

Torrington Parks and Recreation Commission  
Coe Memorial Park Advisory Committee  
Minutes of March 15, 2010 Special Meeting

Chairperson Patricia Fairchild called to order a special joint meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission and Coe Memorial Park Advisory Committee at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 15, 2010, at the Armory. In attendance were Commissioners Jim Pescatore and Dan Lovallo; Superintendent of Parks and Recreation Brett Simmons; Advisory Committee members Susan Coe-Holbrook, Margaret Keywan, Marc Trivella, Frank Pennington, and Mary Zbell; and Mike Zaharek.

Superintendent Simmons began the meeting by detailing the objectives of the meeting and distributing a picture of seven of the nine trees to be discussed, a map of Coe Memorial Park, and a summary of the tree inventory done for the Park. Mr. Simmons stated that there were 9 trees that needed to be removed from their current location along the border shared with the Social Security office, and referenced Mike Zaharek's proposal for removing and transplanting the trees at a cost of \$6,300. Mr. Simmons further stated that decisions on which trees to move, as well as the source of the funding for the proposed tree work, would need to be made at this meeting. A decision on which of the trees would be used as a replacement for the current Christmas tree which is in deteriorating condition was also requested. Also included in this project would be the relocation of the electrical components for the current Christmas tree. Mr. Simmons suggested that consideration be given to purchasing new LED lights for the tree at this time, and noted that Planning and Zoning involvement in the alteration of the landscaping would be required.

Discussion was then held with regard to which of the trees should be chosen as a replacement Christmas tree. Commissioner Lovallo questioned if the current Christmas tree should be left alone until it could be ensured that the new tree would survive after being transplanted. Mr. Zaharek responded that he would recommend leaving the current tree alone for one to two years while the new tree was taking root. Margaret Keywan suggested planting the replacement tree along the electrical line for the current Christmas tree for ease of connecting the electricity. When asked for his recommendation, Mr. Zaharek replied that he would first look to the largest and nicest of the trees, but would inevitably choose whichever of the trees would be easiest to dig for the best root ball to ensure survival of the tree. Discussion continued relative to trimming the trees and the concerns expressed by the adjacent Social Security office. Mr. Zaharek stated that the spruce trees were actually the wrong trees for that location and would eventually push out the bordering wall.

Following discussion, a motion was made by Marc Trivella and seconded by Margaret Keywan, that Mr. Zaharek select the best of the trees for the new Christmas tree. This motion was approved unanimously and was followed by a motion made by Susan Coe-Holbrook, to leave the current Christmas tree [standing]. This motion was seconded by Mary Zbell and approved unanimously.

Ms. Coe-Holbrook further moved that the cost for the transplanting of the new Christmas tree be paid for with Coe Memorial Trust funds. This motion was seconded by Mary Zbell and approved unanimously.

Discussion on the fate of the remainder of the trees continued, followed by a motion made by Margaret Keywan and seconded by Marc Trivella, that the remainder of the trees be offered to the City; said motion passed unanimously. Should any of the trees be desired by the City or the Parks Department, the Advisory Committee agreed that no additional Trust funds were to be used for digging or transplanting of the trees.

When questioned regarding the time limit for transplanting the trees, Mr. Zaharek estimated that there was about a five-week window before the trees would begin budding, at which time no transplantation should be done. A suggestion was made that the remainder of the trees be cut down should there be no one interested in any of the trees. Mr. Simmons reported that the Police Department had expressed interest in one of the trees, and commented that any transplantation of trees within the City would most likely become the responsibility of the Parks Department. Discussion was then held as to the funding for any transplanting of trees should the City wish to plant them in another location. It was suggested that the Police Department bear the cost for the transplanting of any tree they might want.

When questioned about the cost to cut down the remaining trees, Mr. Zaharek suggested that a half day of his two days of pruning that was currently in the budget could be used for cutting down the trees, with little effect on the pruning that is to be done. Although a permit to remove the trees would not be needed, Mr. Zaharek advised the group to consult with Zoning Enforcement Officer, Kim Barbieri before the trees are cut down as this is a zoning issue which may require a plan for replacement plantings. Decisions regarding new plantings to replace the trees will be decided once the Trust issues are resolved and the next phase of the Master Plan is finalized. Mr. Zaharek reminded the group that the cost of tree stump removal would have to be considered with the cost of the replacement plantings. Margaret Keywan suggested that new LED lights could be purchased from Rileigh's while the new Christmas tree is taking root.

Mrs. Fairchild then requested action by the Commission on the motions approved by the Advisory Committee. A motion followed by Dan Lovallo, that the Commission approve the motions as made by the Coe Memorial Park Advisory Committee. Said motion was seconded by Jim Pescatore, and approved unanimously.

A motion to adjourn was made by Jim Pescatore, seconded by Marc Trivella, and approved unanimously at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Rategan  
Parks Department Secretary