

MINUTES

Twin Brook Advisory Committee
Town Council Chambers
Tuesday, June 7, 2011

6:30 p.m. Call to Order

Present:

Chairman John Leavitt	Diane Clement
Councilor Steve Moriarty	John Polito
Member Joe Loring	Heather Stocks
Member Iwona Tarling	Normajean Forbes
Member Theresa Maloney-Kelley	Jennifer Robbins
Member Anne Witte	Ms. Porter
Member Jackie Stowell	
Member John Eldridge	
Chris Bolduc, Director of Public Services	
William Shane, Town Manager	
Laura Neleski, Public Services Admin.	

I. To have a Discussion on Horse Usage of Park

Chairman Leavitt welcomed Horse Owners to the meeting, thanking them for their participation and hoping it would continue. Mr. Leavitt gave a short summation of the history of horse discussions by the Twin Brook Advisory Committee. Mr. Leavitt started the night's discussion by listing on the white board a few of the challenges facing the park and encouraged everyone to contribute comments and suggestions as he went. Mr. Leavitt stated that the area currently designated for horses was around the perimeter – that there were no existing 'trails'. Ms. Witte stated that issues of where horses walk comes up in the spring when the ground is soft.

Residents thought a trail was intended from the concept of the park.

Mr. Polito gave a history of the controversy back at the purchase of the land. That basically the land was purchased as an open space. Area equine owners didn't want to be shut out of the usage of the park and the result of the following lively conversation was the general agreement at the time that equine owners would have peripheral access to the park.

Mr. Polito said newer users don't know where they are allowed to go due to lack of signage. He sees the issue as twofold:

1. Short Term. Need for signage
2. Long Term. Develop more paths to be used for horses, perhaps in conjunction with other users such as mountain bikers, etc.

Question arose regarding maps of paths and are there any?

Mr. Bolduc informed the group that Maps are imminent.

Town Manager Shane put up a map of Twin Brook clarifying two path areas for horses to use. The first one followed the outside of the fields on the Tuttle Road side of the Park. This trail is approximately 1 mile around. The second trail is basically the gravel road from Tuttle to Greely and back for approximately 1.5 miles.

Town Manager Shane indicate that there was a future possibility for additional trails on the Greely side but the large cement culvert is in bad shape and currently preventing the town from getting any equipment into that area to do any trail work.

Town Manager Shane pointed out on the map the locations of the kiosks and said that notices and maps will be posted on the kiosks when they are ready. It would be similar to the Rhines Forest Kiosks.

Kay Fowler gave an example of horses in the hay field as an example of inappropriate use of the facilities. Mr. Polito saw this occurrence and addressed it.

During the discussion of trails, Ms. Witte mentioned that biking wasn't allowed. Ms. Tarling questioned this as she has seen many bikes on the trails. Councilman Moriarty read from the Policies and Rules the section that showed Biking was allowed.

One resident horse owner wanted to know how to find out when events were scheduled at the Park so she could avoid the Park at that time. Mr. Bolduc pointed out that an Events schedule was posted on the Town's web site each week. Town Manager Shane said events were also posted in the Town Crier.

At this point several horse owners commented that there was a woman in the park that has been verbally abusive to the horse owners and tries to prevent them from using the Park. The overall response of the group was when this happens report her to the Police Department.

Ms. Clement expressed concern over the speed limit in the park be too fast. Mr. Bolduc would check to make sure the 15mph limit was clearly posted.

John Leavitt asked the group for input on other ways to address horses in the park. Ms. Clement suggested that as more trails are added in the future we may want to consider color coding the trails so it is visually clear which group (walker, biker, horse rider, etc.) can use each trail. Ms. Clement suggested identifying the riders by having them register for bibs or armbands similar to the program in Scarborough. Mr. Polito thought this was a good idea as well. He said that from a distance you could tell who was riding. A horse being registered to ride in the park for the season was an idea that was discussed in a positive manner by several horse owners. Another comment was that a bib would tell other Park users that the horse was okay to be there.

There was a generally conversation regarding resident stickers for horse riders, for dog walkers, for Cumberland residents vs. non-residents, etc. At this point, several participants indicated a lack of agreement with registering anyone.

