

## **Wethersfield Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes - Thursday, May 22, 2008**

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Tom Ragonese at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall. Members present were Tom Ragonese, Dan Silbo, Rich Lepore, Peter Kalousdian, and Charlie Wood. Also present were Jeff Kotkin, Town Council Liaison, and Kathleen Bagley, Director, Parks and Recreation Department.

### A. Public Comments.

#### 1. Renaming Mill Woods Park Road.

Mr. Dan Smith of 417 Maple Street addressed the Advisory Park and Recreation Board concerning a request to honor past Board Chairperson Dick Dobmeier by naming the Mill Woods Park Road after him. Mr. Smith distributed a letter to Board members explaining why he would like to see Mr. Dobmeier honored in this manner. He is asking that the Board recommend the naming of the Mill Woods Park Road after Mr. Dobmeier. He is willing to raise the funds necessary to cover any costs associated with this action and would like to work with the Board on this project. Chairperson Ragonese asked Ms. Bagley to explain the process of naming rights for the Town of Wethersfield. Ms. Bagley reported that the Advisory Parks and Recreation Board can make a recommendation to the Town Council regarding naming rights for any park facilities. It would then be up to the Town Council to take a vote on that recommendation. All Board members were in support of this idea. Charlie Wood made a motion to move forward with the recommendation to the Town Council that the road leading into Mill Woods Park be named after Mr. Dobmeier. Rich Lepore seconded the motion. It was voted unanimously. Chairperson Ragonese asked Mr. Smith to work with Ms. Bagley and the Dobmeier family to develop the design and wording for this park road sign and bring it back to the Board for their review. After that process it will then be sent to the Town Council with the Board's recommendation. Mr. Smith thanked the Board for their consideration and will get back in touch with them regarding this issue.

#### 2. Wethersfield Cove.

Chairperson Ragonese recognized Charlie Forsdick, Deputy Harbor Master, of the Wethersfield Cove. Mr. Forsdick explained the condition of the existing docks down at Cove Park. These docks are getting older and are costly to repair and rebuild each year when they are put back into the water. He has been working with town staff and an engineering firm (Ocean and Coastal) hired by the town to develop a new design for the Cove docks to handle the water fluctuations in the Cove. He explained that Physical Services does a good job maintaining the existing docks, but with the water fluctuations in the Cove it is difficult to maintain them. The new designed dock system will be safer to use, easier to maintain, more attractive to boaters, economical, will attract transient boaters and help serve as making Wethersfield a destination spot for tourism. The new dock system would be able to stay in the water year-round and not have to be removed each year for the winter season. This new docks system will consolidate the three docks that exist today into one dock system. These docks are designed for ice and will not use pylons for support. The engineer is recommending elastic rode support system. This rode system is part of an anchor system that will allow the docks to float with the water fluctuations in the Cove due to the tide and high water situations.

Mr. Forsdick reviewed the engineer's designs for this new dock system with the board members. He explained that the cost for this work is high, but the hope is that the town will be able to apply for some grants to help implement this system. Also, the funds collected at the Cove Boat Launch area would be used to help defray the cost of the new dock system. Ms. Bagley reported that the new dock system has been included in the Parks and Recreation capital improvement project budget. Charlie Wood reminded board members that the replacement of the docks was identified in the Cove Master Plan with the hope that the revenue raised from the boaters would help fund this project. He also

recommended looking at grant opportunities to help fund the system. Councilor Kotkin asked Mr. Forsdick if there were any places where this docking system is in use. Also, he asked if photos could be taken of this facility and would like some feedback from users about the system. Tom Ragonese concurred with Mr. Kotkin and asked that this information be developed for a future Board meeting. Charlie Wood suggested getting more information on the material involved in the docks and get warranty information on this equipment. Mr. Wood also asked about the location for the boat ramp. Mr. Forsdick reported that the existing boat ramp is located at the end of the Cove Boat Launch area, close to the channel to the Connecticut River. The location of the new docks system is being moved to the middle of the Cove with a future plan calling for a new boat ramp to be built adjacent to the new dock system. However, boaters can continue to use the existing ramp with the new dock location for launching into the Cove. Mr. Wood suggested cleaning up the engineers map, eliminating the contour lines and enlarging the schematic design. He suggested having a meeting of the members of the Cove Park Advisory Committee prior to the board recommending approval for this new system. Chairperson Ragonese thought that since the Cove Park Advisory Committee does not meet anymore, maybe the board could have a future meeting about the design for the new docks and invite the members from this committee. Board members concurred with Mr. Ragonese and asked Mr. Forsdick and Ms. Bagley to get additional information on the new dock system for their August or September meeting and invite the public to this meeting for their input. Charlie Forsdick thanked the board members for their review and will work with the Parks and Recreation Department to get additional information on the docks.

