

From: SimsburyCT Postings 3/23/09 12:21:23 PM
Subject: Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes 02/26/2009
To: SimsburyCT_ParkRecMin
Cc:

Culture, Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting – Minutes
February 26, 2009

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Culture, Parks & Recreation Commission was called to order at 7:33 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. The following members were present: Chairman Linda Johnson, Commission members David Bush, Karen Cortes, Joe Grace, Kelly Kearney, Mary Liljedahl, and Harry Ryan. Also in attendance was Gerry Toner, Director of Culture, Parks & Recreation.

II. MINUTES – DECEMBER 4, 2008

David Bush made a motion to approve the December 4, 2008 minutes as written. Harry Ryan seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

III. TARIFFVILLE VILLAGE ASSOCIATION – PRESENTATION ON PROPOSED
TARIFFVILLE GREEN GAZEBO

Mr. Matczak, President of Tariffville Village Association, stated that they have been working on this multi-phase project for the last six years. He stated that they have worked hard to ensure that the direction they are going is consistent with the Town of Simsbury.

Mr. Matczak stated that the gazebo will be a low maintenance structure. He stated that Schoenhardt Architects are involved with designing the gazebo. The designs are now being finalized and the general contractor is ready to start.

Mr. West showed the Commission the initial rendering of the gazebo. He stated that they want to tell of the history of Tariffville and at the same time have a building that is custom made and maintenance free. The estimated budget for the gazebo is \$80,000 with a \$10,000 contingency. The

materials that they are looking at for the gazebo are hardwoods and composite materials. Mr. West stated that they also have a landscape architect that will be working on some of the design components with Schoenhardt Architects.

Mr. West stated that the first step in developing the Tariffville Green is the gazebo, which will be the focal point. He stated that they have enough money to go to the next phase, which are the walkways. They would like to move quickly on the rest of the development.

Mary Liljedahl questioned if these walkways would be shoveled or plowed during the winter. Mr. West stated that they have not thought that far ahead, although he is sure that the main walkways will be maintained.

In response to a question regarding the size of the gazebo from Joe Grace, Mr. West stated that although they are still figuring out the dimensions. The gazebo will probably be 22 feet across on the flat sides and 24 feet across on the diagonal. He stated that he is unsure if they will be putting seating in the gazebo.

Kelly Kearney questioned if there would be power to the gazebo. Mr. West stated that they had power put in 2 years ago on the Green. They will also be putting in specialty lighting in the gazebo.

Mary Liljedahl stated that she believes this is a great project and thanked the Tariffville Village Association for following through and getting things done. She stated that Tariffville is the gateway into Simsbury. She feels that this is now a showcase.

Mr. Matczak thanked Mr. Toner for all of his hard work. He stated that the Association could not have done this without his help.

Chairman Johnson congratulated the Tariffville Village Association for a job well done. She stated that she respects their persistence and success.

Mary Liljedahl made a motion that the Culture Parks and Recreation Commission recommends forwarding the presentation of the proposed Tariffville Green gazebo to the Board of Selectmen and the other necessary Boards for approval. Joe Grace seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

IV. SIMSBURY SOCCER CLUB – PRESENTATION ON PROPOSED FIELD CONSTRUCTION – CURTISS PARK

Mr. Hayden and Mr. Newell made a presentation of the field construction for the Simsbury Soccer Club. Mr. Hayden explained the purpose of the Club and

gave the Commission members an overview of the program. Regarding their priorities, he stated that they are looking at their programs to see if they are the best they can be by surveying other Towns. He stated that soccer, as well as other programs, continue to grow and that there is a shortage of fields in Simsbury. He stated that their priority is focused on Curtiss Park, which is a showplace for soccer.

Mr. Newell reviewed the seven facilities they currently use for soccer. He stated that Curtiss Park is their centerpiece location. Iron Horse is also an important facility, which has three fields and also has wheelchair access. Orkil is three small fields which serves the second graders. Meadow Pond is not a multi-site facility; it is for the younger children, although this field has drainage issues. Squadron Line Field is a single site for the older kids. He stated that they put in an irrigation system several years ago. Henry James is a two field facility that they use only in the fall and also for a backup for Curtiss Park. Weatogue field is for football in the fall and soccer in the spring. There are two fields at this location. Mr. Newell stated that the multi-fields facilities are more efficient.

Karen Cortes questioned if there were other regional invitational tournaments that the Town could hold with the enhanced field space. Mr. Hayden stated that several years ago, the Soccer Club had a tournament; this is something that they will be looking into.

