

**Columbia Recreation Commission
November 7, 2019
6:00 PM
Yeoman's Hall
323 Route 87 Columbia, CT 06237
Kelly DeForest, Nikki Keldsen, Brian Pedersen, Marc Volza, Brighton Leonard (Eastern Intern)**

Call to Order 1801

Audience of Citizens:

Nicole Henry and Maria Gratton; Carmelo Roldan, Mary Beth Roldan and Bethany Cologna

Ms Henry spoke first and discussed a desire for a Butterfly Enclosure in Rec Park. Enclosure would be in memorandum; spoke with Paula Stahl who thought it was a great idea and encouraged her to approach Rec Commission. Purpose is a relaxing place to honor members of the community that have passed; two local families are first to be honored and are in support of the project. There will be no cost to town. Project had been discussed with Solar Innovations; 30x14x10 as the size; no electricity needed. Open June to September. Polycarbonate material. Mock up examples provided. Came to the commission for approval/site location advice.

- Jeff Buskey asked where the proposed site was going to be; citizens are open to suggestions but prefer Rec Park if able
- Kelly DeForest asked about wildlife/"critter-proof-ness" of enclosure. Enclosure is wildlife proof per Ms Henry. Kelly DeForest also asked for clarification on how money was to be raised and how long/many years of funding would be available prior to starting the enclosure. Fundraiser will happen to fund 100% of the project; no fundraising currently due to awaiting quote and approval for project to move forward.
- Brian Pedersen asked if other locations had been explored; Szegda Farm cannot easily be built upon and has parking limitations. Area near old school house was brought up and not thought appropriate due to size/location.
- Brian Pedersen asked if there would be a name associated with the Butterfly Enclosure; no formal name decided yet
- Brian Pedersen asked if families mentioned by citizens have given support; they have both given support per Ms Henry and Ms Gratton
- Nikki Keldsen asked if there was a committee formed for the planning process; outreach has occurred within the community looking to assist with this project and there are people waiting to assist
- Brian Pedersen asked about a timeline; dependent on approval to move forward

- Kelly DeForest discussed that this committee is an advisory committee; we are unable to make any decisions about building or altering to existing Rec plans but can review potential placement options and make a motion to recommend or not recommend this project to the BOS; this was verified by Brian Pedersen and Marc Volza
- **Brian Pedersen make a motion to add this item to agenda; Kelly DeForest second; Unanimously passed 4-0**
- **Brian Pedersen made a motion to inform the BOS that the Rec Commission is in support of butterfly enclosure provided that a location is feasible. Jeff Buskey seconds. Unanimously passed. No nays 4-0**
- **Brian makes a motion to skip old business and move to Dog Park Discussion for sake of audience of citizens; Nikki Keldsen seconds; unanimous 4-0**

Old Business

- Approval of Minutes- Brian Pedersen moved to approve minutes from 9/5/19; Nikki Keldsen seconds
- Master Plan Update
 - Softball Field- Poured cement, scoreboard, fungus on grass; true-green to address in Spring
 - Road-marked out, Basketball Court-delayed til Spring sec to cold/wet weather impact on surface , Tennis Court done, Playground Equipment-in and functional
- Lake Sign Update-multiple changes suggested; Marc to f/u with Keith
- Kelly asked if there is a treatment for the fungus; no specifics known currently

New Business

Dog Park Discussion

- Carmelo Roldan proposed a dog park for Rec Park. Unsure number of dogs in Columbia. Stated he felt would benefit Columbia residents and would appeal to a large variety of ages. Started with FB posts asking for off leash locations in our area where dogs can be legally allowed off leash. Stated that he felt the dog park would prevent dogs being off leash illegally at Rec Park. A FB group was formed making up approx 5 volunteers who would assist with the park. Petition with approx 40 names has been obtained by Mr Roldan
- Jeff Buskey asked if the other dog parks that Mr Roldan/Ms Cologna had visited were inside an existing park
 - Manchester inside another park
 - S Windsor is up against a residential community
 - Colchester very secluded

- Nikki Keldsen-brought up Szegda farm as an alternate location; parking is an issue and area does not have a lot of flat area and land use is limited due to limitations on land use
- Kelly DeForest asked about estimated cost and brought up Rec Park is closed for a few months of the year so locating within Rec park may not be ideal location due to the gate prohibiting access part of the year.
- No other parks are closed with a gate to Mr Roldan's knowledge
- Marc Volza asked if a committee had been formed; it has not yet per Mr Roldan and stated that fencing quotes are approx. 15k with 2-3k/yr budgeted for upkeep
- Brian Pedersen asked about estimated size of park
- Nikki Keldsen brought up concerns discussed in FB group surrounding cost
- Marc Volza discussed BOS will want to know how funded, upkeep, animal control. Suggested that since project is early reach out to Mark Walter and discuss next steps
- Jeff Buskey asked about potential impact on town liability/insurances costs; no impact on cost or liability other than if any citizen had a dog bite per Marc Volva
- Brian suggested scouting a location, have a list of rules and regulations (Mr Roldan and Ms Cologna state they have these) discuss how they would enforce those rules
- Bethany Cologna Southern Ct State University Masters program wrote papers for her Special Project on dogs parks; reviewed common rules and provided copies of her research/papers

Master Plan 2020 Budget Items

- Marc Volza with with Mark Walter and Steve Everett; work in progress to get an estimate for maintenance building cost.* Refer to 2020-2021 line items on Proposed 5-year Capital Improvement plan* line items reviewed by Marc Volza
- Motion made by Brian Pedersen to move the 2023-2024 line item of CIP concerning Pickle-ball Court to year 2020-2021; Nikki Keldsen second; 4-0 passed unanimously @1932
- 2020 Rec Commission Meeting Schedule 1st Thursday of the month 1800 Jan, March, May , Sept, Nov

Rec Director's Report

- Program Updates-
 - Road Race poor turnout due to weather; may look to move date earlier in October
 - Jeff Buskey discussed why there is no practice time on Saturdays for b-ball; now that cleaning is done by non-parent volunteers no practice on weeks without games due to cost associated with the weeks we would need to pay for cleaning.
 - Marc Volza discussed that payment is approx \$100/Sunday for 2 hrs of cleaning

Open Discussion

Discussion that the Commission needs to replace Commission member Shane Vertefeuille.

Brian Pedersen, Steve Piro and Nikki Keldsen are up for reappointment. Marc Volza to have BOS discuss at next mtg

Adjournment Brian Pedersen motion to adjourn 1949 Jeff Buskey seconds. Adjourned @1949

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly DeForest