 10,000+ dogs in Greenwich, however only 2,200 dog licenses were sold last year. Ms. DelGuerico added that over the last 5 years, dog licenses have gone down

each year, there is no awareness about it and they are hard to obtain, the hope is to have the ability to apply online.

Mr. Siciliano added that dogs that use public facilities are supposed to be licensed. Ms. DelGuerico stated that at each of their events, they promote dog licensing.

Mr. Siciliano suggested the Paws committee focus on one thing, whether it is the dog extension at Greenwich Point, improvements to the dog park, additional off lead areas. Mr. Siciliano advised that the committee contact the Director of Health who is the liaison to the Board of Health to test the waters to see if the Board of Health would consider relaxing the leash law, if so, the department of Parks and Recreation will work on it, if not, the department does not have the time or staffing to work on an alternate off leash location if there is no possibility for relaxing the law as it would be all for nothing.

Mr. Siciliano reported that Mianus River Park is currently the only park that has the Town's Municipal Code posted, which prohibits the use of Town property for private business. The posting was a result of neighbor complaints which were witnessed by Mr. Siciliano himself as well as other members of staff, and Animal Control Officers.

Ms. DelGuerico suggested issuing permits for the commercial dog walkers. Mr. Siciliano replied that there is a large liability issue for the Town.

Issue Resolutions:

- 1- **Greenwich Point** - work with the Parks Department to get permit to host education session at start of season.
- 2- **Update Dog Park**- Send board a list of dog park issues so the board can track progress.
- 3 -**Off leash Area**- Dog Groups meet with health department to discuss tentative proposal.
- 4-Dog Walkers**- The Parks Director has made the decision to ban business ventures in North Mianus. This is which is well within his power. Decision made.

Upon further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

XIV. Unfinished Business

None

XV. New Business

None

XVI. Meeting adjourned 8:54 p.m.