

TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

SPECIAL MEETING
March 10, 2014

Draft Document – subject to Commission Approval

The Special Meeting was called to order by Chairman Szymanski at 6:09 p.m. in the Cafeteria of the East Windsor High School, 76 S. Main Street, East Windsor, CT.

PRESENT: Chairman Szymanski, Commissioners Bagdikian, Balch and Simpkins; Park Director Maltese and Mary Lou Morell from the Park Office; Selectman Dale Nelson and Town Planner Laurie Whitten.

ABSENT: Commissioner Leach.

ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

A quorum was established as four commission members were present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION: To APPROVE minutes of February 10, 2014 Special Meeting as written.

Bagdikian moved/Balch seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

OLD BUSINESS:

a. PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

Town Planner, Laurie Whitten addressed the body stating this is the third meeting of a workshop on the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) to establish goals and guidelines for the Parks and Recreation portion of the Plan; the Parks and Recreation Commission met regarding the Plan and submitted 8 or 9 directives for the Plan and now need to prioritize the items and develop an implementation plan.

The list of initiatives identified is:

1. Community Center with potential to add a swimming pool
2. East Windsor Park: Dredge reservoir
3. East Windsor Park: Install a splash pad
4. East Windsor Park: Expand the basketball court
5. Broad Brook Pond: Clean and dredge pond; clean up the parking area and establish trails along its border
6. Access to both Scantic and Connecticut Rivers

OLD BUSINESS/a. Plan of Conservation and Development (continued):

7. Develop more passive walking trails
8. Passive recreation opportunities at Kogut Property

Town Planner Whitten stated the Plan is long range goals for conservation and development for a 5, 10 and longer years range plan. It can include possible means of funding such as grants, collaboration with other Commissions, utilization of Town groups such a scouts, clubs and leagues; identification of possible sites/venues, and implementation plans.

Town Planner Whitten then asked the Commission as to the priority of each initiative. Chairman Szymanski stated that the initiatives were not prioritized and was not prepared to answer that question or how to fund each project. He was not aware the Commission would be asked for this information at this meeting.

Town Planner Whitten then led a discussion as to how each initiative may be addressed.

Long range Goal:

Community Center with potential to add a swimming pool

Director Maltese stated:

Seek grants such as CIP, STEAP, State and Federal Grants

Utilize other Commissions

Develop an architectural study for feasibility

Identify property for construction

Commissioner Bagdikian suggested:

Possible property: Cinema site as it is easily accessible and has
adequate parking

Mr. Brian Feeney, 19 Treetop Lane, Broad Brook suggested the Community Center could be a multi-use indoor facility for such activities as basketball, volleyball other recreation venues.

Priority:

East Windsor Park: Dredge Reservoir

Work with farmers to prevent adverse water conditions up stream
that flow into the reservoir

East Windsor Park: Construct a splash pad.

Secondary:

Walking trails throughout town and on Kogut property

Access to Rivers

OLD BUSINESS/a. Plan of Conservation and Development (continued):

Utilize the American Heritage River Commission
East Windsor Agricultural Commission
Utilize scouts (such an Eagle project) for walking trails
Investigate rails-to-trails opportunity

Mr. Tom Talamini, 23 Rice Road, Broad Brook suggested the use of the rail trail for a walking/biking trail.

Mr. Dick Sherman, 12 Allen Drive, Broad Brook mentioned that there is a rail line out of Warehouse Point and stops at Wells Road. The line extends down to the river but there are no tracks in place. This would lead to the filter bed area off of Mill Street in Broad Brook where fishing can take place and salmon could be raised for stocking purposes. Town Planner Whitten suggested the Town could work with the Trolley Museum on a project such as this.

Mr. Albert Grant, 128 Melrose Road, Broad Brook stated he would like to see the river bank be secured for hiking trails along with a right-of-way from the road. The Town would secure an easement for liability purposes where the land owner is not liable unless they charge a fee to access or create an issue of liability.

Ms. Debbie Talamini, 23 Rice Road, Broad Brook mentioned there is a trail along the Scantic River that is available in the winter. Access is at the end of Melrose Road which is off Broad Brook Road in Broad Brook. The trail is adequately marked.

