

**Dover Parks and Recreation Commission
Meeting of February 3, 2010
Minutes**

P&R Commissioners In Attendance: John Budd, Peter Davies, Rich Oasis, Scott Seidman, Nancy Simms
P&R Employees In Attendance: Jessica Cooney, David MacTavish
Others in Attendance: Andy Waugh (Warrant Committee); Mike Francis (TTOR); Sue Mosher (Oakley Road resident)

Meeting was called to order at 7:30am.

TTOR

Mike Francis requested that the P&R Commission write a letter of support of the TTOR plan to construct a parking lot on Powisset Street. The letter should be addressed to the Dover Planning Board. P&R happily agreed to do so.

Warrant Committee – Operating Budget

Andy will meet with Dave after the meeting to go over WC questions on our FY2011 operating budget.

P&R Commissioner Term Expiration and Re-election Decisions

John reported that he will not be running for re-election. Rich is unsure but will make his decision known by our March meeting as the Town Caucus is Monday, March 15th.

Caryl Park Reconfiguration Project

Project steps to date were summarized and discussed. Discussions were held on the structure and content for the first open meeting which will be February 25th at 7:30pm in the old library room in the Caryl Community Center.

Abutters Meeting Discussion:

Traffic problems seem to be the issue of paramount concern, especially with respect to the roadway to the rear parking lot. Carl Johnson resides on the north side of Dedham Street, across from the entrance to the tennis court parking lot. The roadway to the rear parking lot would be at about this same spot, and at the January 28th meeting, Carl expressed safety concerns with traffic going in and out of the park at this spot. A traffic light was discussed as a possible solution to the safety concerns raised, perhaps to be activated only at peak traffic times. Other suggestions raised were a No Left Turn sign that would apply during certain hours so that traffic exiting the park would be required to turn right onto Dedham Street, and a paid police detail during peak traffic times.

Dave shared that he has worked with Mr. Johnson in the past to address traffic concerns; specifically, P&R cleared brush and cut back the berm to the west of his driveway last year which helped the sight lines at that point.

The flip side of the more traffic complaint is that more traffic means that the cars traveling on Dedham Street have to go slower which reduces the safety problem. Sue Mosher asked if there were alternative entrances to Caryl Park other than Dedham Street. Dave reported that Dedham Street is the only street with park frontage.

Dave spoke with the town engineer, Bob Homer, who completed a traffic study 5 years ago. Also the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (“MAPC”) recently completed a traffic study in preparation of the addition of the two speed bumps on Dedham Street. Dave has asked for copies of these studies.

Another issue for the neighbors is lights as was mentioned both by Joan Panek and Justine Uritam-Kent at the last meeting. We need to determine whether we really need them, what they would cost, how often and how late they would be on. Most of the lighted field use would likely be by Dover’s adult soccer teams. However, in the fall, the lights would be used for youth soccer team practices for the last few weeks in the season when day light savings time clock adjustments make it dark at 4:30. The neighbors have asked for a policy stating no lights after a specific time as well a maximum number of nights we would anticipate needing to use the lights.

For future public meetings, we need to have field use numbers and documentation on alternative site options. Price range and financing possibilities need to be explored as well. Dave reported that Leo Cavanaugh is almost finished with the spring field allocation schedule, so we can use these data to help quantify our field use numbers.

We discussed the idea of a field trip to DeFazio Fields in Needham to better understand the capabilities of current lighting technology. Such a trip won’t be possible until Needham opens its fields sometime in late March or early April. The lights used at the Dover-Sherborn high school are 10 years old, are now obsolete and are not the type of lights we would be interested. The technology has improved considerably so that there is practically no ambient light. Firms have devised the technology to capture and measure the amount of ambient light that is created by the light towers. The higher the light tower, the less horizontal the angle of the lights has to be, and therefore, the less ambient light is created. The height of the light towers Gale is recommending for our project is approximately 70 feet. According to Gale, most of the trees around the proposed rectangular fields are taller than 70 feet, so the towers will likely not be at all visible. The tall trees will also help shroud the light.

Our Next Steps:

We need to meet with and document conversations with:

- Warrant Committee
- Capital Budget Committee
- Conservation Commission
- Planning Board
- Board of Health
- Highway
- Police and Fire
- Regional School District
- DS Boosters

Dave spoke with Jane Remsen from the Planning Board who conveyed to him that there doesn’t seem to be any problems with the proposed project and that specifically, there are no restrictions from the town on the number of parking spaces.

Alternative Sites Discussion – Medfield State Hospital fields

Dave pulled the deed on the Medfield State Hospital land. The property is under the jurisdiction of the Regional School District, but there are no limitations on further development other than wetlands restrictions. He estimated that there would need to be 800 feet of temporary bridge work done in order to protect the existing gas lines during construction.

In order for a high school to host post-season competitions for any sport, MIAA requirements now mandate that school have available an artificial turf field, that there be stands for spectators and that restroom facilities be within 200 feet of the field. Dave speculated that the Conservation Commission would not allow spectator stands nor toilet facilities be built on the MSH site. If the Region were to build artificial turf fields, they would choose a site that would allow these amenities. The MSH land is not be a viable option for the Region. The Farm Street fields could be converted to artificial turf, could support spectator stands and are within 200 feet of the restrooms inside the middle school gym.

The issue for P&R remains, however, that even if the Region were to build artificial turf fields at either location, there would not be sufficient availability to meet the demand of the youth sports.

It was acknowledged that continuing to play on the over-used fields poses very real safety concerns: a broken ankle on the high school boys' lacrosse team early last spring on MSH field and private soccer clubs refusing to play games on Laurel Field because of its unsafe condition as two tangible examples of the deplorable conditions of the fields used by our youth sports teams. An ongoing concern with youth sports continuing to use the Regional School's fields is the lack of adequate maintenance of these fields. The Region does not have enough money in their budget to properly maintain their fields. Irrigation and uniform levelness continue to be a problem, especially with the MSH fields.

It was concluded that the MSH fields are not a viable alternative site for adding field capacity youth sports because: it would not create additional capacity for youth sports, P&R does not have jurisdiction over the property and therefore cannot propose development on the property, there are Conservation Commission restrictions on improvements to be included in any possible changes to the property, and 100% of the funds for the project would need to be privately raised by DS Boosters as the Regional School Committee has said they would not fund a penny of it.

Miscellaneous

- Bill Seymour has asked for width clarification for the walking trails. It was agreed that the industry standard of 6 feet is fine.
- Kathleen Mitchell has asked to be on the agenda for our March meeting. It was agreed to give her 10 minutes. Jess will inform her.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:10am.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Simms, P&R Commission