

Dover Parks and Recreation Commission
Meeting of October 7, 2009
Minutes

P&R Commissioners In Attendance: Peter Davies, Rich Oasis, Scott Seidman, Nancy Simms

P&R Employees In Attendance: Jessica Cooney, David MacTavish

Others in Attendance: Justine Kent-Uritam and Sara Molyneaux (League of Women Voters); Jane Hemstreet and Barb Murphy (Council on Aging); Don Mills, Ford Spalding and Dana White (Caryl Community Center Building Committee)

Meeting was called to order at 7:30am.

Prior Meeting Minutes

Minutes from March, July, August and September were not available. All other minutes have been approved and submitted to the town clerk.

CCCBC Proposal for 2nd floor gym in Caryl

Don Mills and Ford Spalding presented for discussion their proposal for including a gymnasium on the second floor of the Caryl Community Center ("CCC"). Don Mills is a principal with the firm Mills Whitaker Architects LLC and is a consultant to the CCCBC. The proposal document is dated September 17, 2009 and is described as a conceptual rendering.

Ford stated the future of the Child Development Center ("CDC") is uncertain. This year's enrollment is 60 students, down from 100 last academic year. The CDC, which is run through DS Community Education, is meeting its financial obligations by digging into its reserves. If the CDC remains a tenant in the new Community Center, it will have to incur capital expenditures to modify the space to their specific needs; the Selectmen will not design a new Community Center around the CDC. The Selectmen have asked CDC to let them know what they want to do in January.

With CDC in place in one wing of the first floor of the CCC, and Council on Aging (COA) in most of the other wing of the first floor, the logical place to explore for P&R space is on the second floor. With this in mind, Don put together a plan for the second floor that modifies slightly the current library into a more versatile multi-purpose gathering space, keeps the P&R offices and meeting room where they are, and converts the remaining space into a gymnasium.

Don's conceptual gym measures 76 x 50; includes bleacher seating on both sides to accommodate 200 people; includes some storage; includes a drop down space divider; extends the full width of the building; and will require raising the roof.

Don asked the following questions to better understand P&R requirements:

Q: Is this concept appealing to P&R?

A: Possibly yes, but with some changes (see below).

Q: Is seating for 200 sufficient?

A: It is more than enough. At most we would could imagine 120 spectators plus athletes and coaches. Perhaps include bleachers on one side of the court and include space on the other side for a row of chairs for the players and coaches.

Q: Do you need bathrooms and showers and lockers?

A: Yes to the bathrooms, one for each gender. No for the showers. No for the lockers.

Q: Is this size court sufficient?

A: Not really. Ideally we would like a high school size court so that we could host HS, MS, and AAU tournaments, thereby generating revenue. Adult leagues also want a full-size court. If we went with a smaller MS-size court, our revenue-generating opportunities are limited, although we would be able to offer MS tournaments, wrestling tournaments, tae kwon do exhibitions possibly. Rich pointed out that we really can't ignore the issue of parking. The seating numbers are irrelevant if we don't have parking capacity for the same number.

Q: Could P&R satisfy their storage needs if some of it were outside or off-site?

A: The current space we have in the rooms behind the library works well for storage and staging and is very convenient. We could use the Whiting Road building, although it would need significant improvements. Space in the highway department building is not a safe option. We would need some storage near the gym for equipment specific to the gym.

Q: Would P&R want to keep the downstairs gym?

A: This gym is 50 years old. We have been told that we can't refinish the floor again because the boards are so thin. We could use this room for TaeKwonDo or wrestling because mats could be laid down on the existing floor. It could not be used for dance because of the condition of the boards. We could pay to have new flooring laid, either wood or cushion vinyl. Pine Hill is unhappy with the cushion vinyl floor they have in their gym, so we would probably not go that route. Given the demand for gym space, it we would like to keep it; however, the space could be converted into two classrooms in need be.

Jess asked about the foot traffic pattern from the rear of the building to the front classrooms on the second floor. Don suggested that rather than walking up the back stairs and through the gym, people would be encouraged to walk the length of the building using the first floor hallway and then up the front stairs to the classrooms.

Jess asked if additional storage space could be added in the space between the gym and the classrooms. Don thought that would be possible.

Extending the back of the building out a few more feet to allow for a full size basketball court was discussed as a possible change to Don's plan. We want to avoid the situation experienced at Chickering where the decision to construct a smaller gym without bleacher space has proven to be short sighted in that it has no revenue potential.

Ford commented that if the town wants to keep this building to use as a community center, the minimum expense option will be to renovate what is here. This will not be a small amount of money.

Ford will write up P&R answers to Don's questions and will send them to us for review. He asked P&R to send CCCBC a memo relating to this space and the space we require and asked that it be done within 30 to 45 days.

Additionally, Ford stated that cooperation among the stakeholders of this building is needed. He suggested cooperative exercise programs as an example. For the town to move forward with this building, we need to generate a lot of interest in the building. P&R has the largest constituency, although this group does not always show up to vote; they will need to be there this time.

Revolving Fund Projects

The Library renovation project is just about complete. The final step is to remove the plumbing fixtures. Nu Top Company has kindly donated the countertop to go in its place. The gym floor has been sanded. The remaining project under consideration is to renovate the room next to Erin's to accommodate the new Discovery Club program.

Discovery Club discussion

The Discovery Club is an after school kindergarten program designed by Dover residents Cathy Thompson and Gina Saltonstall. The program would be offered Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons to coincide with half-day kindergarten at Chickering; the first session would commence in January 2010. The program would run through P&R with P&R taking a percentage of their gross income. It was suggested that we require a minimum

fee per session from the Cathy and Gina. We also need to make sure that the temperature in that room can be independently regulated.

