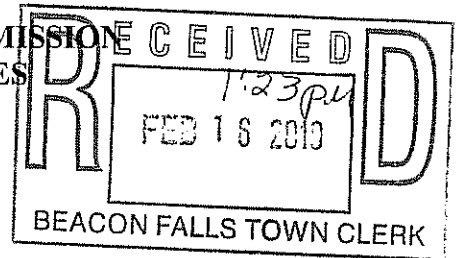


BEACON FALLS PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
SPECIAL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES  
ON MATTHIES PARK  
FEBRUARY 1, 2010



SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: R. Egan, S. Osowiecki, J. Rodorigo, S. Ruhl, A. Sirowich, L. Swanson

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: R. Kunz

PUBLIC PRESENT: First Selectman Susan Cable, Selectmen Michael Krenesky

L. Swanson began the meeting at 6:35 PM by reviewing the updated TPA map with the members and public present. L. Swanson asked the members to call out their priorities with regard to Matthies Park. S. Osowiecki expressed the need to preserve the pond. A. Sirowich wishes to begin by improving the entrance to the park and working inward. B. Egan confirmed that if you lose the pond, the park is also lost.

J. Rodorigo mentioned that some work can take place simultaneously with work being done on the pond and groups like the scouts working on the trails at the same time. The trails would be unpaved and comprised of porous material/crushed stone. Trails can be created in stages with grants from specific groups such as equestrians, etc.

J. Rodorigo would also like to review TPA's redesign of the parking area with its narrow entrance, as the traffic in and out of the park, especially when there is an event, is a problem.

L. Swanson distributed papers for the members to vote on their top three priorities for Matthies Park. After reviewing the votes, the priorities were clear and unanimous: **preserving the pond, redesigning the park's entrance, and the creation of trails.** Preserving the pond includes the preservation of the sluiceways which feed and filter the pond. The conceptual design for the parking lot and entrance needs to be reviewed and confirmed. Trail work, in particular a circular trail around the pond, would include; raising the canopy around the pond's edge, creating wooden footbridges over wetlands, and establishing picnic areas. The commission needs to establish a blueprint or prototype for these trails.

The members also discussed the island's lifespan and agreed that while the house and the island are unique features of Matthies Park, the cost involved in reinforcing these features make them a low priority. The commission agreed that the lifespan of Matthies Park, should it remain untouched, is 15-20 years.

Turning to financial matters, estimates for the work needed on the sluiceways is approximately \$300,000 with \$80,000 required just to power wash the eroding bed line. The boathouse roof needs to be replaced. The current pump house contains asbestos tile and is poorly located, as it is not connected to city water.

Susan Cable mentioned that there is now competition for grant monies for our parks from the Toby's Pond site. She asked that the commission allow her a month's time before calling a Town Meeting to discuss Toby's Landing and the possibilities of opening Matthies Park to the public, so the board can apply for federal and state grants to begin this work. She envisions a recreational area in Beacon Falls which would be good for the economy of our town. The meeting adjourned at 7:22 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Erin A. Schwarz  
Clerk, Park & Recreation Commission