Town Planner Whitten stated East Windsor could work with abutting towns (think regionally) to connect trails/bike paths. Bike path lanes could be established on the pavement throughout town and can work with DOT for signage.

Ms. Nancy Wandze, 245 Reservoir Avenue, Broad Brook asked about implementing walking trails adjacent to the Dog Park. That way both dogs and humans can get exercise at the same time.

Ms. Christine Dahl, 102 Reservoir Avenue, Broad Brook would like to see cross country trails for skiing and snow shoeing.

Ms. Patricia Tracy, 241 S. Water Street, East Windsor asked about Bocce Courts. Parks and Recreation Director Maltese stated that it is already in the planning process. Ms. Tracy asked if there could be a court in every borough – leagues/competition could be formed which would bring the community together.

Ms. Dale Nelson, 51 Omelia Road, Broad Brook stated that any project for consideration must be put in the Plan, whether or not it may come to fruition, otherwise they cannot be acted upon for funding/grant money by the State and

OLD BUSINESS/a. Plan of Conservation and Development (continued):

Federal entities. The Plan is our roadmap to the future for conservation and development. That is the purpose of the Plan.

Town Planner Whitten explained that the POCD is a public document and is available for viewing by the public at any time. She encourages residents to become familiar with the Plan.

A question was raised as to how projects get created. Director Maltese stated that you present your idea to the Parks and Recreation Commission for consideration. Should the project go forward, ask for volunteers to do research to investigate what other town do, other organization, etc., to include liability, any estimated expenses that might be incurred and any revenue to be generated and sources of funding (which would include fundraising). The Parks and Recreation Commission will then guide you along the way in the process of approval.

b. BMX Skateboard Park

No discussion this evening.

c. East Windsor Dog Park

Robin Chesky stated that the East Windsor Dog Owners Group did the fundraising, planning, building and maintains the Park.

The Park will be closed from March 11, 2014 through the end of April, approximately, to replant the grass.

Ms. Chesky expressed concerns of the impact of disc golf on the Dog Park. She is concerned for the safety of the dogs and people along with possible damage to the Dog Park fence. She questioned whether a buffer around the Dog Park could be installed. Chairman Szymanski commented that the buffer be of distance rather than plantings and vegetation.

Ms. Chesky then reported that the Dog Park grass area had been damaged from the retention pond project and not the community Garden project.

Commissioner Balch commended the Dog Park group on the maintenance of the Park.

d. Disc Golf

Commissioner Balch handed out to the Commissioners information she obtained from the internet regarding comments on various Disc Golf Parks.

OLD BUSINESS/a. Disc Golf (continued):

Commissioner Balch read from a chat line on January 11, 2014 that Brian Donnelly referred to clearing some land. Commissioner Balch stated this is Town property and he did not have authorization to do so. Chairman Szymanski has instructed Mr. Donnelly to remove the chat and reminded him no work can be completed on the proposed course.

Commissioner Balch then read other excerpts from her internet information indicating that alcohol is associated with the sport and there have been injuries (eye, face, head) from the flying discs which can travel at speeds more than 70 mph. This is a safety issue. There are environmental impacts as well – grass and low lying vegetation trampled; tree bark damaged; vegetation removed from hill sides causing erosion. These comments that Commissioner Balch shared with the audience were from parks not in our locale but other areas of the U.S.

MOTION: To TABLE Disc Golf from moving forward at this time.

Balch moved/Simpkins seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

Discussion: A member of the audience asked if she visited locally at Wickham Park that has a Disc Golf course. The answer was no.

Ms. Percoski, 41 Reservoir Avenue, Broad Brook stated that entering the Disc Golf Park at Reservoir Avenue at the curve is not a safe place.

Mr. Brian Feeney, 19 Treetop Lane, Broad Brook stated that Commissioner Balch was looking for negative issues on Disc Golf. All issues should be addressed. If you keep the attendance local you will restrict usage. Commissioner Balch stated with 75 cars on a weekend she is looking to protect the environment; citizens from injuries; and the Town from lawsuits.

