



Town of Acton Recreation Commission

MINUTES - JANUARY 6, 2009

7:00 PM

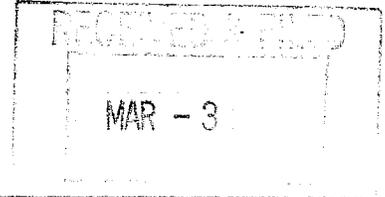
ROOM 126, ACTON TOWN HALL

ATTENDEES

Recreation Commission members present were Mr. Ron Schlegel, Mr. Frank Calore, Ms. Karen Jarsky, Mr. Brendon Cotter. Also present were Ms. Kim Bodnar, Ms. Pauline Knibbe, Selectman, Ms. Cathy Fochtman, Recreation Director, and Ms. Cheryl Getsick, Secretary.

NOTE TAKER

Ms. Cheryl Getsick



AGENDA TOPICS

Meeting called to order at: 7:30 PM

Citizens Concerns: None to report

OF NOTE:

Ms. Fochtman received a thank you message from a Carlisle resident noting the plowed walkways throughout NARA.

CONSENT AGENDA

DISCUSSION

December minutes

CONCLUSIONS

December minutes accepted as amended, 4-0

TOPIC: SENIOR CENTER PROPOSAL

DISCUSSION

Ms. Knibbe, Selectman provided an outline of the various options for the Senior Center. There are three different options being considered. These are, construction of a new senior center across from NARA Park, remodeling of the current senior center or possibly leasing commercial space. These options will be presented to the Board of Selectman in January 2009. If a new building were constructed, space would be available for use by other groups within town. The remodeling costs are estimated at 3.1M. New building construction is estimated at 7M. Mr. Cotter noted the largest population within the Town of Acton is currently 60+.

CONCLUSIONS

Ms. Knibbe concluded by informing the Commissioners there will be two presentations of this information during January 2009; one at the current senior center and the other at Town Hall.

TOPIC: PLAYGROUND REVIEW

DISCUSSION

Ms. Fochtman informed the Commissioners she is in the process of creating an inventory of playground equipment including the age and safety of the existing equipment along with a current "Needs Analysis" of such equipment. Mr. Cotter raised a question about safety concerns on the playgrounds. Ms. Fochtman noted she maintains certification as a playground safety inspector herself and will review each playground for such needs.

Gardner – Currently there is not a safety concern however maintenance is necessary. Improvement of the surfacing is also needed (i.e. mulch, depth of six (6) inches of compressed material; pea stone needs to be aerated). Parking continues to remain an issue.

Elm Street – A CPA Grant was applied for last year. This former site is not long equipped. This site also requires the most amount of work and is not being utilized. The Town of Acton did receive funding however the CPA funds for Recreation were determined by a recent Newton Court decision to be used for "new" playgrounds and not for renovations of existing playgrounds. Donations were solicited from local residences totaling \$375.00. The CPA amount is 75K. Ms. Jarsky requested a letter to be sent to all donors informing them as to why the playground renovations are currently "on hold".

Goward – This is an aging, wooden structure. A few stand alone structures have been removed due to rot. This playground is heavily used and has a lot of maintenance issues such as wooden posts rotting out. Ms. Bodnar questioned whether the library would help fund repair or replacement of the playground. Ms. Fochtman noted the library and lawn is on municipal property however the playground is on property maintained by the Natural Resources Department. Immediate requirements for this playground are replacement of timbers and a few stand alone structures with additional mulch needing to be installed. There are some funds remaining within municipal properties which may cover the repair and refurbishment of a few structures. **Where to place " frequent replacement of parts."**

Veterans Field – This is a new, small playground with pea stone as its main surface. There is a parking lot along the ball fields and playground. Safety concerns remain an issue here as there are not adequate parking spaces. The playground location requires children to cross the parking lot. A possible solution would be to

create additional parking where the playground currently exists and move the playground adjacent to the ball fields. The possibility of a future firehouse on this site has placed this possibility on hold for now as the firehouse takes precedence.

NARA Park – Though ten (10) years old, drainage within the open areas of this playground remains a problem. During the spring and severe weather, the mulch runs off the playground onto other areas. New mulch is needed along with replacement of the fence posts as they are rotting out.

Jones Field – This playground was installed during the year 1996. There are currently two (2) separate play areas at this location. Drainage remains an issue as well as the pea stone and bricks beginning to rise.

Robbins Mill – There is currently unassembled playground equipment which currently does not belong to Recreation. Once the homes are sold, the playground will be installed by the contractor and then turned over to the Town of Acton. Some residents have raised their concerns about developing a tennis court instead of a basketball court.

Great Hill – An older playground was dismantled two years ago and not replaced.

CONCLUSIONS

An inventory list will be available for review during the February 2009 Recreation Commission meeting. Ms. Fochtman has spoken with the Town of Acton, Planning Department. There is the possibility of utilizing the census data to obtain the information needed. Additionally, Mr. Peter Ashton may be able to provide some statistical information.

TOPIC: SCHOOL STREET

DISCUSSION

Ms. Fochtman has not been provided any new information regarding the lease agreement for School Street. The deadline was December 31, 2008. This is a critical field as it is utilized heavily by various leagues and organizations.

CONCLUSIONS

Ms. Fochtman will possibly meet with or speak to Mr. Andy McGee to inquire about the status of School Street.

TOPIC: LIONS CLUB FAIR

DISCUSSION

Ms. Fochtman met with the Lions Club members regarding the possibility of moving the location of the Lions Club Fair from the Parker Damon parking lot to NARA Park during the last full week of June 2009. There remain lots of details to work out however parking along Nagog Park Drive is a possibility. There is also the option to combine concerts from Danny's Place and Acton Recreation.

TOPIC: LEAGUE MEETING

DISCUSSION

Ms. Fochtman met with the leagues on December 16, 2008 to determine what each leagues needs and plans are for the upcoming year. One of the biggest concerns is the future of School Street which is in need of repair. Ms. Fochtman will speak with Mr. Andy Magee regarding the need for irrigation for turf. Mr. Calore noted there is a concern as to what the leagues continue to utilize to maintain the turf on the field and the closeness of the Town of Acton wells. Mr. Schlegel asked if the leagues had met with the new Town Manager, Mr. Steve Ledoux. Ms. Fochtman confirmed the leagues had met with Recreation, Mr. Steve Ledoux, Town Manager and Mr. Andy Magee on Wednesday, November 12, 2008.

TOPIC: TOWN BUDGET

DISCUSSION

Ms. Fochtman commented on the latest news for town departments to be prepared for cuts up to ten percent (10%). There is also the possibility ten percent (10%) reductions may also need to be cut from this current year as well. Mr. Cotter asked if there was any way to determine how much money Recreation has given back to the town over the past year or two. Ms. Fochtman replied "No". Ms. Bodnar asked who is responsible for maintaining the fields at this time. Ms. Fochtman commented the Youth Leagues are hiring contractors at this time.

REPORTS

DISCUSSION

None to report

NEW BUSINESS/DISCUSSION:

DISCUSSION

Recreation will attend the Merriam Camp Fair to be held on Tuesday, January 27, 2009. A request for volunteers was made to the Recreation Commissioners for a shift between 6:30-8:00 PM. Ms. Fochtman noted the Winter Carnival is scheduled for February 7, 2009 between 4:00-7:00 PM. Volunteers are needed

NEW BUSINESS/DISCUSSION:

MEETING ADJOURNED TIME:

8:45 PM