

Sudbury Park and Recreation Commission Meeting

Sept 21, 2015

6:30PM-8:30 PM

MEETING Notes taken by Amber Comeau

Members Present: James J. Marotta Chairman, Robert C. Beagan, Michael Ensley, Paul Griffin, Richard C. Williamson

Amber Comeau – Assistant Recreation Director

Jim – assistant planner

Jody Kablack – Town Planner

Mike Walsh, Al Fordiani – Sudbury Baseball

Linda Bendel – 521 Hudson Road, Sudbury, MA

Started at 6:45

• Review Minutes 6:30PM

No minutes to review

• Public Comment 6:40PM

Mrs. Bendel came to question the absence of the Park and Recreation Director. Questioning why town residents are unaware and how tax dollars are being wasted. She explained that the line may be drawn and that the disability may be a financial strain on the town. Things are not the way they used to be, the fields are not properly watered, the tennis courts are now missing. There is currently a lack of interest, is it with the town or the management of the town? "This community has so much potential and we can do so many things, but things are going down the tubes." Mike Ensley and Jim Marotta suggested she go to the Interim Town Manager, Marianne Bilodeau, to voice her opinion farther. Mike Ensley suggested she check into what is going on with the Fairbank Community Center Task Force to see the creative things that are coming down the pipeline. Bobby began explained that the Park and Rec commission is a policy making board so the changes that need to take place are a challenge. Mrs. Bendel expresses that this is a top down problem and that she hopes the new Town Manager helps establish a vision.

• Featherland Renovations 6:45PM – Mike Walsh

Mr. Walsh showed plans to expand the current upper field, by 25 feet. The intent would not be to move buildings and home plate would stay in the same place. 10 trees would need to be taken down to make room for the outfield and a new fence would need to be built. Paul Griffin questioned whether or not a higher fence would save some of the trees, but Mike Walsh explained that the trees would not be able to be saved. Some trees would remain. Mike Ensley explained that currently there is not much a buffer as it is anyway so the fence would improve this. Dick Williamson asked what the process would be, Mike Walsh explained that baseball would pay. Jodi stated that if the land is disturbed they may need a water treatment plan. There are no wetlands.

Mike Walsh stated that there is an issue with the school baseball fields, and has been for a long time. Baseball was part of the original Davis field plan, but baseball withdrew their plans due to town comments. 200 kids in first and second grade are playing at Noyes, Nixon, and the Crime Lab fields, which are substandard. At this level they don't need a 200 foot field, 100 feet is fine. Baseball proposes using the former Featherland tennis courts to install two 100 foot fields in their place. They looked at building this at Crime lab, but there is not any other available space other than Featherland. This project would also be self-funded by baseball. Mike Walsh explains that the Featherland Tennis courts don't get used that often. Jim Marotta likes the synergy of having this baseball complex expanded. Jim Marotta wants to know how much demand there is for tennis courts and what we do if we lose that space. One study he found shows that there should be 17

courts for the size of Sudbury. The high is 8.4 courts per 10,000 residents. We currently have 12 courts in Sudbury including LS and Feely. Expanding Featherland would remove baseball's need for Noyes 1, maybe crime lab, and definitely Nixon, so Mike Walsh mentioned these could be used as grass fields. Mike Ensley mentioned that Noyes will never be a sufficient grass field. Field use would be Monday through Friday evenings, and Saturday and Sunday all day. There would be no lights on these fields.

Jim Marotta asked for Jodi's thoughts on this project. Jodi mentioned that they would likely need a waste water plan and maybe a site plan. Parking would not expand, Mike Walsh doesn't believe that more parking would be needed given how empty the upper Featherland parking lot by Morse Road typically is. Jim Marotta asks Jodi if they would need to go speak to the planning board and the answer was they may need to. Dick Williamson asked about the overall decline in baseball enrollment in the state, but Mike Walsh explains that 800 kids play baseball in Sudbury and it's one of the biggest baseball towns in the area. Bobby Beagan asked that user groups stay transparent with their numbers so we constantly have the data points. Paul Griffin mentioned that user groups are boxed in by the field availability, and most user groups would like to expand programming if they had more field space. Sudbury only has the field space to have one practice a week, and most towns allow two practices a week. Bobby Beagan says that he will not vote on this project unless we allow the town users to speak and for baseball to explain the new plan to the town.

