

Park, Beach, and Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting
July 11, 2012

Members Present

Daniel Worroll, Jr., Chairman
Ann Fabian, Vice Chairman
Kerri Rowland, Commissioner
Frank Giustino, Commissioner

Absent

Public Works Representative
Nick Veccharelli, Jr., Aldermanic Liaison
Anthony Giannattasio, Aldermanic Liaison
Julie Nash, Commissioner - Excused

Also Present

Paul Piscitelli, Recreation Director

The Park, Beach and Recreation Commission held their Regular Meeting on **July 11, 2012** at 7:30 PM in City Hall Auditorium. Chairman Worroll called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

I. Consideration of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Park, Beach and Recreation Commission held on June 6, 2012.

Vice Chairman Fabian made a **Motion** to accept the June 6, 2012 minutes as read. Commissioner Kerri Rowland seconds **Motion**. **Motion** unanimously carried.

II. Public Statement

Gideon King – 17 Plymouth Court – Speaking for the Milford Kawanis, feels putting a permanent fence at the Bernard/Francis Baseball Field will have a negative impact on the Oyster Festival which is something they care about.

Bill Bevan – 23 Merlin Circle – Talked about the negative impact of temporary fencing at the fields. Wants a permanent fence with access to the Oyster Festival.

George Spescha – 88 Valley View Road - Looked into temp fencing which is only 4' high and creates a problem for taller kids. The Junior Major League is proposing a 20' gate on each side of the fence to access each field so egress wouldn't be diminished. Also wants it 6' high to stop the fielders from running into each other. He eventually wants to go 10' high with permitting approval. Does not see any restrictions in putting up a permanent fence.

Tracey Hart – 5 Grapevine Row – Does not see how fencing is going to hinder the Oyster Festival.

Jim Lambert – 18 Great Meadow Drive – Works at the Oyster Festival, and other fund raising events, and is Chairman of the Duck Race. He indicated that other venues use the same area as well as Lifestar for evacuation purposes.

Jay Pinto – 20 Elaine Road – President of the Milford Oyster Festival – Presented an exhibit to the Board of an aerial view of the Oyster Festival at full capacity. The Oyster Festival has no objection to the Junior Major League putting up a fence on this field. However, a fence that affects the Oyster Festival will be ruinous to that day with a negative impact. The Oyster Festival reached out to the Junior Majors League to come up with a compromise with a temporary fence. Discussed options with Director Piscitelli since this is a City issue. The Oyster festival was willing to submit a meaningful and significant amount of money towards this proposal to erect temporary fencing in the amount of \$3,000. Prior to hearing the detail the Oyster Festival proposed to the Junior Major League they rejected it.

Pinto advised this is a designated area/zone for Lifestar in the event of an emergency or evacuation. He suggested to the Board that they determine an opinion from the Fire Department as to get their opinion on safety issues from them.

Pinto further discussed the bottle-neck and safety hazard to the people who attend the Oyster Festival by putting up a permanent fence.

Financially – The Oyster Festival is the largest one-day festival in CT. It is the largest non-profit fund raiser in Milford. It is the only tourism event in Milford. To say it is just one day is doing a disservice for the all that it provides for and the economic impact. Supports a temporary fence solution.

Rebecca Maula - 132 Berner Terrace – Addressing Pinto’s safety issues, indicated there are 700 Milford residents utilizing the fields whose safety is at risk because there is no fencing there. Does not feel the triangle will trap people in as there are 20’ on either side to enter the fields, and a 4’ high temp fence is not high enough for the safety of children.

Scott Monfort – 39 Baker Street – The Junior Major League does a lot for a lot for children. Working the Oyster Festival every year has never seen the fields completely filled. Discussed safety issue of the children. He supports putting up a permanent fence.

III. Correspondence

None.

IV. Director’s Report

1. **Waterfront Program** – Director Piscitelli – The waterfront program is going strong. Hired full staff of 26 new lifeguards, seven days a week at all City beaches. Due to the heat there is record attendance. There are three documented cases of assistance provided to swimmers by the lifeguard staff with positive results. On Friday, July 13, the Milford Fire Department Training Division will have practical training in pre-hospital care and waterfront rescue working with a dive team in the event of a drowning with regards to witness identification and also spotting positions of last location of the victim.

Summer Playground Program – Director Piscitelli advised that the Summer Program kicked off July 1. There are six sites servicing approximately 600 children, per day, from 9 am to 3 pm, Monday through Friday. There is a staff of 85 counselors providing a safe and fun atmosphere.

2. **On-Line Registration System** – Director Piscitelli indicated the on-line registration system is roughly seven to 14 days away from its soft opening on the Internet with a projection of August 1 to be up and running, and on September 1, to begin accepting credit cards on line.

V. Commissioner Reports

1. **Golf Course Committee** – Chairman Worroll advised this is going very well and that rounds are up by 2500 compared to 2011.
2. **Walnut Beach Enhancement Committee** – Chairman Worroll indicated the walk-overs are out to bid. They will be ADA complaint. Outstanding items are stripping the parking lot as well as clean-up and putting up handicapped signs. A new sign will be placed on the corner of Naugatuck Avenue and Tudor Road which starts the area on Walnut Beach.
3. **Bench Dedication Program** – Vice Chairman Fabian – advised that they are waiting for the bench to be delivered and installed for Harriet Rac. The pad is down and this will be the second bench at Walnut Beach.

