

**Parks & Recreation Commission Regular Meeting  
James Harmon Community Center- 44 Main Street  
Thursday, November 14, 2019 8 PM**

**Minutes**

In Attendance:

Joanne Baecher-DiSalvo (Chair), Gene Calamari, John Dailey, David Downs,  
Mike Jacobs, Angela Reeve, and Aaron Podhurst (Superintendent).

A quorum is in order.

1. Call to Order
  
2. Public Comment - none
  
3. Old Business
  - October meeting minutes approved.

- Skate Park - update

Several residents are in attendance to discuss proposal of skate park at Burke Estate (piece of land offered by Hastings School District for Village's use for such a proposal).

Ray Highland (Hastings resident and civil engineer) visited the proposed site and regarded the proposed area somewhat small in terms of skate park standards. But, considering 5000'sq and considering site lines, a triangular site without getting into the stone embankment could work. The set back would be 8'-10' (so not right up to the Farragut sidewalk nor the access road to the playing fields). There was some thought to sinking the park to help minimize effect to sight line, but existing sewer line would prohibit that. Also thought about raising the site with the possibility of a retaining wall. Mr. Highland felt that the site offered by the school district offered some real possibilities.

Serena Eisenstark (Farragut Ave, Hastings) asked about the large sycamore tree. Mr. Highland indicated that tree was outside the footprint offered by the school, and therefore would not be affected.

Anne Runyan (Farragut Ave, Hastings) suggested the proposed area would result in leaves and acorns dropping and therefore would become a maintenance issue. Commission members shared the example of Hillside Park tennis courts where the Village provides brooms and tools necessary for the users to sweep the courts before play.

Some neighbors of the proposed site asked if alternate sites could be considered. One asked about the other side of Burke (adjacent Broadway and Windsor). Another resident referred to that area as one with a sensitive ecology (wetlands). Neighbors expressed concern over youngsters crossing Farragut Ave to access the skate park. Youth members of HOH Skate responded that they envisioned youth would access the site the same way that the users of the athletic fields do (ie. using designated crosswalks at Mt Hope and Farragut and/or at the crossing guard by the Middle School). In response to neighbors concerns about traffic speeds on Farragut, John Dailey pointed out that the Village has a Safety Council and as residents we should alert the police if there are incidents of speeding traffic.

Joanne Baecher-DiSalvo (Chair) stressed to all in attendance that it is our hope that people will come together for open and positive communication so that we can ensure all concerns are heard and we can work together. John Dailey shared that discussions started near two years ago and that it is the P&R Commission's role to hear input from the community before formulating an opinion to the Board of Trustees. He shared that it's our hope to offer a well-used amenity that can be enjoyed for a long period of time factoring in the

community's input. Mike Jacobs pointed out that many of the concerns that have been expressed can be addressed in the design process.

Nicole Miziolek (Hastings resident, and HOH Skate parent) - asked for clarification on the process... asking what the P&R Commission would need in order to approve the idea and move the proposal to the Board of Trustees? Joanne is asking the two groups to get together to talk and see if everyone can work together to ensure all concerns are heard. John Dailey indicated that the P&R Commission has generally indicated to the Board that we are in support of the idea of a skate park in the Village. Joanne indicated that we will continue to discuss at a future P&R Commission meeting and the P&R Commission will be in communication with the Board.

- Hillside Woods - report on Nov 7th public meeting & update

{Hillside Woods Steering Committee Meeting - 11.7.19 - video & presentation found here: <https://www.hastingsgov.org/home/pages/hillside-woods-initiative> }

David Downs shared a recap of the November 7th public meeting. The evening opened with a presentation by Haven Colgate who introduced representatives from Westchester County (Sara Cavanagh, current Curator at Lenoir and HHS alum and Taro Ietaka, Rec Supervisor Sal J Prezioso Mountain Lakes Park and certified arborist) who will be sharing their expertise with our Village over the winter months as we move forward to address the forestry management plan. First phase is removing the invasives. The event was well attended, and following the presentation the audience broke into two sub-groups: 1- residents interested in forming a Friends of Hillside Woods; and 2- residents interested in helping the Vine Squad and Parks Crew with invasive removal. A representative from Westchester County Parks shared info on how a "Friends of Hillside Woods" group could be established under the non-profit that currently exists for the County

(Westchester County would take 10%). The Village Parks crew has been training with the County arborist to learn about the various invasives and how they are to be removed. Parks department will then be setting up dates (starting in early December) to invite volunteers in to help with the removal. Haven Colgate shared that the High School's physical education classes will be participating with the invasive removals as part of their winter hiking unit soon to be underway.

