

**Springdale Study Committee  
Recreation Subcommittee  
April 6, 2015**

*Attendees:* Nancy Kostakos, Doug Novitch, Catherine White

*Guests and Liaisons:* Chris Boland (Parks + Recreation), Carol Lisbon (Selectmen)

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:32 PM by Catherine White.
2. **Chair Election:** Doug Novitch was elected Chair of the Recreation Subcommittee.
3. **Discussion with Parks + Recreation:** Mr. Novitch and Ms. Kostakos provided an overview of the Springdale Study Committee's charge and work to date for Mr. Boland, explaining that this subcommittee's objective was to explore active recreational uses for the property; passive recreational uses would be covered by the Open Space subcommittee. A discussion of active recreation uses followed:
  - a. **Sports fields:** Mr. Boland stated that if we chose to create sports fields, they would surely be used. However, Mr. Boland did note that the demographics at the moment are showing a decline in school-aged residents. The "bubble" is in middle school and will soon be in high school. Younger families are coming into the community, but their children are still several years away from youth sports. Mr. Boland also noted that there are some negatives associated with creating sports fields on the property that probably outweigh the positives. Traffic and lighting could both be problematic. Traffic can get very congested at field turnover times. A use that is not tied to tight schedules and high volume would have much less impact on traffic patterns. Ms. Lisbon noted that although lighting would not be a necessity on fields, it would be needed in parking areas. The group also discussed sensitivity in the town to spending more on youth facilities. A large percentage of the town budget is already devoted to schools and youth facilities and programs, so we would likely get more support for a use that serves a broader range of ages. Also, there is ongoing effort to improve sports fields, including construction of an additional turf field, at the regional school site. With respect to lessons learned from the Caryl Park turf field effort, Mr. Boland noted that aside from traffic and lighting issues, clearing woods and installing a synthetic field were the biggest negatives (not applicable here). He also noted the importance of having the club sports teams fully supporting the effort from the start. Ms. White stated that Barbara Palmer had asked whether it might be possible to relocate the baseball field behind the Caryl House to the Springdale property in order to restore a more historically accurate background to the historic house property. Mr. Boland stated that it is much easier to add fields than it is to eliminate them. He felt there would be significant resistance to eliminating the field behind the Caryl House.
  - b. **Glen Farm, Portsmouth, Rhode Island:** Ms. Kostakos shared research she had done on a comparable facility in Portsmouth, RI called Glen Farm. She had

attended a lacrosse tournament at the facility, and noted that while grass sports fields had been created out of former farm fields, the historic and natural beauty of the property had been nicely maintained. It is a larger facility, encompassing approximately 100 acres. It includes the Garner Seveney Sports Complex, reserved for youth recreation, a historic farm house which is being restored for community use by a volunteer organization, a special events field for community use, a utility field for parking, and a polo field and equestrian complex. More information is available at [www.portsmouthri.com/408/Glen-Farm](http://www.portsmouthri.com/408/Glen-Farm). Although the idea of a recreational facility that maintains historic and natural character is interesting, based on the challenges described above, we concluded further study of this facility would not be necessary.

- c. **Basketball courts:** One of the requested uses submitted by the community was basketball courts. Mr. Boland stated that while there has been occasional discussion about additional basketball facilities in town, the reality is that between the winter months, when outdoor courts are not usable (and subject to damage), and the summer months when many people are away, the actual use of additional outdoor basketball facilities would likely not be high.
- d. **Skating rink:** Another community use suggestion was a skating rink. Mr. Boland stated that the community seems very happy with Channing Pond as a skating facility and felt that even if there was demand for an indoor skating rink, it would face the same youth-centric, traffic and lighting challenges as sports fields at the Springdale site, and would ultimately make more sense at the regional school site.
- e. **Community pool:** Mr. Boland stated that there likely would be interest in the idea of a community pool. Swimming appeals to all ages, and the opportunity to create a facility that is more central to town, versus at the regional school site, would also be appealing. There was discussion regarding the fact that Dover Parks and Recreation provides many youth-centric services that benefit both Dover and Sherborn and that creating a recreational facility that serves the broader community and is more Dover-centric would be more favorably received. We discussed researching comparable facilities in other towns and conducting site visits and interviews with those responsible for the facilities to get a better idea of costs, revenue potential and community benefits. Mr. Novitch also volunteered to contact architectural firms who may have designed comparable facilities.
- f. **Programming:** Mr. Boland stated that Assistant Director Mark Ghiloni has done an outstanding job of creating new recreational programming and that regardless of whether we recommended an active or passive recreational use for the Springdale property, Parks and Recreation would certainly be able to design programming around either option. The property would provide great

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opportunity for nature programming if its use remained passive recreation and open space, and if we recommended active recreational facilities, Parks and Recreation would also be glad to develop appropriate programming.

4. **Next Steps:** Our next steps will be to research and conduct site visits at comparable community pool/recreational facilities in other towns, and to contact the Dover-Sherborn Boosters to get more detail on the field plans at the regional school site. We will likely come back together as a subcommittee in early May.
5. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Kostakos