Middle School and Freshmen teams

There was discussion regarding the lack of financial commitment on the part of the Regional School Committee for middle school sports programs and freshmen/JV sports teams. It was noted that some sports teams are funded entirely by parents and/or the youth sports clubs in town. Parents of students playing on these teams are still required to pay to the school the \$250 per sport athletic participation fee despite the fact that they receive no services from the school for this payment.

Dover Days Fair

Dave shared with the commissioners a letter from Betsy Ryan, Chickering PTO President. Dave will draft a response and send it around to the commissioners for comment. In it we need to explain the issues we were faced with that day. Specifically, when we moved the date of Dover Days from _to September 12 to avoid Rosh Hoshana, we essentially gave up our safety net for a rain date. Because our date change was so late, the inflatable vendors were not able to give us the Sunday rain date as they were already booked for another location for that day. Additionally, we had the same situation with the electronic equipment associated with the road race.

The mistake we made was in our communication. We should have told our local vendors ahead of time there was no rain date. Jess will write up rain cancelation / delay policies and procedures for the commissioners to review. One item identified as critical is a 5:00pm Friday vendor notification deadline for rain cancelation / delay.

Joint Programs with COA, Library, Comm.Ed.

Jess has been in touch with all three groups to set up a second meeting. CCCBC has expressed interest in these three groups plus P&R co-sponsoring programs, as has Open Space Committee. One of the agenda items will be to set a time table for recurring, regular meetings.

LWV Town Common Signage

On behalf of the League of Women Voters ("LWV"), Justine Kent-Uritam and Sara Molyneaux requested permission to place signs on town land south of the Town House. Justine and Sara acknowledged that there is limited space for putting up signage and asked that their signs be given priority. The Town Clerk, Barrie Clough, will be responsible for requesting a signage space, and given enough notice, P&R will give Barrie priority. The LWV has funds and will purchase four or five standard banners; for instance, one will be to advertise the annual Town Meeting. Justine will put this agreement in writing. Sara will order the banners. Dave and Scott have contacts for the procurement of the banners and will forward these names to Sara.

Caryl Park Reconfiguration Project Sponsors

Discussion took place regarding the financing of the Caryl Park Reconfiguration project. It was agreed that each of the towns' three sports clubs will be asked to contribute to the cost as they will directly benefit from the project. The current configuration allows two baseball games or two 6 v 6 soccer games or one lacrosse game to be played at any particular time; the proposed reconfiguration would allow a combination of these games to be played simultaneously.

Each club will be asked to pay a share based on the number of seasons it uses the fields; therefore, DSSC (boys and girls soccer) will be asked to pay 2/4 of the cost, boys and girls lacrosse will be asked to pay ¼ and DSYBS (baseball and softball) will be asked to pay ¼. DSYBS apparently has not yet received moneys from Sherborn from last spring's season, so they may not be able to come up with funds immediately.

It was agreed that we would request a response from each of the clubs by October 15, 2009. Dave and Jess will put the request in writing and send a draft copy to the P&R commissioners for review prior to mailing it out to the clubs. Completing the study gives P&R something to show to potential private financiers as well as to interested citizens. It is a necessary tool to have if we are to successfully raise any private funding.

Field fees for Spring 2010 will be \$25 per participant.

Matt Dowd Baseball Dugouts

Dave reported that Greg Dowd has the necessary drawings for the project. The next step is to show the construction specs to Tony Calo, the town's building inspector. It is possible the project may not require a permit. At our prior meeting, P&R agreed pay for some portion of the project. Nancy will check past minutes to clarify our commitment. All work will be done by volunteers. Dave is not sure where Greg is on his fundraising goal.

School Committee Report: Chickering Ski Program and Alternative Gym Site

For the past several years, P&R has offered a Wednesday afternoon ski program to coincide with the weekly early release days in January and February. This year, the Chickering school calendar was changed so that every other Wednesday is an early release day. P&R was able to negotiate a new time block with Nashoba, moving our lesson spot from 2:45 to 4:00 with open skiing until 10:00pm. The 4:00pm start time will require the participating students to be dismissed a little early on the three full days during the session. The School Committee granted P&R approval to do so and run its ski program as restructured.

The other item Dave discussed with the School Committee was the proposed town athletic facility. Currently, the proposed plan for the Caryl Community Center includes an athletic facility on the Springdale Avenue site. At the request of the town's Board of Selectmen, Dave discussed the possibility of alternative locations for a stand-alone facility, including Chickering field. The School committee reported that they were fine with this location.

Fall Sports Programs

The coach of the middle school football program has struggled with an extraordinary number of intrusive parents who don't understand the program philosophy. They have complained that their sons are not receiving enough play time or aren't playing certain positions. Apparently, many of these people are parents of boys who do not regularly attend practice and/or are not physically prepared to play certain positions. Player safety is a key concern according to the coach, and he will not play a boy who is unprepared and therefore at risk of injury. The coach has met with Dave to make sure that there is up front explicit communication next year identifying what is and what is not acceptable parental input and requiring a parent signature of acknowledgement.

P&R visibility – newspapers

No discussion.

Misc.

Dave announced that a new ethics test will soon be required of all town employees, elected officials, and appointed officials. The test will be administered online and can be taken anytime. He also announced that all meeting agendas need to be posted online 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

Anticipated items for next meeting:

Catch up on minutes

Begin Budget process

Meeting adjourned at 9:05am

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Simms, P&R Commission Secretary