

Town of Groton

173 Main Street
Groton, MA 01450
Tel: 978-732-1893
Fax: 978-448-1115

fstanley@townofgroton.org



Park Commissioners

Gineane Haberlin, Chair
Kenneth Bushnell
Robert Flynn
Matthew Frary
Jonathan Strauss

Meeting Minutes

Date: January 5, 2015
Time: 7 p.m.
Location: Legion Hall, 1st Floor Meeting Room, 75 Hollis Street, Groton
Commission attendees: Gineane Haberlin, Robert Flynn, Jonathan Strauss, Kenneth Bushnell
Visitors: Nick Marsh (Eagle Scout candidate), Dean Marsh (Nick's father), Robert VanSchalkwyk (Lost Lake Firefighters Association)
Handouts: December 15 and 19, 2014 draft minutes
January, 2015 emails between Jonathan Strauss and Donald Black on gazebo
December 23, 2014 email from Jonathan Strauss regarding CPC open space funding
December 31, 2014 email from Gineane Haberlin regarding food permits
draft letter from Park Commission to CPC regarding basketball court project

Gineane Haberlin called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm. With Nick and Dean Marsh in attendance, Gineane Haberlin moved up the agenda item of Nick Marsh's offer to repair the Smith Social Pavilion.

Smith Social Pavilion (gazebo)

Nick Marsh expressed interest in preserving and refurbishing the Smith Social Pavilion. The Park Commissioners accepted Nick Marsh's offer with thanks. Commissioners advised that the Park Commission would pay for the materials if Nick Marsh can do the labor and project planning. A request was made to Nick Marsh that he attempt to fold in the accessibility requirements as per the CPC grant's accessibility evaluation. Robert Flynn asked about the process for overseeing or shepherding through an Eagle Scout project. Thought will be given to durable, vandalism resistant work. Commissioners will reserve large structural repairs such as those being undertaken by contractor Jimmy Cronin to replace rotted support posts to professionals.

Fran Stanley will email the blueprint plans for the gazebo to Nick Marsh's attention. When Halsey Platt viewed the pavilion, it was reported that he suggested adding 6 inch pavers around the base of the pavilion to keep lawnmowers away from the structure. Ideally, the work will be completed by July 4th fireworks time.

Gineane Haberlin thanked Nick Marsh and he and his father left the meeting. Wondering about possible material costs for the gazebo, Gineane Haberlin recalled that materials alone for the Hazel Grove kiosk built by an Eagle Scout candidate cost \$2,600.

Jonathan Strauss pointed out the email exchange between himself and Donald Black regarding the Park Commission's care of the gazebo. Jonathan Strauss updated Donald Black on recent Park Commission decisions about the deteriorated gazebo.

Gineane Haberlin announced that the Groton School's 8th graders are interested in volunteering for a spring clean-up of Park Commission properties. Gineane Haberlin drew commissioner attention to the food permit issue raised in the distributed email regarding food service at Hazel Grove.

Minutes

Jonathan Strauss moved to approve the December 15, 2014 minutes as written. Gineane Haberlin seconded and motion carried 2:0. (Matthew Fray absent, Kenneth Bushnell and Robert Flynn abstained).

Gineane Haberlin moved to approve the December 19, 2014 minutes as corrected. Jonathan Strauss seconded and motion carried 4:0 (Matthew Fray absent).

No field use permits are pending.

CPC update/Active Recreation/Review of draft letter of support for basketball court

Commissioners discussed ways to communicate with public about recent Park Commission activities. How about a news article in March, 2015 that will allow Park Commission to give residents a sense of what has been done and what can be funded in the future. If Town Meeting presentation is not doable, then use local media to tell that story. Group members expressed a general willingness to the CPC for project funds so long as there is money there that is available to the Park Commission.

Jonathan Strauss informed the other commissioners that he is going to go as a private individual to speak with the CPC on January 13th. In that discussion, Jonathan Strauss will speak regarding the need to pivot from attention to land acquisition for conservation and passive recreation and attend to properties already owned and also allot funds to active recreation and attention to needed infrastructure projects.

GDRSD Update

Robert Flynn attended a GDRSD meeting with a contractor who will analyze needs for all GDRSD playing fields. The GDRSD or perhaps an athletic booster club will pay for the study. Commissioners discussed possibility of assuming responsibility for the GDRSD fields that are located in the Town of Groton.

