

January 6th, 2011
Town of Sudbury
Park and Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes

Present: Commissioners - Jim Marotta, Georgette Heerwagen, Paul Griffin, Dick Williamson, Bobby Beagan
Guests: Michael Ensley, Mark Winters – Youth Hockey

Skating Rink at Featherland - Jim Marotta explained the reason for the quick Park and Recreation Commission meeting was due to a call he received in December regarding the ice skating at Featherland Field. He received a request from Youth Hockey participants and Sudbury residents requesting to moving the existing rink at Featherland to some other site in Sudbury with lights and suggested the upper Featherland softball field.

Maureen Valente, the Town Manager, wanted all recreation requests to go through the Park and Recreation Commission for approval and discussion with the Park and Recreation Department.

Michael Ensley stated that he and the others were just looking for a better place to skate. The youth hockey organization would be happy to help out and assist in the funding of an ice skating area in Sudbury. They looked at different sites in Sudbury and thought that the Featherland softball outfield would be the best location due to the fact that it had lights. Mike sent out emails to residents and received a favorable response for funding for lights. They felt an improved skate rink would be great for the community. He mentioned that similar rinks are being constructed in Concord, Stow, and other surrounding communities.

Photos of the current state of the Concord rink were distributed. Pat Haberstroh, from Park and Recreation, stated that Bill Place, DPW Dir., spoke with the DPW Dir at Concord. He was told that the rink in Concord takes enough time to get going and required cold weather and snow to get started. They do not use volunteers, and only use 2 DPW workers on overtime to create and maintain the rink. The DPW workers also created their own Zamboni to resurface the ice. They use a section of a playing field that isn't used again until the fall.

Bill's concern about using Featherland field was potential damage to the field and the fact that the added snow piles may not allow it to be ready for the spring softball season. There is also no easy water source for the ice. The other concern is that the town does not have excess funds to cover the overtime required to work on the ice. There is also concern about using volunteers and who would be in charge of them and the schedule they would work. Paying for the lights, for night skating, would also have to be paid by someone other than the town. It was clear that the town cannot spend funds they don't have to create a better ice rink in town.

A suggestion was made to use volunteers this year to make the current ice rink at Featherland better and plan for another site in FY 12. The Commissioners also discussed with Youth Hockey the possibility of using a liner instead of snow, but all of this would have to be planned out to determine the actual expense of the project and the time commitment. Above all else, the weather also needs to cooperate.

A motion was made to vote on the recommendation by the Commission. The motion received a second. The motion was as follows;

The Commission recommends that this proposal be pursued because of the large potential to the community and potential benefit for safe skating. It is recommended that the cost, maintenance, location, financing be addressed by the appropriate town staff. We would like to see this happen this winter.

The motion received approval 5-0.

CPA - Georgette gave a brief update on the Recreation CPA proposal which didn't look favorable. Georgette said there was some discussion that Davis field might be an opportunity for CPA funds, but she found that surprising. There was discussion that we could still put something through on Davis when Nancy comes back from her medical leave.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm