

Draft Minutes

TOWN OF GUILFORD Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes – 7th November, 2011

A regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Monday 7th November, 2011 at 7:00p.m. in the Guilford Community Center with Chairman Ralph Schipani presiding.

Present: Theresa Bryant, Rose Dostert, Sue Robins, Ralph Schipani and Judy Sullivan. Also present Director Rick Maynard. Joining the meeting in progress were Jenny Carrillo (7:30p.m.) and Barbara Pine (7:06p.m.). Excused: Calvin Page. Absent: Marc Iacobellis.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05p.m.

Public Forum: Claire Cain, Connecticut Forest & Park Association (CFPA) introduced herself and circulated a brochure on CFPA. She talked briefly about CFPA and a new trail which would be coming through Connecticut and Guilford. CFPA is the managing authority for New England Trails and as part of this Ms. Cain said it was considering where the terminus for Guilford should be and how to find a location for this. Ms. Cain said the trail system was a congressionally designated system of both scenic and historic routes. The New England Trail will be a national scenic trail. Ms. Cain said the terminus would be on the shore of Long Island Sound and Chittenden Park was being considered as a possible location. She added that when thinking about how to define the terminus CFPA looked to sister trails and Ms. Cain briefly reviewed other trail system termini. She noted that an example of a kiosk could be found at the Guilford Route 80 parking lot for Timberlands. Ms. Cain felt the terminus at Chittenden Park could be something really special. Ms. Bryant asked that when it became a trail-head would there be a lot of cars parked for hikers since it was going to be one of only 11 trailheads. Ms. Cain replied that she had not seen that kind of activity at any of her trailheads. She noted that Mt. Higby which was heavily used normally only had 7-8 cars. Ms. Cain, therefore, did not envision needing expanded parking, etc. Heather Allore pointed out that one thing which was different about the New England Trail was that it was not designated for overnight camping such as the Appalachian Trail. She felt there would be a real economic benefit to Guilford from the trail. It is really set up for section hiking where one would hike a section and then stay overnight in a local Bed & Breakfast. Dr. Allore said Chittenden was being proposed but CFPA was open to other suggestions. Referring to the parking issue, Dr. Allore said since the train stopped both ways in Guilford at weekends it was felt people would use the train rather than drive to Guilford. She added that parts of the trail had historic elements so these would be highlighted. Ms. Robins asked if there were any negatives and Ms. Cain replied no. Dr. Allore added that there could be some trash. Mrs. Sullivan queried expense to the Town. Dr. Allore replied that there would be none. Ms. Pine asked about the relationship between CFPA, Shoreline Greenway, and the new cultural group. Dr. Allore replied that there was no relationship between CFPA and Shoreline Greenway. She added that the trail was a national scenic trail with federal stewardship. Mr. Maynard said he thought Chittenden Park had been approved for the terminus after an earlier CFPA presentation and it was agreed to research this in the minutes. Ms. Bryant said she would like to see a more specific proposal. Paul Mei noted that this was the gateway of the trail in Guilford so it was important, and important for everyone to be involved. Mr. Schipani said the Commission would research whether or not it had made an earlier decision and then proceed from that. Later in the meeting Ms. Bryant said this proposal was potentially a huge opportunity. She felt the Commission should think about long term goals and a well thought out plan for Chittenden Park. Ms. Bryant said she would not want the Commission to squander this opportunity because it had not

Public Forum: (continued)

thought about it. Ms. Robins suggested having a liaison and Ms. Bryant volunteered. Ms. Pine mentioned that the Commission had talked about new fencing around the parking lot. She asked about involving Will Thompson in this project. Mr. Maynard noted that part of the work which Mr. Thompson did on the Jacobs Beach Master Plan involved a boardwalk at Chittenden Park. Ms. Pine then made a motion appointing Ms. Bryant to serve as the Commission's liaison to CFPA. Mrs. Dostert seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Jacobs Beach Project – met with Will Thompson/Town Hall South staff, took photo of hurricane Irene damage & provided to Finance Director for FEMA report, discussed plan with boy scout leader; worked on 5 Year Capital Plan; checked various fields/areas to be seeded; met with new receptionist Delores Conte; met at Baldwin A Little League Field with contractor, Paul Schmidt, and Little League representatives re re-grading; met with maintenance crew several mornings to review tasks; met with trash contractor re issues with trash removal; attended CIRMA meeting on workers' compensation; met with carpet installer to set date for new carpets in Alexander Lounge/Menunkatuck Room; met with contractor repairing basketball court at Police Department; attended following meetings: Green Committee, Field Committee walk, Christmas Tree Lighting Committee, emergency meetings after storm; worked on budget; worked at Haunted Mansion – nearly 500 people; checked on crew working on clean up at Jacobs Beach; Rescue Squad volunteered to do clean up at Chaffinch Island Park; submitted report to Finance Director on administrative hours associated with Hurricane Irene; met with Tony Annicelli and sales rep at Bittner Park to demo new product to remove puddles from fields; worked at emergency shelter after snow storm.

Mr. Schipani asked about the new puddle removing product. Mr. Maynard replied that the Department had been using a particular product for years. Recently a new product was discovered which might work out to be less expensive and so he asked a representative to come and give a demonstration. Mr. Maynard stated that the old product came in 50lb bags which were hard for maintenance staff to maneuver. The new product comes in 10lb buckets so it would be easier to handle and store. Mr. Maynard felt it was worth trying. Mr. Schipani added that the new product would be checked for hazardous materials.

STAFF REPORTS

A. Recreation Supervisor (written): Met with Pam Johnson (Guilford Courier) and Cheilaugh Garvey re Halloween Party – held 10/30/11 at Adams Middle School due to storm, over 300 people; Haunted Mansion – over 500 people attended, \$1,735 collected; attended CRPA meeting; ½ day program – collaborated with library and Youth & Family Services on half day of school activities for Baldwin, Adams and High School students, had DJ on the Green, 70 students attended; Winter Brochure – contacted current instructors, met with new instructors, offering many new after school programs, first day of registration is 12/5/11. Winter Special Events: concert/chili cook off 1/29/12, winter festival 2/20/12, third Annual Holiday House Decorating Contest; ordered office furniture, due by end of November.

B. Seniors Program Coordinator (written): **Programs:** Lecture on Octoberfest; Blue Plate Special Luncheon – staff dressed like 50's waitresses; Lunch & Learn – healthy eating during the holidays;

Emergency Shelter: (continued)

the Commission should explore what it meant to do this and that it should be placed on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting. Ms. Pine pointed out that the Commission had never discussed this topic, and that as a Commission it was responsible for its staff. Mrs. Dostert stated that the Community Center was built to act as an emergency shelter also and asked how many times it had been used for this purpose. Mr. Maynard replied approximately 4 times. Ms. Robins asked Mr. Maynard what he thought the expectations of the Board of Selectmen were. Mr. Schipani agreed that policies and procedures needed to be in place and that BOS should lead this effort. Concern was also expressed about funding emergency shelter operations. Ms. Robins asked what criteria would the Town follow when a request was made to open the building as an emergency shelter. Ms. Pine felt plans and policies should be developed by the Town and not the Department. It was suggested having Mr. Maynard ask BOS what its policy was. However, Ms. Pine volunteered to research what policies were in place and email information to the Commission. Mr. Maynard noted that the Department had its own procedure in place when asked to activate the emergency shelter. Ms. Robins said that Mr. Maynard and his staff had done a fantastic job and thanked him for this.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Standing Fields Committee: Mr. Schipani reported that some field walks had been held. He said it was felt that Baldwin School was still the prime location to be evaluated for a new ballfield.

B. Jacobs Beach Project: Mr. Schipani said there was no news on the STEAP grant. Mr. Maynard said it might not be awarded until early December. He added that he and Will Thompson had met with some students from the University of New Haven. The students might help set up the plan and possible sources of funding.

C. Property at Guilford Point: Ms. Carrillo stated that she had brought this item to the attention of the Land Acquisition Commission. LAC felt this was not an ideal time to buy the land. She also asked the Commission to consider the loss of tax revenue to the Town. Ms. Carrillo felt a good plan was needed in order to make a successful presentation to LAC.

D. Senior Transportation Fees Outside of Guilford: Mr. Maynard said that the Seniors Program Coordinator had arranged for Dial A Ride to make a presentation to the seniors on 12/2/11. Mr. Schipani stated that he would like to see something in place by the end of the year. He also noted that the Department needed to be making this decision rather than having it driven by outside forces. Ms. Pine asked that the Seniors Program Coordinator attend the December meeting with draft wording for a policy.

E. Policy on Naming Facilities: Ms. Robins circulated a draft document. She said she had tried to make this short and user friendly. Following brief discussion Ms. Pine made a motion to adopt this policy with the following change: under “II Responsibilities”, in the last sentence the words ‘*and purchased*’ will be omitted. Ms. Bryant seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously. Mr. Maynard mentioned an earlier request from Cynthia Magee for a bench at Chaffinch Island Park in memory of her husband. Ms. Robins made a motion to approve this request based on the newly adopted Policy for Naming Facilities. The bench is to be in line with design and installation of the other benches at this location. Mrs. Sullivan seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously. Ms. Robins recommended Mr. Maynard set up a form letter to deal with this type of request.

F. 5-Year Capital Plan: Mr. Schipani reported that changes had been made to the plan submitted by the Commission because it was felt what was requested was too large an amount. A compromise was reached and it was agreed that the new ballfield needed to be done. Mr. Schipani added that he had been assured that any reimbursement received from FEMA and the STEAP grant would be solely at the Department's discretion.

G. Operating Budget 2012-2013: Mr. Maynard stated that information on the budget would be available for the December meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Update on National New England Scenic Trail: See above under "Public Forum".

B. Recognition of Cynthia Cartier for Contributing to the Department: Ms. Pine made a motion to recognize Cynthia Cartier for her contribution to the Town through her yoga classes which were very well attended. Ms. Robins seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

C. Calendar of Future Agenda Items: Mr. Maynard circulated information on this topic. Ms. Pine said she thought there was confusion at the recent budget workshop and that staff were more geared towards the budget than talking about improvements they would like to make. Therefore, it was agreed to add to the August agenda an item "Workshop for Staff on Future Planning and New Initiatives".

D. Staff Attendance at Conferences/Seminars: Mr. Maynard circulated a list of conferences and the staff who attended and briefly reviewed this. Although this was not listed Mr. Maynard said that maintenance staff also attended training seminars. Ms. Carrillo thanked him for this information.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Ms. Carrillo made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45p.m. Ms. Robins seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

The next meeting of the Parks & Recreation Commission will be held on Monday 5th December, 2011 at 6:30p.m. at the Guilford Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Katharine Stewart
Recording Secretary