

## Wethersfield Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting Minutes - June 26, 2003

The Wethersfield Recreation and Parks Board meeting was held in the Town Manager's conference room at 7:15 p.m. Members present were Chairman Richard Dobmeier, Charles Wood, Richard Lepore, Damon Herring, Jackie Pentalow and Kathleen Bagley, Director, Recreation and Parks Department.

A. Public Comments.

No Comments.

B. Minutes.

Richard Lepore moved to approve the April 24 and May 29 minutes. The motion was seconded by Jackie Pentalow and voted unanimously.

C. Monthly Report.

The monthly reports for April and May, 2003, were reviewed.

D. Letters and Announcements.

No letters and announcements at this meeting.

E. Old Business.

1. Mill Woods Master Plan.

Ms. Bagley reported that the Town Council raised a question concerning the sharing of the lighted Little League stadium and the possibility of using a retractable fence. The purpose of this request by the Town Council was to see if it was feasible to use the outfield of the Little League stadium for a soccer/football combination field. Board members discussed this issue and felt strongly that the field should remain a single use. They cited numerous discussions with the architect regarding the appropriate design for a Little League stadium and the concerns about a non-permanent outfield fencing. Board members discussed the possibility that the retractable outfield fence has the potential for safety issues and would require a large amount of maintenance time to alleviate this issue. Also, no tournament or All-Star ballgames could be played on this stadium with a retractable fence per Little League's standards. The Board members discussed the architect's recommendation of not sharing a baseball field with a soccer/football field because of design issues and overuse concerns. Board members recalled that the architect felt that the placement of the appropriate lighting standards would present design issues as with the layout of each of these fields on top of one another. Board members discussed the very first draft of the Master Plan's design. It did include a standard alone-lighted Little League stadium and a separate combination soccer/football field for lights. The lighted soccer/football field was eliminated from the first plan due to concerns about encroaching on the wooded area and the cost for construction. Board members did not feel they could support a dual and triple use of the Little League stadium based on these issues.

F. New Business.

1. Friends of Nature Center Request for Nature Center to Move to Moeller Home.

Board members discussed this issue once again. They recall during the process of the design for the Mill Woods Master Plan that an assumption was made that a park and recreation use would be in the Moeller building, preferably the Nature Center, or the Recreation and Parks offices. Therefore, the design of the entrance to the park was considered with that type of use for the building. The Advisory Recreation and Park members will review this issue with the members of the Friends of the Nature Center at a future meeting. They will discuss the design of the park entrance in order to determine that it meets the needs of the Nature Center facility.

2. Cove Park Master Plan.

Board members discussed the status of the dock design and additional work following the recommendations of the Master Plan. Ms. Bagley reported that at this time the designs for the dock are part of the capital improvement plan and at some point in the future she would set up a meeting of the Cove Park Master Plan sub-committee to determine the type of docks for the facility. She reported that they will be doing some additional clearing of the overgrowth in Cove Park. Charles Wood asked about the status of the path going from the Solomon Welles House parking lot down to the existing Cove Park path. Ms. Bagley reported that the Engineering Department is developing a plan for the path which will include the proposal of burying the utility lines and bringing the electricity to the back end of the park.

3. Playground Program.

Ms. Bagley reported that the playground program as per the budget reductions was reduced from four playgrounds to two playgrounds. Originally, the Town Council had eliminated funds to reduce the playgrounds from eight weeks to four weeks. Ms. Bagley explained to the Town Manager that it would be difficult to find staff to work at all four playgrounds for four weeks and recommended keeping two playgrounds open for eight weeks and eliminate two playgrounds. The Town Manager agreed to this proposal. She reported that the two playgrounds to remain open are Mill Woods Park and Cedar Street playground. This decision was based on the number of children that attended these playgrounds in previous years, the geographical locations and the amount of children living in the vicinity of the parks.

4. Summer Programs.

Ms. Bagley reported that the summer programs were gearing up and the pools had opened.

5. Montanaro Field and DiCiccio Field.

Ms. Bagley reported that these soccer fields were closed for the summer due to the terrible condition of the fields after the spring rain and from people playing on them. She will be working with the Maintenance Department over the summer to repair these fields.

6. Park Tour.

Chairman Dobmeier asked Recreation and Parks Board members for their next meeting in July if they would like to have a park tour. Board members agreed that the July meeting would be a good time to visit the park facilities. The tour will begin at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Hall Library entrance.

G. Adjournment.

Mr. Lepore moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. Motion was seconded by Jackie Pentalow and voted unanimously.