

**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**Public Parks and Recreation Committee**  
**Weymouth Town Hall**  
**Council Chambers**  
**June 22, 2016, Monday**

Present: Jane Hackett, Chairperson  
Michael Smart, Councilor  
Arthur Mathews, Councilor

Not Present: Michael Molisse, Vice Chair  
Thomas J. Lacey, Councilor

Also Present Steve Reilly, Director of Recreation  
John McLeod, Construction Supervisor  
Ken DiFazio, Councilor  
Ted Langill, Chief of Staff

Chairman Hackett called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

**Discussion on Lovell Playground**

Chairman Hackett reported that there has been a lot of press regarding the status of the proposal for Lovell Field. She invited Councilor DiFazio as the District Councilor.

Mr. Reilly reported that the initial plans which were presented for renovation of Lovell Field were voted down by the Conservation Commission. Councilor Hackett asked for more detail. Activitas presented a project in the fall of 2015, they had conducted a study for Weymouth. When Legion and Pingree projects started to come online, Activitas provided paperwork for the RFQ. The initial plan included three turf fields, three basketball courts and parking concessions, a skate park and playground. They reviewed the map.

Councilor Mathews reported that he was present during the Conservation Commission's hearing. There was a brief discussion of the Wetlands Protection Act and the buffer zone around the project. Mr. Reilly confirmed that the Conservation Commission voted it down. One member recused, and the vote was 2/2. Councilor Mathews asked how many hours they worked with Conservation prior to presenting? Mr. McLeod responded that there were seven meetings with the Conservation Department/Administrator. Councilor Mathews noted that with the vote, he would want to be sure the Administrator was kept in the loop during it. He was surprised by the reaction; perhaps there wouldn't have been as many open ended questions regarding the Order of Conditions. Mr. McLeod noted they followed the process; there were site visits, concerns addressed around the Herring Run. The price of this project was about \$11 million. Activitas thought it should have been appealed to DEP for the town to proceed. The price tag wasn't achievable at the time anyway and a new administration was coming on board so the appeal was scrapped. They then started the process with the new Mayor. He called a meeting with the

Conservation Administrator who brought it back to the Conservation Commission. There are two issues; is it an achievable site and is it affordable. The costs were scaled back and adjustments were made to the project. The skate park and three basketball courts were removed; the size of the fields were changed (2.5 turf fields) and moved further from the buffer zone.

Councilor Smart asked what would be allowed in the buffer- could they put in passive trails? Councilor Mathews responded that they are not allowed to increase the impervious surfaces. The Conservation Commission would like the 100' buffer to remain undisturbed. The estimate was reduced to \$6 million. The economic impact to the Jackson Square area was reviewed. Councilor DiFazio thanked them for including him in the discussion and allowing him to speak. He reviewed the committee that advocated for Legion and Lovell several years ago. They thought that the objective would be to achieve the proper amount of playing fields for the children in town. It's important to complete this along with Legion and the high school fields. On behalf of the district he noted that if the project is completed, it will bring economic benefit and invigorate the area. He asked if the cost was a factor to the new administration? Mr. McLeod noted that it was too expensive and it needed to be scaled back. Councilor DiFazio asked if Mr. Reilly is still optimistic that these fields will get them closer to meeting the needs of the recreation programs. Mr. Reilly responded that the original study indicated their fields were being played on 6 times more than they should be. Councilor DiFazio noted that two properly sized fields exist at Talbot- he asked if they would consider relocating the basketball courts elsewhere. Councilor DiFazio noted this would be beneficial for residents and visitors to the town. If they could spend a little more money, he requests that administration make sure there is adequate parking.

Councilor Mathews asked if they would consider taking out the half field and increase the parking and make sure the remaining two fields are adequately sized. He further suggested to not eliminate their use for any sport. Mr. McLeod noted that there is a stump dump on Lovell and it needs to be made stable enough to play on. It needs work and will have grass over it. Councilor Mathews suggested they might be able to use CPA funding to the grass portion (with the change in the legislation). They might be able to use Host Community funds as well. Councilor DiFazio also noted there is money remaining in the Legion Field bond. Councilor Mathews noted it should be left there for the eventual replacement.

Chairman Hackett noted that is why she asked for this meeting. They have heard the needs from other departments, but not this committee yet. This would likely be hybrid funding. Councilor Smart asked about the stump dump. It is half of the turf field and has been tested. Councilor Smart noted he would hate to see it started and then find out there is an arsenic issue with the DEP. They will check with the Conservation Administrator.

Councilor Mathews noted that bonding is 15 years; the turf would need be replaced before the bond term is finished. Councilor DiFazio noted that the original design cost \$750,000 (for Legion Field); he hopes they didn't waste it and there is some money left. Construction management portion of the original contract was held back. Chairman

Hackett asked what changes were made to the specs? There was concern with potential carcinogens. Mr. Reilly responded that encapsulated foam rubber product was suggested which reduces the heavy metal contents but it still didn't appease the Conservation Commission. The organic landfill products that they changed to are consistent with maintenance and appear to be right for this location and the costs are coming down. Other facilities are already using it.

Chairman Hackett reviewed the changes that were made to the original plan; fields reduced by half a field, eliminated three basketball courts and the skate park and some of the parking, reduced the toxicity of the materials and moved everything outside of the 100' buffer zone and reduced the price by half. They met with the Conservation Administrator and they will redraft and present to the commission in July for project approval.

Mr. Reilly noted there was also a change in drainage and bio-retention in the court space to satisfy Conservation. Councilor Smart noted his concern with materials used and the need to use something that is safe for kids to play on. Chairman Hackett noted that the parity amongst user groups and which sports seem to be getting the attention. Two softball fields are being taken away and they need to be replaced elsewhere. She had a meeting with the Mayor and suggests that baseball and softball are done in conjunction so that Conservation is the last hurdle in the process. She noted that the basketball courts will go in at the high school. They are not losing them. There are different places that are conducive and less expensive. She noted a lot of work can go into backfilling this. There was a discussion regarding school vs. town property and the Chair urged they sit with the school department before going back to Conservation. Then they need to reach out to the different groups and get some positive energy flowing. She is willing to support the project before the Conservation Commission.

#### ADJOURNMENT

At 7:54PM, there being no further business, a Motion was made by Councilor Smart to Adjourn and was seconded by Councilor Mathews. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Barker as Recording Secretary

Approved by Councilor Hackett, Chair of the Parks and Recreation Committee  
Voted favorably on 6 September 2016