

Park and Recreation Commission  
Minutes of the Meeting  
February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**Meeting called to order:** 7:40 pm.

**Commissioners in Attendance:** Dave Romejko, Rob O'Connor, Dan Rezende, Mike Kelly, Al Larson, Cindy Beaulieu, Katie Graham

**Also in Attendance:** Ray Favreau, Matthew Riley

Ray introduced Matthew Riley as our new Council Liaison

**Approval of Minutes:** Motion made and seconded to approve the January minutes. Passed unanimously.

**Public Input:** None

**Special Reports:** (1) The commission unanimously approved a \$500 donation to Beth Hillel Temple in memory of the late Beatrice Grigorian, wife of one of the commission's members. (2) Ray informed the commission that the town council passed resolution of the Farmland Preservation Proposal that was presented at the January commission meeting by Any Paterna.

**Report of Council Liaison:** Discussed the Town has roughly 2 million dollars for developing purchase rights. The Town Council passed a resolution to direct the Town Manager to develop policy on how to deploy the funds as they apply to the community. For example, the policy would provide guidance on how it is ensured that purchased land for farming remains as such (or policy to change it in the future). A discussion on water way access to the CT river should be discussed when developing land and/or purchasing. Matthew agreed that water access would be a good thing for South Windsor community. In addition, Matthew informed us that the council is to ensure that developing rights are not limited to specific areas (e.g. Main Street green way).

**OSTF:** None

**Report of the B of E Liaison:** No meeting held. Several properties being reviewed are (1) Collins sledding hill area, (2) Rye Street house/land next to the basketball courts, and (3) Wagon Sled Nursery.

**Report of Parks and Rec. Director:** Ray provided the "Report of Parks & Recreation Director" to the council. The following are some key points and commission discussions:

**Barton Property:** The initial phase of tree clearing, stump removal and rough grading is now complete. A man-made earthen berm with new tree plantings will be put in its place as soon as possible. Phase two, for finish grading and seeding and phase three for a gravel ring road will go out to bid this winter for projected work in spring 2016, driving to have done in support of the Wapping Fair.

**Little League Complex:** Ayers Rd. Softball Field project grand opening ribbon cutting is tentatively set for Sat., April 23 and will be held prior to a 10am high school girls' varsity softball game. Details are to follow.

**Wapping School:** Ray is working on an application for a \$500,000 STEAP grant for improvements to the school to be used for recreation. This grant can only be used for recreational purposes. The school would need more work to make it a true "Recreation Center". There are still other groups in town that would like to have some space in the school.

**Priest Property:** S.W.A.A.N. Committee received a grant from the Dept. of Interior for \$24,000 to evaluate the property and structures for historical significance and structural integrity to assist in determining the future plans for the site. Initial meeting with the evaluators was held on Jan 13<sup>th</sup> to hear their initial progress report. As recommended, the Town has boarded up the homestead to prevent further vandalism and unauthorized entry, and will look to temporarily shore-up the roofing on the back "L" of the building vulnerable to potential collapse. Possible uses are a community garden and/or a farm museum. If determined to be historical, other grant opportunities may exist.

**Rye Street Park:** The Town's first Mountain Biking trail in the wooded section of the park between the active athletic fields and the railroad tracks is 90% complete with only one brook crossing to install out of three needed. The anticipated trail opening is 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday in June.

**Schools:** The estimate for a 10 foot high, 900 foot long visual/sound barrier to separate abutting neighbors from the SHWS stadium has been added to our Parks Division operating budget for fiscal year 2016-2017 to the tune of \$ 75,843. This again invoked a lively discussion from the commission. The commission unanimously objected that the funds should be removed from PARC budget given that we have not received Capital budget since 2010.

**Wapping School:** On Fri., Jan. 15<sup>th</sup> the application was submitted to the State of CT for a \$500,000 grant (the maximum amount eligible to request) through the Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP). This initial plan is PARC to have a functional transition and does not include any major renovations or structural changes to the building. It has been brought to the commission's attention that even if the \$500,000 is awarded, it is significantly less than what is required to make a viable Recreation center. The cost would be around 3.2 million dollars to have a satisfactory center for the community of South Windsor. It was discussed that obtaining the additional funding would require a Town council champion and/or a referendum.

**Program Updates:** On Monday, Feb. 29<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm Wolf Pack team Capt. Ryan Bourque will be a special guest visitor to Our Monday Night Social Club for young adults with special needs.

**Capital Project Committee:** Work continues on the 2016-2017 fiscal year CIP budget. A \$100,000 line item was submitted for engineering assessment of Wapping School for defining the re-purposing to Parks & Recreation in Fall, 2017, a \$170,000 line item for a Rotary Pavilion II slated for VMP (an estimated \$100,000-\$150,000 contribution will likely come from SW

Rotary Club), and as requested by the Commission a \$142,700 line item was submitted and accepted for consideration for improvements to the basketball and tennis courts at Rye Street Park. The commission discussed strategy for appealing to Council for properly allocating finds to implement master plan moving forward. Rob will be attending the next Council meeting to make aware of our frustration of no capital budget since 2010 and the aforementioned top three capital projects that the commission supports.

**Commissions Budget:** Annual operating budget was once again submitted at \$4,500 as in the past few years which seem to serve the commission well for the little things in most years. A balance of \$3702 remains for this fiscal year.

**SWWWW:** Full Moon Walk with SWW&WW 7:15pm at Nevers Park on Fri., Feb. 19. Starts and ends at the Pavilion complete with fire pit and hot chocolate.

**SW Food Alliance:** None

Meeting adjourned 10:38 pm

**Next Meeting:** 7:30pm March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Respectfully Submitted

Michael Kelly