

Parks and Recreation Special Planning Meeting NOTES 3/14/15

Stacey passed out by laws to the group.

Stacey passed out the long range plan.

Mike asked where the division between public works and Parks and Rec lies? Mentioned sidewalks on Association Park. We should be instrumental in suggesting what materials the sidewalks should be made of. Talked about contract negotiations. Mike said he would follow through on it. Mentioned the gazebo and how it became borough property and public works maintains it.

Our budget is only pertaining to programs: triathlon and skate park (two separate budgets). Because we had the money, we were able to add park equipment. In the past, we've never had the money. Since we do, we've purchased.

Stacey reviewed by laws. Suggested maybe borough type up a new copy.

Rules and regulation for people using the parks with a permit:

Stacey will add everything to a binder to bring to every meeting.

Susan Bluth swore in Michelle Jordan.

Is Logan still on commission? Is Craig an alternate or going to replace Logan and can he? Our list of commissioners is outdated - need to update list and website. Susan will investigate and straighten it out with Debbie.

We never had a separate treasurer, duties were assumed by Pat Duncan. Stacey reviewed the number of appointments. Five regular members and two alternates according to ordinance, dated 1998. Three is a quorum.

Review of 2009-2015 Long Range Plan:

Reviewed prior history and subcommittee for triathlon.

Important accomplishments, ie gazebo, playground equipment, etc.

Our Parks:

Dawes: short term goal was drinking fountain, flowers, signage. All has been done. We talked about resurfacing the basketball courts for a long time. We need totally new surfacing. Susan will talk to Carmela. Mike suggested we talk to the contractors when they are awarded the contract. Public Works would have the responsibility, not us. We can bring it up to them, but cannot talk to the contractors.

Susan will talk to Carmela to see how it all fits in. It should not come out of our budget. Kim

asked about slide repair. Is that then not part of our cost? The borough owns the property. We should not have to pay for repairs, we have only been doing so since we've had the money from past fundraising.

Raised the question of what we should really have to pay for? Susan will get clarification.

Long term vision: resurfacing the basketball court, repairing the slide. Let's see what public works has in the budget for repair? It wouldn't be beyond us to purchase a new piece of equipment, as we did in Association Park. Is there anything else we want to do? Cannot create dog park at Dawes because of proximity to playground equipment. Is there anything else we want to purchase? Equipment is old.

Talked about dog run vs dog park. Dog run is 1.5 acre or less. Possibility of adding to Rocky Brook? Mike asked Susan to ask Carmela for survey of land in Rocky Brook so we can figure out what our options are. Carmela has the survey of the wetlands.

Rocky Brook:

Look at wetlands survey. We have to be very mindful of what we can or cannot do. Not many people seem to know about this park. Possibly add signage or promote the park? A dog run would help. Have more events? An arborist to talk about plants and trees, concerts, etc. Talked about old events that took place there. Talked about events and how to promote them. Possibly create a Facebook page? Or a Parks and Rec newsletter? Good photo of parks and what you can do there? Create a plan for marketing and promotion? Some signage has been provided. Possibly a sign on Main Street to direct people to Rocky Brook?

Other items include moving or rebuilding Big Max? Items worth saving or trashing? It has electricity and water. Identify plans for what we can do in this park.

Why can't we use the sign at the firehouse to promote events . Anything in the parks, CAC, etc.? Mike will check into it. Susan said we were not allowed to use it and asked that Mike check into it. Stacey mentioned ran into issue running a parks and Rec program in the firehouse. Susan confirmed that the borough owns the property, therefore we or any other commission should be able to use the space.

Michelle mentioned that the whole upstairs is underused. Talked about mindset of firemen and how to approach them to use space for meetings, rec programs, etc. Talked about using space for recreation programs and if we get paid for something, that possibly we could donate to their organization.

Other things in Rocky Brook... A butterfly garden? Purchasing different plants to attract butterflies, etc. Craig talked about the garden. Stacey mentioned a flower garden and better signage for the park to start. Need to hang a sign for the garden.

Signs downtown, could we add signs for the parks? Was that Downtown Hightstown? Ask Gary Grubb?

Ask local garden center to donate plants, etc, to create a butterfly garden? Mike said he could help. Stacey will talk to Gary Grubb.

Memorial Park:

Add a sign to promote borough happenings? Decided we wouldn't pursue. All space adjacent to Peddie Lake and across the bridge is part of the park. Incorporate instead signage that promotes all parks.. Map, happenings, etc, as part of grant for bridge?

Stacey talked about a locking mechanism for the docks. Mike mentioned talking to trustee of the church, Jimmy Kaiser. He is no longer in the capacity, but mentioned that it could likely be a go if we wanted to build a temporary structure. Susan will reach out to Fred Raffeto to reach out to Dave Coates, the church lawyer. Craig said he will reach out to Dave Coates since he is a friend to see what's going on. We need to address the boats, storage, etc.

Association Park:

We have accomplished a lot. The Lions Club wants to donate and plant a flower garden. Moved to approve in last pnr meeting.

The Greenways:

The heritage trail protects historic landmarks. As we look at grants, i.e. rails to trails, is there any way to get grant money for improvements. Kim asked how we can find grants? Stacey said it is public info and we can look into it on our own. Talked about grants that we've looked into and the greenway by Dawes Park.

Susan mentioned that the town is hiring a grant writer. The RFP is out to get resumes.

Looked at NJ trails program, are there any opportunities for us to build more trails and Greenways.

Discussed Skate park additional funding through grants. Mike mentioned using volunteer services of Brenda Seal, a local grant writer to help. The deadline for the grant is April 30th. Is this feasible? Could we look at the grant proposal that was done previously and tap into some of the groundwork? Mike suggested showing that to Brenda seal to see if she can freshen up the grant? Mike made a motion to ask her to review. Stacey will ask Jason and/or Pat for the proposal that was done previously.

Concerts:

Talked about a schedule.

Discussed Shakespeare in the park program. Kim suggested bringing it up at next CAC meeting.