Mr. Moriarty asked the group if they really wanted to go down the slippery slope of registering different groups of park users. Small fees wouldn't really help the Park financially and could really create ill will, more work and more bureaucracy than anyone really wanted and there was no need for it. The town wanted to have an open park for residents to use.

General response was that Mr. Moriarty was correct.

The consensus that followed was that for the short term the follow steps would be good:

1. Marking the trails clearly so riders knew where to go.
2. Post trail maps at Kiosks
3. Clear signs when a field trail was open or closed.

Mr. Leavitt also wants to have information posted to the Town's web site as soon as it's available. Mr. Bolduc informed group that a Twin Brook web page would soon be going up and make access to information easier.

Town Manager Shane had a few specific questions for horse owners:

1. What surface is good for horses to walk on?

Mr. Polito said wood chips but Mr. Shane indicated a lack of easy availability.

Gravel was discussed and the response was that gravel was fine.

Mr. Shane reminded the group that the gravel roads in the Park are treated with calcium chloride which can be corrosive and to keep this in mind.

2. What is a good trail width? 8 to 10 feet?

This was great but many horse owners are also fine with narrower trails for trail riding.

3. How much do horses weigh on average?

Approximately 1100 pounds on average.

A question was asked about making a designated place for parking trailers. The response was that parking availability changes by day, season, and event. So that designating one area just wasn't practical.

Mr. Leavitt thanked the horse owners for coming and indicated that signage and maps will be worked on and forthcoming. Mr. Polito thanked the Committee for inviting them. Everyone agreed that it was a good meeting with great input. At this point, the Committee prepared to move on to other business and the residents who attended to participate in the discussion regarding horses left.

II. Approval of the Minutes

May 3, 2011

Motion to Approve the Minutes of May 3, 2011 by Joe Loring

Motion Seconded by Anne Witte

Vote: 7 – 0 Unanimous

III. Old Business

Ms. Witte questioned the use of rockets at the park and was it only Sundays? The section of the Rules and Policies was read and rockets are allowed by incendiary devices were restricted.

Mr. Bolduc said he would email everyone his email address so that he could be contacted easily if there were concerns at the park. It was mentioned that members might read and remember the rules so they can appropriately address their concerns or questions put to them by residents.

Mr. Leavitt informed the group the Boy Scout Ryan Pinchon would not be attending the meeting. Mr. Bolduc explained that Mr. Pinchon would be working directly with Mr. Shane, Mr. Bolduc and Mr. Bingham to finalize the bridge now that the group has seen the overall plans. Mr. Bolduc will email any additional information to the group as it arises.

Mr. Bolduc recapped the Community Garden progress – posts going in and water is being run this week. There will be a tall deer fence going in as well.

Ms. Tarling wanted to know why it is going in on the hill instead of a flatter piece of land like over by the road on the Greely side. Mr. Bolduc explained about the proximity of the water to the spot that was chosen.

Ms. Witte wanted to know who the contact person for the garden is. Karyn Marden is the contact person. Ms. Witte thought the idea of a garden was great but doesn't want to see the garden taking over the park. Mr. Shane explained that the maximum size was permitted at 2.23 acres.

Ms. Fowler noted that a Baseball game continued at Twin Brook last week while thunder was rolling. Doesn't the new lightning policy cover that? The new policy won't go into effect until the Town Council approves it. It is scheduled to go before the Council on June 20th. But the Maine State Principals Association rules should have applied and Mr. Bolduc will look into the issue.

Mr. Leavitt wanted an update on installing an AED Device. Mr. Bolduc explained the concerns and challenges that need to be addressed first, such as location, mobility, the cold weather effects, etc. It is still being looked into.

IV. New Business

Parking

Mr. Leavitt was concerned about parking on both side of the gravel road on the Greely Road side of the Park. Discussion followed on why that might be happening. Mr. Bolduc said that his staff could post one side of the road.

Rail Fence

Mr. Leavitt wondered why the rails were down. Mr. Bolduc said that rails were often down because sport teams removed them to move equipment. Some were loose as well. Park staff would continue to replace the rails and would look at fixing after July 1st.

V. Next Meeting August

Date to be determined for a site visit. The Committee will be notified by email of the date. The community will be notified by posting on the Town's web site.

VI. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Kay Fowler

Seconded by Theresa Maloney-Kelley

VOTE: 7 – 0 Unanimous Passage

Time: 8:20p.m.