VI. Old Business

None

VII. New Business

1. **Bench Request at Anchor Beach** - Director Piscitelli advised there is a request from the Sanford Family for a bench to be installed at Anchor Beach. Photo of requested designated area is presented to the Board. After speaking with the official of the Borough of Woodmont, Director Piscitelli determined that the area the Sanford Family has selected may already be an existing dedicated bench site that was dedicated many years ago. Director Piscitelli asked to Table this Item in order to obtain more information from the Borough of Woodmont as to the exact nature of the dedicated bench. Director Piscitelli was also given a list of additional sites to use since the location the Sanford Family has requested is not available.

Commissioner Rowland made a **Motion** to Table Item under New Business, Bench Request at Anchor Beach. Vice Chairman, Ann Fabian seconds **Motion**. No discussion. **Motion** unanimously carried.

2. **Proposed Permanent Fence at Bernard/Francis Baseball Field by Junior Major League** – Chairman Worroll asks if there is anyone from the Junior Major League who would like to speak on this now.

George Spescha, 88 Valley View Road, Milford.

Showed an exhibit to the members of the Board. Understands the Oyster Festival is concerned about safety but doesn't feel this issue poses a safety matter for the Oyster Festival. Without a fence it is a safety issue for kids. He indicated that the Junior Major League has maintained the fields and these are not multi-purpose fields unlike Wasson Field which is a multi-purpose field and maintained by the City. These are baseball fields and the Junior Major League has a signed lease. In addition, not having a homerun fence, the Bernard/Francis Baseball Field is limited to host tournaments to enhance the program.

He further stated that the issue is with the newer bats as balls that go further, and with 6' fencing

and after permitting to put in a 10' permanent fence in the center would stop the balls from going into the other field.

Chairman Worrell asks Mr. Pinto if he wishes to rebut.

Mr. Pinto reiterated the safety hazard that permanent fencing will create. In addition, the potential future uses such as the Duck Race expanding will be compromised. He further discussed the Plan of Conservation and Development committee is proposing future uses of City properties within the City of Milford and suggested to the Board they wait until the PC&D committee determines what will be done in this area before permanent fencing is place. Pinto also pointed out that the Junior Major League leases the field and the City Attorney does not have a current lease for them. Their lease expired in 2007 with an automatic renewal for five years out. This had to be completed, in writing, by April 2007. As of June 30, 2012, there is no viable lease with the City Attorney from the Junior Major League.

Commissioner Rowland made a **Motion** for permanent fencing at the Bernard /Francis Field. Commissioner Frank Giustino seconds **Motion**. Discussion.

Commissioner Rowland asks that since the infield in the Bernard Field is not used, is this something the Junior Major League would be open to allowing use of that field for people and staging?

George Spescha responded that he is not opposed to having the infield used for the Oyster Festival. He did, however, cite his concerns for damage to the field based on past history.

Commissioner Rowland asks Spescha that if he had a choice between the infield being used and a fence could he make a choice?

Spescha indicated he would choose a fence.

Commissioner Rowland asks for any statistics regarding the center fielders if they currently line up beyond each other or are they mostly back-to-back, and how often is a ball hit beyond into the other field?

Spescha did not have any statistics as it depends on the night, pitchers and batters. They don't line up looking at each other as they are back-to-back.

Vice Chairman Fabian – With regards to the Lifestar Helipad, addresses Director Piscitelli regarding any conversation with the Fire and Police Departments of the use/non-use ability if the pad is taken away.

Director Piscitelli - The Police Department is concerned about gaining access if a fence is put up. They would want to make sure the fences were open or that they had access to open those fences if needed. As far as the Fire Department, the Fire Marshall mentioned if the fences were to be in place, that he would need an egress report prior to the Oyster Festival to ensure the safety of the Oyster Festival patrons. As it relates to the Lifestar landing zone, this is one of two or three locations in Milford that is desirable in the event of water rescue or something that may assist the Coast Guard as well in putting one of their helicopters down close to the harbor.

Spescha asks Piscitelli - If it would be an issue if there was a fence there are you are looking at a full size field to land a helicopter on?

Piscitelli – Does not know the specifics as to what the size of the landing zone is. That would be a question the Fire Department would have to respond to.

Montfort to the Board – Does not feel that a helicopter is called often here in Milford.

Chairman Worroll – Comments. This is a quick proposal and a quick decision to be made. Feels there is a workable solution for this problem and it is unfortunate that both groups could not work out a compromise. However, a motion is before the Board to have either a permanent fence or no fence. The Oyster Festival is the only one person that uses this field. Fields are getting very rare in Milford. Lacrosse and soccer has boomed, and we're always looking for fields to accommodate these sports. The City still owns this field and I can see other events and other sporting events going there. As far as Lifestar goes, it is a big area and it is for Lifestar landing and the next closes spot would be Wasson Field. As far as temporary fencing it has come a long way. Wasson Field uses the old snow temporary fencing and not aware of any incidents there. Refers to Director Piscitelli regarding any incidents at Wasson Field. Director Piscitelli – indicated that he is not aware of any problems.

No further discussion.

Chairman Worroll – A **Motion** is on the floor and it has been seconded to put a Permanent Fence at Bernard/Francis Baseball Field.

Affirm – Commissioner Rowland

Oppose – Commissioner Giustino, Vice Chairman Fabian and Charman Worroll.

Motion Fails.

VIII. Adjourn

Vice Chairman Fabian made a **Motion** to adjourn at 8:26 p.m.

Commissioner Kerri Rowland seconds **Motion**. **Motion** unanimously carried.

The Park, Beach and Recreation Commission will hold their next Regular Meeting at 7:30 p.m. on **August 1, 2012** in **Conference Room “B”**.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda M. Mossorofo
Secretary