

Recreation Commission Regular Meeting
Wednesday, July 13, 2022
DRAFT

- 2 The regular Recreation Commission meeting was held Wednesday, July 13, 2022 at the Stowe Arena Community Room starting at 5:05 P.M.
- 3 Members present: Lynn Altadonna, Dave Rogers, Ed Stahl, Brett Loomis, Forrest Shinnars, Matt Frazee. Absent: Adam Rice, Ryan Thibault Audience: Billy Adams, Michael Diender, Tiffany Donza, Nick Donza, Harry Shepard, Jed Lipsky, Bill Little, Patt Sker, Jo Sable Courtney
- 4 **5:05pm called to order. Agenda Approved LA/ES**
- 5 **LA motioned to approve the minutes BL second. All approved.**
- 6 **Memorial Park Study update**
- 7 Matt presented background that Recreation Commission reported to Selectboard on priorities for Recreation which were Replacement of the Recreation Center, tennis/pickleball courts, and basketball court at Memorial Park. The priorities and goals were approved by the Selectboard and a capitol request of \$85,000.00 to contract a study of updating the existing Memorial Park Master Plan to incorporate the goals was approved by voters in March 2022. The intent of the study was initially to explore how to incorporate the goals of the program by looking at three alternatives, 1. replacement of Rec Center and Courts in their approximate current location, 2. an addition on the Arena for the new Rec Center and courts in the area where they and the Rec Center currently are located, 3. Relocation of the Parks operations and new Rec Center and courts developed in that area.
- 8 Harry Sheppard reported that initial meetings have found that the location where the parks building currently are, is not a likely option for a new Rec Center due to DEC permitting/wetlands/Act 250 requirements. Where the existing Rec Center and courts are located, it would likely only be possible for either the courts or the Rec Center but not both. Harry indicated that the only option to accomplish all the goals might be an addition to the Arena for the Rec Center and for the courts to be in the area where they and the Rec Center currently are. There was some discussion regarding the concept of an addition to the Arena and most indicated that it would not likely be functional for both operations. Harry mentioned the other option would be to find an alternative location for the tennis/pickleball courts. Bill Little asked if the Town owns land that would be possible for the courts and Matt and Harry indicated that a suitable location is not known at this time.
- 9 The event fields and Mayo Farm was discussed as a possible location. Jed Lipsky said that there is a conservation easement which restricts development on the property. Matt said that the easement with Stowe Land Trust goes until 2028 and the Conservation Commission will begin to evaluate in 2026. The easement renews as is unless the Town/voters take action to amend or dissolve the easement with Stowe Land Trust.
- 10 Brett Loomis asked Harry what his thoughts about the addition at the Arena for the Rec Center after the discussions tonight. Harry said based on peoples comments it may not be a viable option due to the functions of the Arena and Recreation and it seems likely that they would be disruptive to each other. Traffic and parking would also be a challenge to manage. May not be feasible to co-exist in same space.

- 11** Tiffany Donza said she is not satisfied with the efforts or approach and recommends taking a higher view of what the needs of the Town are going to be in the future. She said the limitations are too restrictive as to what is needed and the Arena should not be a consideration for an addition. The land in Town is not being utilized properly and the community has not been engaged. Need more time and energy to get it right. She said the Town needs a larger Recreation Center and should offer an afterschool program again. Jed said storm water management needs compliance which limits possibilities. Memorial Park is also in violation of Act 250 but he said contingent liability may be worth challenging so what we need to accomplish could be done. Harry said it may not be a possibility.
- 12** Matt said it is not currently a goal to offer an afterschool program again and most afterschool programs in Vermont are operated out of schools by licensed childcares which the school contracts with. If the Town were to offer a licensed afterschool program, we would also be required to license the summer camp program which would mean that all staff and the facilities would have to meet licensing requirements. Matt said that was one of the factors that led to the program being offered in the school and the other factor was the Town was struggling to hire staff to support the program. Michael asked why the summer camp can't be in the school. Tiffany said it hasn't been able to be because of COVID. Matt said that the school is only available to date sporadically but not available for the duration of summer camp consistently because of their maintenance schedule.
- 13** Michael said that if the Town considers alternative locations for pickleball courts they should take noise into consideration. Pickleball makes significant noise which could bother neighbors which is why Memorial Park location is ideal. Billy Adams asked if the south side of Marshall Hill could be a potential location for the courts. Harry said he will have to take a closer look at it.
- 14** Lynn asked Harry what his thoughts are overall. Harry said options he sees currently would be addition on Arena and courts in their area or Rec Center in current area and courts would need alternate location. Billy asked if the school could be considered as a potential for an addition for a Rec Center. Brett asked how much courts are used for summer camp/rec. Matt said they are used frequently by summer camp. Bill said Memorial Park would be the preferred location for pickleball courts. Nick agreed that everything in one location is ideal.
- 15** **Forrest motioned to form a task force to dive deeper into further exploring how to accomplish the goals at Memorial Park to include the Rec Center and courts. Ed seconded, all approved. Lynn asked those interested to provide contact info and Matt will send email about the next meeting and steps.**

16 No other business.

7:02p Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted

Matt Frazee