

Ball Pond Advisory Committee
MINUTES
June 8, 2010
7:00 p.m.

A regular meeting of the Ball Pond Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, June 8, 2010 in the Town Hall Conference Room.

Cynthia Stevens (Chair) called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Brian Bosley, George Buck, and Helen Gallagher were also present. Walter Hope and Terry Lent were not in attendance.

Approval of Minutes:

Helen Gallagher made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2010 regular meeting. Brian Bosley seconded the motion.

Vote: 3-0-1 (Motion Approved)

General Correspondence:

- Cynthia Stevens read into record a letter (attached) written by James Ratzken to Selectman Hodge regarding the conditions at Ball Pond Town Park.

Public Comment: None

Old Business:

- Ball Pond Town Park
 - Cynthia Stevens reported on the status of the silt fence. Although it was verbally approved by Tim Simpkins and Steve Merullo, it has still not been dropped off to be installed by Ball Pond Advisory Committee members. Cynthia Stevens will follow up.
 - Discussion ensued about temporary, low-cost ways to remediate the problems at the Ball Pond Town Park to make it more aesthetically-pleasing and safer in a manner which still protects the lake. The consensus was to request that the Department of Public Works rake out the gullies in the sand, cut down the weeds, and empty the garbage cans. The garbage cans should either be removed or kept and maintained by Public Works on a consistent basis. Cynthia Stevens will follow up with Selectman Hodge.
- Storm Drain Marking Program
 - Cynthia Stevens showed samples of storm drain markers to the group (pictures attached). There are metal and vinyl types available.
 - Cynthia Stevens and Jim McAllister surveyed the roads around Ball Pond and found 83 storm drains that could be marked (excluding those on State Road 39). Cynthia Stevens recommended to the group that all possible storm drains should be marked.
 - Questions/issues for marking the drains around Ball Pond:
 - Installation is labor-intensive. Can the Ball Pond Advisory Committee members handle that? Brian Bosley and George Buck said that they could install all of the markers and get others to help them if necessary.
 - Cost: \$7.50/metal marker (first 10 are \$5); \$5/vinyl. Would the Friends be willing and able to cover this approximately \$600 cost? Brian Bosley suggested providing homeowner sponsorship opportunities (i.e., buy-a-marker program). Cynthia Stevens will follow up with the Friends. She will also determine what is included in the cost (e.g., mounting hardware).
 - Cynthia Stevens wants to wait until this program is sanctioned by the Town in writing before beginning.

- The State is not in favor of this program on State roads because they are afraid that the markers will be distracting to motorists.
 - If all of these issues can be resolved, installation could begin by mid July.
- Pink Water Lilies
 - Cynthia Stevens and Bruce Lockhart surveyed the lake and found over 70 points where pink water lilies exist. Lockhart and two of his staff members have been working on weed removal this week. Ball Pond Advisory Committee has limited funds (about 2 days worth of work) to pay them with. Hopefully, the Friends will be able to help. Discussion ensued about how the pink water lilies reproduce and if there are other possible ways of eradicating them. Aside from the application of chemicals (not eco-friendly), this seems to be the best way. Cynthia Stevens will keep the Committee updated via email.
 - Brian Bosley offered the use of his 16' rowboat with an outboard motor for water lily removal. Cynthia Stevens will ask Bruce Lockhart if that would increase the efficiency of the removal and, if so, she will call the police to let them know that a motor will be being used.

New Business:

Other Comments:

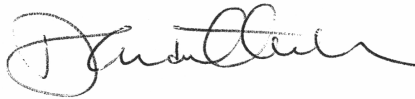
- Cynthia Stevens reported that a Notice of Violation has been served to the property owners of 121 Ball Pond Road for creating a sand beach. Cynthia Stevens and Helen Gallagher plan to attend the next Conservation Inland/Wetlands meeting where this will be discussed.
- The Torrington Department of Parks and Recreation contacted the Ball Pond Advisory Committee about the carp program.
- George Buck reiterated his desire for the Ball Pond Advisory Committee to write an official thank you letter to Bill Hyatt and Pete Aarrestad for their support of the carp program since its inception. George Buck will draft a letter and send it to Cynthia Stevens for review.
- Cynthia Stevens will contact Pete Aarrestad and Tim Simpkins to arrange the weed dive.