Ms. Christine Dahl, 102 Reservoir Avenue, Broad Brook asked how much acreage is needed for Disc Golf. It was stated it is about an acre per hole. Ms. Dahl asked how many holes are planned.

Parks Director Maltese stated that Disc Golf is just a conceptual idea at this time. Town Planner Whitten stated that Mr. Donnelly is to use areas where paths already exist.

Ms. Sharon Muska, East Road, Broad Brook, asked how much of Town resources would be used to benefit this group.

Commissioner Balch then read to the audience a letter she received this evening addressed to Parks and Recreation from Dean and Caren Rasmussen, copy attached.

OLD BUSINESS/a. Disc Golf (continued):

Parks Director Maltese stated she has not seen that letter and Commissioner Balch stated that the Rasmuessens could not attend the meeting and gave the letter to her.

Ms. Percoski, 41 Reservoir Avenue, Broad Brook, stated she was concerned about another “Park” in her immediate surroundings.

Ms. Sharon Muska, East Road, Broad Brook, stated that walking trails along with a Disc Golf course is not safe for use in the same area.

MOTION: To TABLE discussion on Disc Golf.

Simpkins moved/Balch seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

NEW BUSINESS:

a. Financial Accounts Review

Parks Director Maltese handed out the most recent Budget by Department for review.

MOTION: To ACCEPT the presented Budget by Department.

Bagdikian moved/Balch seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

b. Park Director’s Report

Director Maltese stated that the Department has received approval for one of its projects to move forward in C.I.P. - \$22,372 for security cameras at East Windsor Park. She stated briefly where the 3 cameras would be positioned and how they would operate. It is a DVR System which is not actively monitored. They capture the images for review.

Director Maltese stated she has taken over the ERASE Program that was administered by Human Services. It is an east of the river substance abuse program to address alcohol and drug use. Money is received from the State in the form of a \$2,400 grant to be used to address issues in Town. There will be a table with information at the March 11, 2014 Community Health night to be held at the East Windsor High School at 6:00 p.m. ERASE from East Hartford will be present.

Director Maltese is also looking into having a prescription take back program for town residents and assisting the Police Department with compliance checks at local businesses.

NEW BUSINESS/b. Park Director's Report (continued):

Director Maltese reported that Little League enrollment is low at this time. Additional flyers have been placed around town to increase marketing. Field 3 at Osborne (Warehouse Point Park) will be skinned and benches are needed.

Director Maltese advised that hiring for the summer is in progress. The state minimum wage has increased which she needs to comply with and will review all salaries for wage compression as well. The minimum wage is scheduled to increase again in 2015.

Rental requests for use of the Abbe Road Soccer Complex are coming in. The tentative field start date is April 23, 2014.

Director Maltese informed the Commissioners that the Department Budget will be presented to the Board of Finance on Wednesday, March 12, 2014 at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall.

The 5th Panther Plunge to benefit the East Windsor Fuel Bank will take place on Sunday, March 16, 2014 at 1:00 p.m. at East Windsor Park. Windsor Federal Savings is the sponsor. Over \$10,000 has been raised since the event has been held.

The East Windsor Dance Program is having a fundraiser of Butter Braids to raise funds for scholarships for program participants.

Director Maltese stated that the CREC schools – Public Safety Magnet School in Enfield has approached her to inquire about use of fields in East Windsor for their sports programs. She is waiting to receive their proposal but we may not have facilities available for their use. They can only use Park facilities, not Board of Education facilities.

The East Windsor Athletic Club is seeking nominations for its 2014 Hall of Fame. Nominations must be submitted by May 12, 2014. The annual induction dinner is held in November.

Commissioner Balch asked about swim lessons. Director Maltese responded that we presently do not have a Water Safety Instructor on staff to be able to offer lessons.

MOTION: To ACCEPT the Park Director's report as presented.

Balch moved/Simpkins seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

CORRESPONDENCE:

None

MISCELLANEOUS:

None

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Bills were signed by Commission Simpkins.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: To ADJOURN meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Simpkins moved/Balch seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Lou Morell
Recording Secretary