Mr. Newell discussed the Master Plan with the Commission. He stated that the Simsbury Soccer Club has \$175,000 in their capital budget that will be put into the Master Plan. He stated that there were discussions regarding if there could be an expansion at Iron Horse, although they felt that their best option was an expansion at Curtiss Park. Mr. Newell stated that the Master Plan is a 5-10 year outlook. The Plan shows the fields, proposed and existing, improved parking, walking trails, and improved access to the River.

Mr. Newell discussed Phase I of the Master Plan, which will be a new field with parking behind it. He stated that this is a six month project regarding building the field and another six months of waiting for the grass seed to grow. Mr. Newell stated that Phase I has been approved by the Simsbury Soccer Club. The Town may be giving \$75,000 to the Club, although this still needs to be voted on. He stated that they would like to start construction of the field this spring so they can be playing on those fields by next spring.

Kelly Kearney stated that there would not be a new gain of any large fields in Phase I. Mr. Newell stated that this was correct. Mary Liljedahl questioned how less would the other fields be used once the new field was

in use. Mr. Newell stated that it was a one for one tradeoff. Karen Cortes stated that there will be a net gain of one small field with Phase I. Until Phase II is complete, it will not be easing the burden on the other facilities.

David Bush made a motion that the Culture Parks and Recreation Commission recommend the forwarding of Phase I of the Master Plan presented by the Simsbury Soccer Club to the Board of Selectmen and the other necessary Boards for approval both of the Plan and additional funding. Joe Grace seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Mr. Hayden thanked Mr. Toner for all of this help.

Chairman Johnson asked the audience for any feedback as to why they were attending the meeting. John Deliso of Simsbury Youth Lacrosse stated that he was at this meeting to hear any decisions regarding the soccer fields. He stated that all sports in Simsbury are growing and there is a shortage of fields. Lacrosse may need to close their registration if something is not done because they cannot accommodate the children. He stated that lacrosse, like soccer, needs large fields. Mr. Deliso stated that he will continue to attend these meetings until a decision has been made.

V. DOG PARK – LINDA JOHNSON

Regarding Town Forest, Chairman Johnson stated that she talked to the head of the Girl Scouts and found out that the Scouts use this park on many occasions throughout the year. The Scouts have declared this area as their own. She stated that there is no reason to pursue this piece of property any longer.

Chairman Johnson stated that they are still currently looking for new property to pursue for the Dog Park, although it is very hard to see this time of year with the snow cover. She stated that she has sent Mary Glassman a letter regarding her interest in possibly utilizing an area of the Triangle. She stated that Meadow Pond was another possible site for the park.

Chairman Johnson stated that this issue will need to wait until the spring. She stated that this is something worth waiting for.

David Bush stated that he appreciated Chairman Johnson listening to the Scouts; they have done so much good in Town and he would not want to see anything taken away from them.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

Chairman Johnson stated that she attended the third meeting of Simsbury Celebrates. The current challenge is fundraising. After last year's event, an e-mail went out with one of the questions being if people would like to participate or be on the committee. Chairman Johnson stated that they received approximately 10 responses. They now have several new people on the committee. She feels that Simsbury Celebrates has been re-energized with these new people coming on board.

Chairman Johnson stated that last year's Simsbury Celebrates was the biggest turnout they have had; between 11,000 – 12,000 people attended the event. Because of this, they will be cutting back on some of their advertising this year.

The Commission continued their discussion regarding the need for fields in Town. This is a very real issue that Simsbury is faced with. Not only are more children enrolling in sports, but children are enrolling in more than one sport at a time.

David Bush stated that he attended the Board of Selectmen meeting regarding the proposed uses for the Triangle. He stated that the people promoting the recreational fields were in the minority. There was a logical argument being made for agriculture and for corridors for the animals and wildlife habitats.

David Bush stated that Mr. Toner recently sent out a pool facility survey. He suggested that this be put on the next agenda; it would be helpful to hear what the base recommendations are. He stated that he would like to implement, as best they can, some of the things they will learn from this. Mr. Toner stated that the Complex Committee initiated this. They will be reviewing this at their next meeting.

Mr. Toner stated that the Board of Finance recently stated that they will not approve any capital projects. He has submitted a number of projects, one being the paving of the access road, as well as the combined park maintenance facility, which were in last year's budget. The only projects that the Board of Selectmen voted to send forward were these two projects. He stated that this was very encouraging. He stated that, in large part, this was for safety reasons. Mr. Toner stated that the public hearing will be held on March 12th. There will also be a Town Meeting on May 5th. He stated that it is imperative to get people out to these meetings.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Karen Cortes made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:24 p.m. David Bush seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

