

Parks and Community Programs Advisory Committee
8/22/2017
4:00 pm
Mason-Motz Conference Center

Meeting Called By: Lucky D'Ascanio

Note Taker: Andrea Mittleder

Attendees: Lucky D'Ascanio, Karen Jones, Sally Sandler Bitan, Karen Jones, Melanie Collins, Andrea Mittleder, Jeff Mason, Amanda Stearns, and Matthew W. Ek and Stephen G. Doe from Sebago Technics

Secretary's Report:

No changes to minutes from June meeting

Sebago Technics:

Matthew W. Ek and Stephen G. Doe from Sebago Technics discussed the proposed Homestead Farms Subdivision off Mountain Road and Route 100, which propose a trail around the subdivision and three "park" areas. It has not yet been determined what facilities would be housed at each of the park areas. Further, it has not yet been determined whether the town or the homeowner's association would develop and maintain the park areas. The current subdivision proposal would consist of three phases, and the park and trail development may be phased in as well.

Following the presentation by Sebago Technics, the committee discussed the viability of developing and maintaining the three proposed park areas as official public town parks. The committee unanimously agreed that only one of the three areas was suitable for a town park which should be maintained, in whole or in part, by the Town. The other two areas, i.e., the southernmost space and the northwestern space, are located behind proposed housing lots. The third lot, the northeastern space, has frontage on the two main proposed roads in the subdivision and would benefit from a large proposed parking area across the street. This space has the potential to be developed and maintained as a public park in a manner that is consistent with the other small pocket parks in the town.

The committee discussed various improvements/facilities that should be included in the development plan for this park area. Specific suggestions included picnic tables, playground equipment, a cleared open area, seating, and some sort of barrier on the southernmost side of the park to demarcate the border between the park and adjoining private land. Possibilities include intermittent rock walls, benches, plantings, and/or berms. It was also suggested that an additional crosswalk be placed across the road at the far eastern side of the park leading to the parking lot, as the current plans show only one crosswalk towards the western side of the park.

Parks Division:

The spring was very rainy, but the summer has been unusually dry. As such, the town has had to use water reels at Community Park to irrigate the fields. Despite the draught, mowing has continued to control weeds.

The parks department is currently utilizing two full time staff members, as well as one seasonal employee, who will continue working part time this fall. As the areas maintained by the department have increased in recent years, staffing has decreased, and as such, the department would greatly benefit from having a third full time employee reinstated.

Insect activity has been unusual this year. Committee members and park employees have noticed a marked decrease in the number of fireflies this year, but an increase in the number of bees and monarch butterflies. To allow the monarch caterpillars to develop, the department left unmown some stands of native milkweed , specifically in the B1 section of Community Park.

FCP:

The fall brochure was just released, and registration is ongoing. Some activities, such as Striders, are already full.

The new fifteen-person passenger van has been picked up and registered. However, it needs running boards and steps before it can be utilized fully.

The renovations at Huston Park are complete, except for lighting, which is going up for bid shortly.

The new Mason-Motz Senior Center and Conference room has been getting a lot of use. Recent activities include mahjong and cribbage tournaments, eclipse watching on the television, and laughter yoga.

Old Business/New Business:

Planning for the town's tercentennial anniversary is well underway. The current plan provides for a meshing of anniversary activities with the summer concert series.

Comments by PACPAC, the senior advisory committee, and Parks Division staff regarding the Village Green improvements have been submitted to OceanView. Some local granite pieces will be incorporated as benches and tables. The cost is somewhat higher than budgeted by OceanView, and the overage will be subsidized by the town. Work should begin in the next few weeks.

The new OceanView housing area is nearing completion. Two apartments are ready for viewing. Lighting bases have been installed in the parking lot and trail connection, and lighting will follow shortly.

Development of the plan for the Greening of Falmouth 2.0 is underway.

The town has hired Amanda Stearns to be the new Open Space Manager, under the Parks Division. Amanda is the current Community Development Director and will replace Bob Shafto (Ombudsman) when he retires in January. Amanda will be retiring from her current position to work 20 hrs/wk as the Open Space Manager.

On Saturday, September 16, from 9:00am-12:00pm, the town will host a field trip for the public to observe open space management practices, including an active forestry operation and wetlands restoration project.

Next Meeting: September 19, 2017