B. Minutes April 24, 2008.

Richard Lepore moved to approve [the minutes of April 24, 2008](#). The motion was seconded by Peter Kalousdian and voted unanimously.

C. Monthly Report.

April 2008 Monthly Report reviewed by members.

D. Letters.

1. Draft Rules on Cottone Field Future Lights.

Included in the Board's packet was a draft policy on the use of the lights at Cottone Field at the high school. Board members reviewed the policy and asked Ms. Bagley to keep them posted on this draft proposal of the rules as the process for installing lights at Cottone Field moves forward in town.

2. Memorial Day Parade.

Ms. Bagley reminded Board members that the Memorial Day Parade will be held on May 24th at 9 a.m. starting at the Motor Vehicle Department parking lot. Chairperson Ragonese reminded Board members of the community nature of the parade and encouraged all of them to be a participant either by watching the parade or marching in the parade. Ms. Bagley reported that the Keane Foundation has gotten permission for the steel pieces from the World Trade Center for installation at the Community Center. These pieces will be in the Memorial Day Parade.

3. Request for Use of Cove by the Cabela Store in East Hartford.

Ms. Bagley reported that the Cabela store contacted the town and asked permission to use the boat launch facility for launching of their company boats onto the Connecticut River. Ms. Bagley had a discussion with the Town Manager and the Town will be offering the Cabela store a non-resident season pass to launch their boats at the Cove. Charlie Wood commented that this was a good business idea and the town should look to support and encourage these types of endeavors.

## E. Old Business

### 1. Mill Woods Park Building Committee - Project Status.

Chairperson Ragonese gave Board members an update on the project. He reported that the town is going out to bid for a second time, since the first time they only received two bidders. He reported that committee members are working hard to get the word out to other contractors and ask them to bid on this project. The bid is being advertised now and will be opened June 10.

### 2. Community Center Renovation.

Ms. Bagley reported that the renovation for the Community Center is moving along and the contractor is working on both the interior and exterior of the building. The generator has been relocated to the back of the building and all the wiring has been done for the generator. Other exterior work has included getting the site ready for the new sidewalks and brickwork. The interior of the building has included all the ceiling prep work. They have installed the heating and air ventilating unit on the roof of the gymnasium and the new windows have been installed. The Town Council has received an additional state grant for window replacement and they have designated it for the Community Center. The Town is getting a quote on replacing more windows in the Community Center to match the new windows that have been installed for the 9/11 Memorial Sports Center. The state grant is for \$75,000.

## F. New Business

### 1. Request to Name Mill Woods Park Road after Dick Dobmeier.

This request was discussed earlier in the meeting.

### 2. Review the Draft Plan for Cove Park Docks.

This item was also discussed earlier in the meeting.

### 3. Webb Carnival.

Chairperson Ragonese reported that Webb school will be holding a carnival the weekend of June 20-22 on the school's athletic fields. Mr. Ragonese was concerned about this carnival because of three points:

1. It would take the baseball field off line at its busiest time.
2. Damage could be done to the field.
3. The Board has been working with the baseball groups on good relations regarding the condition of the fields.

He had these concerns and sent a letter to the Town Manager. He has heard back that the Town and the Webb PTO have worked to keep the mechanical rides off the baseball and football field so that there will be no damage done to the field.

### 4. Mill Woods Park.

Councilor Kotkin reported that a resident had been concerned about teenage kids hanging out at the park, using rude language, acting in a threatening way and fooling around on the swings and at the playground. They were making it difficult for other people to use the facility. Ms. Bagley will talk with the Park Ranger and instruct staff to keep an eye on this facility. A discussion will be held with the Police Chief to inform him of this issue. It was also reported that the swings and playground equipment were not in the best of condition. This equipment will be inspected.

G. Motion to Adjourn

Rich Lepore moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m. Motion seconded by Dan Silbo and voted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Bagley, Director  
Parks and Recreation Department