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Wethersfield Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting Minutes - September 25, 2003

The Wethersfield Recreation and Parks Advisory Board meeting was called to order by Chairman Richard Dobmeier at 7:00 p.m. Members present were Chairmen Dobmeier, Mark Fanelli, Gregory Even, Damon Herring, Jacky Pentalow and Thomas Ragonese. Staff members present were Kathleen Bagley, Director, Recreation and Parks Department and Salvatore Cucia, Assistant Director, Recreation and Parks Department.

A. Public Comments.

Chairman Dobmeier introduced Mr. Thomas from the MDC who gave a presentation on plans to put a sewer line through the Tanglewood Nature Preserve. Mr. Thomas explained to Board members that the MDC was requesting permission from the town to install a sewer line into the Tanglewood Nature Preserve in order to service houses along Ridge Road. This sewer line would parallel the rear of the property line of these houses. He explained that the MDC would install the sewer line and then restore the grounds and the area to a condition as required by the town. The reason for the sewer line is that these houses on Ridge Road currently utilize septic systems and failures have been reported in some of these septic systems.

Another representative from the MDC, Mr. Donofrio, reviewed the engineering drawings of the construction area for this project. Board members had questions regarding the amount of disturbance to the wetlands and how the assessments would be done to the households for this service. Mr. Thomas explained that they have been looking at a variety of ways to provide service to these houses. This proposal seemed to be the best proposal to minimize any problems that might occur through the excavation for this sewer line. Chairman Dobmeier thanked Mr. Thomas and Mr. Donofrio for answering all their questions regarding the installation of the sewer line. Board members will discuss this project under their Agenda item. Mr. Thomas asked if the Board could let them know of their decision whether or not to support this proposal. Chairman Dobmeier said that Board members would discuss it and get information back to him.

B. Minutes - July 24, 2003.

Mark Fanelli moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Thomas Ragonese and voted unanimously.

C. Monthly Report.

Board members reviewed the July and August monthly reports. They also discussed the Firemen's Carnival at Cove Park and felt everything went well. Ms. Bagley reported that there were no problems with the Carnival being at the park.

D. Letters and Announcements.

1. Petition from neighbors requesting the removal of the basketball court from Colonel Chester Park.
Board members reviewed the petition and discussed the police report identifying their visits to the park. Board members recognized that the amount of police visits to the park were minimal over the past couple of years. Board members did not see a problem with the basketball court remaining at Colonel Chester Park. They felt the court was needed in the neighborhood and if there are problems because of youngsters hanging out, then we need to work with the Police Department to rectify the problems. Ms. Bagley reported that the police have been very cooperative in her requests to visit the park and have not noticed any major problems in this area.
2. Meetings Dates 2004.
Board members approved the meetings dates for the upcoming year.

E. Old Business.

1. Mill Woods Master Plan.
Ms. Bagley reported that the Mill Woods Master Plan was approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission on August 19, 2003, and also approved by the Town Council on September 15, 2003. Board members discussed the next steps in the process of implementing the Mill Woods Master Plan. Ms. Bagley

suggested to Board members the possibility of creating a Mill Woods Park Friends organization to bring together all interested parties to develop a plan for the implementation of the Mill Woods Master Plan. She reported that she could send letters out to all the individuals involved in the process over the past two years to determine interest in this organization. Board members felt that this was a good idea and asked Ms. Bagley to proceed with an informational meeting for the potential of a "Friends" group to bring all interested parties together. At the same time, Board members asked Ms. Bagley to look at ways to generate funds to implement the Mill Woods Master Plan. Some ideas suggested were investigating grant opportunities, corporate donations and fundraisers.

F. New Business.

1. Request from MDC to install a sewer line through the Tanglewood Nature Preserve.

Ms. Bagley reminded Board members that the Tanglewood Nature Preserve is a designated park and as such is under the jurisdiction of the Advisory Recreation and Parks Board. Board members discussed the presentation from representatives from MDC and their concerns regarding the construction in the Tanglewood Nature Preserve. Board members had some reservations about the project. They included:

1. Currently, access is not easily available in the area and this construction would open up a right-of-way over the sewer line and to the rest of the property.
2. The town may experience additional costs to maintain the property if it is more easily accessible.
3. Concern about damage to the wetlands.
4. The availability of keeping the area safe for people's use and what would be the town's liability once this area is opened up.

Board members asked that these concerns be passed to the MDC representatives and to the appropriate town commissions.

2. High School Football Field.

Board members discussed the proposal presented to the Town Council to put lights at the high school football field and install an artificial turf field. Board members discussed this idea and recalled that this idea surfaces every couple of years. They felt this idea should be considered for the field.

G. Motion to Adjourn.

Jacky Pentalow moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. The motion was seconded by Gregory Even and voted unanimously.