Adjournment:

- The next regular meeting of the Ball Pond Advisory Committee will be on Tuesday, July 13, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Conference Room.
- Brian Bosley made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m.; Helen Gallagher seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0-0 (Motion Approved)

Respectfully Submitted,



Darlene Anderson-Alexander
Recording Secretary

Selectman's Office
New Fairfield, Ct.

Re: Deplorable conditions at Ball Pond
Town Park

Dear John Hodge,

On Thursday afternoon I had stopped at your office and left a note with your secretary for you indicating that Ball Pond Town Park needed sand so one would trip when using the Park. While driving by the Town Park earlier in the day I noticed some ravines and gullies on the town property.

Later that afternoon my daughter came home and informed me that she had tripped in a hole while walking on the property. She spent the evening with an ice pack and crutches. I did not take her to the hospital. I wanted to wait at least one day to see if she felt better.

The next day I decided to take a walk to the Town Park on route 39 to see first hand what the extant conditions are. I recommend that you personally visit the site with a representative from Public Works and the Park and Recreation.

I observed a former jewel of New Fairfield totally neglected. Weeds several feet high, no sand at all when entering the park just some stones, two wide ravines, probably caused by erosion. These ravines are a tripping hazard.

There is a foundation protruding that should be covered in sand or removed, another tripping hazard. There are two garbage pails filled to the brim, one located in the middle of the park which is not an appropriate location and the other by the elevated boat slips. These pails have not been emptied for quite some time. The neighbors have informed me that several times a week a public works truck stops by the park, but no one empties the garbage pails or cuts the weeds.

The beach has lots of activity on it. People are always rowboating, kyacking or canoeing. Presently there are three rowboats and three canoes on the site indicating the varied use of the Park. I noticed that the benches are no longer there, what happened to them?

There are numerous young families in the area a new generation exists since I moved to New Fairfield twenty years ago.

There is no reason why a lifeguard cannot be hired to have some supervision at the beach at least over the weekends. If the town decides to open the beach as a swimming area, the milfoil would have to be removed and a designated swimming area roped off with floating buoys.

On Friday I was given a petition with thirty-seven signatures of families residing in the area stating WE CARE: KEEP BALL POND BEACH OPEN FOR SWIMMING AND PICNICKING OPPOSED TO RETURNING THE PROPERTY BACK TO ITS NATURAL STATE. I don't know if you ever received it. If you would like a copy let me know and I will furnish one to you.

Perhaps, a public hearing could be scheduled or a questionnaire be distributed to establish what the community wants regarding the park.

Jane Didona, a landscaped architect, has done a marvelous job for the city of Danbury creating parks with beautiful landscaping and cozy sitting areas. I am sure if she is asked she could transform the Ball Pond Park into a place that New Fairfield can be proud of.

I am not putting in a claim against the town as a result of my daughter falling on town property, but this should be a warning that if anyone else falls and is injured the town has had prior notice of the conditions cited and could be held liable.

Therefore, until a permanent plan has been decided for Ball Pond Park, please rectify these ravines immediately. Have the garbage pails emptied at least once a week, and all the weeds should be removed. If you would like to beautify the entrance with shrubs and flowers as you have done at Town Hall that would be greatly appreciated. I don't think anyone would object to having the park landscaped.

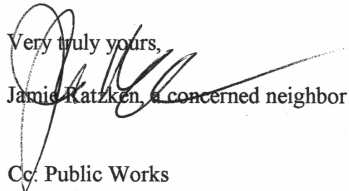
Closing the park or lock the gate is not the solution, since children could still get in. The park is presently being utilized by children and adults every day during the warm weather, and as I noted before various boats are launched from the site. Several years ago the town approved an Eagle Scout project to build an elevated boat slip on the property, and that structure is always filled with private boats.

There are many college and high school students who can use extra funds, pulling weeds and raking the sand is not a difficult task.

Someone has to be responsible in the town to accomplish this and I am confident that you will follow through and take the necessary steps to make the Ball Pond Park safe and attractive once more.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Very truly yours,


Jamie Katzken, a concerned neighbor

Cc: Public Works
Park and Recreation
Ball Pond Advisory Committee
Citizen News

BPAE minutes 6-5-10