A turf field would cost approximately \$1.2 million to install; \$50,000 per year to maintain; and would last about ten years until it needs to be re-padded and resurfaced for an additional \$400,000. Despite the heavy use that a turf field could tolerate, Commissioners questioned the amount of money required to have a turf field when grass fields cost less to maintain.

Email protocol

The commissioners discussed Fran Stanley's recent email to Town Hall staff regarding gazebo repairs. The email was based on unapproved minutes. Robert Flynn stated that such emails, when there is need to send them, should be coming from the chair of the Park Commission. At the very least, the emails should be signed off on by the Chair.

Ice Rinks

Legion Common rink is installed with a porta pottie stationed adjacent to Legion Hall for use of the skaters.

Gineane Haberlin agreed to move the rink planned for the Tarbell School to Cutler Field parking lot when abutter opposition to Tarbell location came up. Cutler Field parking lot is not ideal, requires plowing and there is no water there. Commissioners agreed to not to install the rink at Cutler.

Jon Strauss got permission from H&V to use its field. Upon further investigation, the insurance rider would be too expensive for the Town to purchase. Commissioners discussed whether the rink should go back to Tarbell. Should the Commissioners wait for public opinion to help assert what the community wants to have in West Groton?

The Tarbell School porta pottie can be moved to be right against the building which is less noticeable for the neighbors. DPW volunteered to help move the rink from Cutler from Tarbell. 35 by 85 rink laid out near the road originally. Robert Flynn thinks that the Park Commission should proceed with the previously approved plan to install at Tarbell which the Park Commission has received permission to use.

Gineane Haberlin moved to relocate the West Groton ice rink to the Tarbell school and, should it not be possible to install the rink in a timely manner, then to dismantle it. Robert Flynn seconded and the motion carried 3:0 (Matthew Frary absent and Jonathan Strauss abstained).

Irrigation and fertilization work

Robert Flynn recommended a three year contract for the irrigation and fertilization vendor. Scope will be updated per group discussion (to add rain sensors where needed, replace broken rain sensors, add soil testing, add possible lime application and add aeration). Three estimates will be solicited.

For commons maintenance, P.C. Myette did a good job in 2014 and the charge was only about \$2,000. Robert Flynn recounted that it is difficult to find contractors to estimate when the dollar amount is small. The perception is that for many years, Park Commission vendor selections rarely changed over so contractors questioned the value to them of assembling an estimate for landscaping services.

Invite for Field Use Permits

Park Commission will send an email letter to use groups who have used fields in 2014 inviting them to apply, share field use requirements, and then attend Park Commission meeting so that field space can be planned. Kenneth Bushnell reminded the group that it is unclear whether Woitowicz will be ready to be put back in use.

Town Bonfire on Town Field

Robert VanSchalkwyk (Lost Lake Fire and Hose Association) stopped by the ongoing meeting and discussed a request to have food vendors at the Town Bonfire. The approved field use permit did not include any mention of food sales or service at the event. Gineane Haberlin asked him to pull necessary permits from Town Hall and the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health. Robert VanSchalkwyk agreed to check on that requirement. Kenneth Bushnell asked Robert VanSchalkwyk whether the firefighters could help to top off the water in the Legion Common rink. Robert VanSchalkwyk will ask Chief Steele McCurdy.

Kenneth Bushnell advised that tree service contractor Dave Mead quoted \$500 to take down the tree that is overhanging the Town Shed at Town Field. Park Commissioners recalled that encroaching trees dropping limbs and leaves on the Town Shed's old roof hastened the deterioration and eventual failure of that roof. Now that there is both a new roof and some replaced structural supports, the Park Commissioners readily agreed that the issue described should be addressed. After some discussion, the Park Commissioners agreed that the tree needed to be cut down and that the estimate was reasonable considering the amount of work involved.

Kenneth Bushnell moved to contract with Mead Tree Service for the removal of the tree overhanging the Town Shed for an amount not to exceed \$500. Robert Flynn seconded and the motion carried 4:0 (Matthew Frary absent).

Next Meeting: Monday, February 2, 2015 at 7 pm in Legion Hall.

Jonathan Strauss moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 pm. Gineane Haberlin seconded and motion carried 4:0.

Notes by Fran Stanley.