

Minutes
Coe Memorial Park Advisory Committee
April 7, 2010

Mission Statement

To create within the downtown area of Torrington a first class horticultural oasis in accordance with and strict adherence to the intent of the Coe Godfrey benefactors and the Coe Family Trust.

Present

Parks and Recreation Superintendent J. Brett Simmons
Parks and Recreation Commissioner Dan Lovallo
Coe Memorial Park Advisory Committee Members: Margaret Keywan, Susan Coe Holbrook, Marc Trivella, Frank Pennington, Dr. Isadore Temkin, and Mary Zbell
Guests Lori and Jeremy Stickney of Still River Gardens

Absent

Parks and Recreation Chairperson Patricia Fairchild
Coe Memorial Park Subcommittee Member Emeritus Robert Driscoll

With the absence of Chairperson Patricia Fairchild, Superintendent Brett Simmons opened the meeting at 5:15 p.m.

A motion to approve the minutes of the February 3, 2010 meeting was made by Margaret Keywan, seconded by Marc Trivella, and approved.

A motion to approve the minutes of the March 15, 2010 special joint meeting with the Parks and Recreation Commission was made by Marc Trivella, seconded by Margaret Keywan, and approved.

The March 3, 2010 regular meeting of the Coe Memorial Park Advisory Committee was not held due to lack of a quorum.

Citizen's Comments

None

Park Operations

Mr. Simmons reported that both the Parks Department and Still River Gardens have begun spring clean-ups of Coe Memorial Park. The contract between the City and Still River Gardens was finalized and a copy of the contract has been forwarded to the Committee members.

Lori Stickney of Still River Gardens informed the Committee of the work that had begun at the Park and reported that some of the bulbs were in bloom, in contrast with last year

when not all of the daffodils had bloomed by the end of April. She explained that an early warm spring sometimes affects the bulbs in that the flowers may emerge earlier with smaller blooms. The tulips are looking healthy, although some were uprooted, and some of the roses did not survive the winter. It was mentioned that some of the beds had been trampled upon and that squirrels were responsible for pulling up some of the bulbs.

Dr. Temkin brought up the subject of the cutting of daffodil leaves by Still River Gardens last year and the condition of the Park's daffodils this year. Both Dr. Temkin and Sue Coe-Holbrook remarked that this year's daffodils came up later and were shorter than those in other nearby areas. Dr. Temkin questioned whether the cutting of the daffodils last year affected this year's daffodils and requested that Mr. Simmons provide direction to Still River Gardens as to what should be done this year. Mr. Simmons stated that this issue could be discussed during the walk-thru of the Park planned for April 21. Mrs. Stickney responded that the leaves were cut down as they were unsightly, and Jeremy Stickney described their intention of integrating daffodils into perennial areas so that as the daffodils complete their cycles, they would be masked by the perennials.

Given the possibility of another frost, Lori Stickney questioned how important it was to have annuals planted by Memorial Day. The Committee responded that they would rather have color in the Park for Memorial Day even if it meant that the annuals might suffer from a late frost. Discussion continued regarding the ordering of materials and the colors to be planted within the Park. Dr. Temkin brought up the subject of a design plan for the park, to which Mr. Simmons responded that work on the design plan was a work in progress with the progression of the seasons. At this point, Dr. Temkin excused himself from the meeting and Mrs. Zbell entered the meeting. Mr. Simmons invited all those present to attend the walk-thru of the Park on April 21 at 5 p.m.

Sue Coe-Holbrook then brought up the subject of the evaluation form for Still River Gardens and stated that it was previously agreed by the Search Committee that this was an inadequate form of evaluation. She continued by stating that she thought that the form was to be changed, but noted that it was now a part of the new contract. Mr. Simmons stated that it might be possible to still discuss the form and that he would confer with Corporation Counsel.

Mr. Simmons reported that he had recently spoken with Mike Zaharek and that wet weather had hindered his plans for scheduled pruning. With regard to the spruce trees, Mr. Simmons stated that in looking at the first four or five trees from the road, it was possible that three or four of the trees would be transplanted with only one being cut down. City Hall has a possible location for one of the trees and the Police Department and West Torrington are other possible sites for the trees. Mike Zaharek has recommended the second tree in from the road be transplanted for the Park's Christmas tree. Mr. Simmons stated that they were looking for homes for all of the trees; but with the removal of the first four or five trees, the trees that remain pose little impact to the driveway and their disposition could be addressed in the fall.

Back flows and water meters were installed this week. Artistic Irrigation will be conducting their start-up of the irrigation system on April 23 and will be inspecting all irrigation heads as part of the start-up.

In response to a request from Sue Coe-Holbrook, Mr. Simmons stated that he would provide an update on the condition of the Park's beech tree at the next Committee meeting following his discussion with Mike Zaharek.

Mr. Simmons presented the following handouts:

- Quarterly report
- Calendars for March and April 2010 for Coe Memorial Park.
- Financial report for the month ending February 2010

New Business

A motion was made by Margaret Keywan to have the lights at Coe Memorial Park adjusted seasonally. She explained that the Park lights go on before the street lights and are still on in the morning after the street lights go off. Brett Simmons explained that the street lights work off a photo-cell whereas the Park lights are on a timer, which is adjusted seasonally. Ms. Coe-Holbrook stated that until the next seasonal change, there will be almost 12 hours of light daily and that the lights used to be adjusted according to Daylight Savings time. Sue Coe-Holbrook seconded the motion made earlier by Margaret Keywan, which was then approved unanimously.

Mrs. Keywan commented that the lawn at the Park was looking good, to which Mr. Simmons responded that some reseeding of the edges along the sidewalk would be done.

Old Business

When questioned about the stove, Mr. Simmons reported that the stove had been disconnected, the gas line capped off, and the exhaust hood removed. Mr. Simmons also mentioned that new tracking and ceiling tiles were needed in the kitchen.

It was mentioned that violators continue to park in the parking lot, despite being advised otherwise.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Marc Trivella, seconded by Sue Coe-Holbrook, and approved unanimously at 5:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Rategan
Parks Department Secretary