Jim Marotta calls for a public meeting to discuss the upper field at Featherland perfect and a special Commission meeting to follow. Paul Griffin recommends discussing the upper Featherland plan as two phases, one with the current field and one regarding the former tennis courts. The Commission will submit the public meeting to the Town Crier for October 5th.

- **Open Space & Recreation Plan 7:00PM – Jodi and Jim**

A draft of the Open Space and Recreation Plan Goals and Objectives and Survey Results were passed out. The survey was posted all over town, at many public buildings, and through a mailing. The results of this survey, with the open comments, are posted online. Based on the survey the Goals and Objectives were compiled and updated from 2009. Most of the goals have stayed the same since 2009, although number 8 has been added. Jim Marotta commented that Park and Recreation did not seem to be very well represented in the 2009 plan, but he was thankful that they are involved this time. Jim Marotta brings up expanding utilization of existing areas, adding lights to some fields, replacing and maintaining, and proper irrigation. Paul Griffin wants a goal to be added to acquire new land to protect it and keep the rural nature of our community. Jim Marotta mentioned that it's been very difficult to work with Conservation and it ends up being unproductive and a final barrier. Park and Recreation should have similar goals to Open Space and Conservation, but the Commission believes it's a bit of a barrier. Jodi asks whether or not we should consider diversified recreation facilities, not only single use parcels. Paul Griffin recommends we add a goal to improve coordination and communication with Lincoln Sudbury High School. Paul Griffin stated he believes that CPC funds are heavily weighted to conservation and not recreation.

Five Year Action Plan is presented by Jim and Jodi. The 2009 plan shows a chart of the Goals and Objectives, timeline, group responsible for goal, and where the funding will come from. After the Goals and Objectives of 2015 are finalized, the same chart will be made with the new goals.

Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest was handed out. A private land inventory was established in 2009 with a list of 36 properties and their potential uses for conservation and recreation. Nobscott Boy Scout Reservation was mentioned as possible recreation land, The Nora Haynes Property next to Featherland, Johnson, Maynard Rod and Gun Club, etc.

Jodi was asked by the Sewataro Family to bring up the purchase of Sewataro to Park and Recreation. The family is getting older. They would want to keep a camp on the land and build houses on the subdivided property into 35 house lots. Paul Griffin says that Sewataro may be a great option for creative land use with the Wayside Inn. Sewataro does have a swimmable pond, fishing, open space, buildings, and an outdoor pool.

- **Summer Camp Refund Policy 7:15PM – discussion moved to next meeting**

- **Lane Cancellation Policy 7:30PM – discussion moved to next meeting**

- **Davis Update-CPC Discussion 7:45PM**

Jim Marotta mentioned the Parc Grant application has been submitted and is waiting to hear back. If that does not go through there will be capital money put aside to make piece mail sure of this facility. The Commission has put in a request for CPC money. There is some belief that there is contamination at Davis. Jodi mentions that there was a plume on site that has been monitored, 180 reports since 1985. These go all the way to the east of Malone to the eastern part of Davis. The Selectmen are going to go through the reports to assess what this means for Melone, as listed on an Article from 2014. Jodi wishes that we could also review the reports for Davis at the same time. All of the monitoring will be pulled, it's been found that the levels are not changing any more at they are low at this point. Bobby Beagan says that he believes a lot of this discussion comes from those in town that are against the development on Davis. Jodi says that with all the talk of contamination, we should just look into it and see if it's really a problem at all. Mike Ensley asks as a Commission, do we have the authority to pay for anything. Dick says that we don't, but we can request it. Jodi thinks it should be around \$5,000 since it will only be an add-on to the review of Malone that will already be done.

- **Capital Budget 8:00PM – discussion moved to next meeting**

- **P&R Department Budget Update 8:15PM - discussion moved to next meeting**

Misc. - Haskell – Bobby Beagan - He reached out to Sudbury Youth Soccer to let them know we needed help with the turf.

Adjourned – 8:46