

## **Wethersfield Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes - Thursday, September 25, 2008**

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Tom Ragonese at 7 p.m. at the William J. Pitkin Community Center. Members present were Chairperson, Tom Ragonese, Dan Silbo, Charlie Wood and Richard Lepore. Also present was Kathleen Bagley, Director of Parks and Recreation Department.

### A. Presentation on Proposed Cove Docks.

Chairperson Ragonese welcomed members of the public to this informational meeting on the proposed new dock design for Cove Park. He introduced Ms. Bagley, Director of Parks and Recreation, and Mr. Forsdick a past member of the Cove Park Advisory Committee, who gave the presentation on the new design. Chairperson Ragonese explained that the presentation would take approximately 10 minutes, followed by a 20 minute question-and-answer period. Members of the public present were Earle Munroe, Jim Civitillo, Dan DeCourcy, John Lepper and Fred Zerio.

Ms. Bagley began the presentation by distributing an outline providing information on the dock design. Also available to the public were handouts identifying the plan design, the engineers written proposal, a picture with a written description of the elastic rode system (anchoring system for docks), a conceptual design of option #3, background information on the engineering firm and pictures of similar docks around the state. Ms. Bagley explained that the process for these new docks started with the Parks and Recreation Board and the Cove Park Master Plan, developed in 2000. The current docks are in poor condition and they do not function well during high water in the Cove. The Town hired the engineering firm of Ocean and Coastal Consultants from Trumbull, Connecticut to develop a plan for new docks at the Cove. These consultants reviewed the existing conditions and developed two conceptual designs. They reviewed these designs with town staff, received input and developed a third option. The third option was reviewed by town staff, including representatives from the Police and Fire Departments. The approval and permitting process for this plan will include the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Town Council, Inland Wetlands Commission, Planning and Zoning Commission, Historic District Commission and State Department of Environmental Protection. The Department of Environmental Protection will probably take about a year to review the town's proposal. DEP will review the proposal after all other Town Boards and Commissions have reviewed the plan.

The new plan has three phases. Phase 1 is the replacement of the three existing docks with one new dock system. This new dock will be 6' wide and 130' long with pre-fabricated aluminum floats. It will be located in the approximate area of the existing middle dock and will have slips for the Police, Fire and Harbor Master boats. The dock will have the capacity to tie up 50 dinghies for boats moored in the Cove. These docks will be floating and anchored to the bottom with an elastic rode system. This system will allow the docks to rise and fall with the changing water level. Docks will be made of aluminum, which will provide for a longer life, and less maintenance than timber or concrete versions. The aluminum is light weight, will not splinter, rust, warp or crack with age. It is cooler to the touch. The cost for Phase 1 is \$370,000 and includes a \$50,000 mobilization cost.

Phase 2 involves the construction of a new boat ramp at a cost of \$600,000. It includes a \$50,000 mobilization cost. The boat ramp will be 20' wide and constructed of pre-cast concrete planks. It will be located adjacent to the new dock.

Phase 3 involves the construction of a movable float and floating walkway. During normal conditions, the movable float will be positioned besides the floating dock. During high water conditions, it will be connected to the floating walkway. The floating walkway will be constructed as a path from the existing 22' contour at the top of the hill near the chain-link gate to the existing 8' contour where the grass meets the road at the bottom of the hill. The walkway will be constructed of prefabricated timber floats and it will be anchored by the same elastic rode system. This path will float during high water. The cost for Phase 3 is \$340,000 and includes a \$50,000 mobilization cost.

The Cove Preservation Fund will help pay for this project. This fund is set up to take in the boating fees each year from the Cove and use the fees to help pay for improvements to Cove Park. Also, grant opportunities will be explored to help fund this project. The goal is to minimize the costs of this project on the town budget.

At this time Chairman Ragonese opened the meeting to public comments and questions about this new plan. One issue that came up included checking the new boat ramp to determine if it can handle large boats that use the Cove. Maintenance issues at Cove Park were discussed, including the removal of trash, port-o-let and shed during flooding. A question arose about people having access to the Cove during periods of high water. This new design will allow people to access the Cove when it had previously been unavailable due to the high water. Mr. Forsdick explained that whenever the Police close the Cove due to high water, it will still remain closed to the public. At no time will the Cove be open during high floods. This design will allow people to launch their boat at times when in the past the ramp or the dock has not been available because of high water. Residents wanted to know if this new dock would be removed for the winter season. This new dock system is year round and is designed to handle the ice in the winter. The discussion on the docks concluded at 8 p.m. and Chairperson Ragonese thanked all individuals, who came to the Park Board meeting to express their views.

After a short break, the Park Board continued with their regular meeting.

B. Public Comments.

None.

C. Minutes - [August 28, 2008](#).

Rich Lepore moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Dan Silbo and voted unanimously.

D. Monthly Report - August 2008.

Chairperson Ragonese asked Ms. Bagley if she had any comments on the Monthly Report. She highlighted the assistance she received from Mr. Fred Bushey of the Wethersfield Public Schools Maintenance and Operations Department. They provided training to the Community Center staff on floor maintenance in the building. She is working with them to utilize green cleaning products in the Community Center.

E. Old Business.

1. Mill Woods Park Building Committee Project Status.

Chairperson Ragonese asked Ms. Bagley to give an update on the construction of the Little League field. Ms. Bagley reported that the field is beginning to look like a ball field. The contractor has completed the irrigation lines to the future new Soccer Field and to the Little League Field. The contractor has excavated the sub grade to prepare it for the Little League field. Footings for the dugouts and press box have been completed and the contractor is working on the electrical lines to the Little League field. They are getting ready for the installations of the footings for the light posts.

2. Report on Dedication Ceremony for 9/11 Memorial Sports Center.

The 9/11 Sports Center in the Community Center opened for business with an open house on September 11, 2008. People of all ages, from children to senior citizens, visited the place and had the opportunity to shoot a basket or utilize the fitness machines and computers in the building. Board members attended the event and were very impressed with the renovation and the dedication ceremony that evening. Approximately a thousand people were present for the dedication ceremony. Chairperson Ragonese reported that he was in Bradley Airport that evening and watched the six o'clock news that highlighted this ceremony.

### 3. Beaver Brook Park.

Ms. Bagley gave board members an overview of the consultants study on Beaver Brook Park. Tom Benjamin of Vanasse, Hangen, Brustlin, Inc. was hired by the Town Council to review the condition of this linear park, compare it to the 1969 Master Plan, and present new recommendations for future improvements to this property. Ms. Bagley reviewed the detailed concept maps with Board members. The consultant recommended concentrating on the south end of the park property first by Spring Street Pond and cleaning up the vegetation. The future plan includes walking trails or boardwalks and pedestrian access from the path to the Silas Deane Highway and Town Hall. This report was presented to members of the Conservation Commission at their last meeting and they will be discussing it at their October meeting. The Board members reviewed the maps provided by the consultant and concurred with his recommendation that concentrating on the south end of the park is a good place to start. They felt the north end of the property behind the Police Department was not really suitable for the park, because of the dense brush in that area. Ms. Bagley will keep them informed on this project as it moves forward to the Town Council.

### F. Adjournment.

Rich Lepore moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. the motion was seconded by Charlie Wood and voted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Bagley, Director  
Parks and Recreation Department