#### 4. New Business

##### - Upcoming / New Programs

###### \* For Pre-Schoolers:

Thanksgiving Cupcakes - ages 3-5yrs - Nov 21, 1-2pm @ JHCC

###### \* For School Aged Children:

Obstacle Course - grades 3rd - 6th, Sat Nov 16, 23, Dec 7 - 11am - 11:45am

Baking - grades 5-8th, Thurs Nov 14, 21, Dec 5 - 3:30pm - 5pm @ JHCC

Upcycling - grades 5-8th, Tues Nov 26, Dec 3, 10, 17 - 3:15pm - 4:15pm

###### \* For Seniors:

the November Senior Calendar is available on the Rec website or at the Office

Thanksgiving Luncheon - Tues Nov 19 - 12:30pm - 3pm @ JHCC

##### - Sugar Pond Shed - presentation

Sarah Birkadah (Hastings resident) presented an idea that she and a few other residents (David Pugh, Cassandra Sweet, ...) have been discussing to replace the deteriorating Sugar Pond Shed with an outdoor pavilion. A sketch (created by Christina Griffin) was shared with the Commission.

In sharing thoughts as to how such a project could be funded, Sarah suggested

that perhaps if there were a “Friends of Hillside Woods” established people could donate and “tag” those funds toward the shed/pavilion project.

Sarah and Cassandra Sweet are here this evening to share their preliminary ideas/discussions and seek advice on how they might develop a more formal proposal.

John Dailey suggested addressing these 5 main concepts:

- 1- What will it look like?
- 2- What will it cost?
- 3- Who will use it?
- 4- Who will support it?
- 5- Who will oppose it?

David Downs reminded those in attendance that there are 3 phases of the Hillside Woods project:

- 1- Removal of major “stuff”, invasives, and cleanup
- 2- Fence / deer exclosure
- 3- Beautification and tree planting (this is 4-5 years down the road)

Joanne asked Aaron to give a “heads up” to the Village Manager that we have heard from a group of residents who are interested in replacing Sugar Pond shed. David noted that he will be mindful of the idea of addressing Sugar Pond shed in his future discussions with the Hillside Woods Steering Committee.

- Superintendent’s Report

\* Commission members please note a 11/13/19 email from Dermot Burke

(Farragut Ave, Hastings) expressing concerns with proposal of a skate park at Burke Estate.

\* Spray Pool - concrete pool deck surrounding the Spray has been removed. It's our goal to have the Westchester County Health Dept of Health inspect the project before the permit applications are submitted in early spring 2020.

\* Quarry Park - work will cease now for the winter. Steps have been taken to prevent soil erosion resulting from wind/snow/rain. Contractor looked at the stairs of the Quarry Park Trail and was able to fill in the trench and sure up the steps.

\* At the most recent Board of Trustee Meeting, the Village Manager secured approval (as part of the capital request process) for two Parks & Recreation requests:

- 1- A Ford F-250 pickup truck (to replace the current deteriorated truck); and
- 2- \$25k to address the ball fields. This includes fixing the drainage issue at Zinsser 2 and addressing Uniontown -- configure to a 50'/70' play, field improvement, drainage, and address damaged turf that resulted when the tree came down.

Gene Calamari expressed immediate concern when learning that HLL had approached Aaron to request 50/70 field reconfiguration, citing that the fences were not set up for a 50/70 field, noting that such a reconfiguration would serve only a small population, would drastically change a perfect field, etc. Aaron asked Gene to contact HLL Board (Dan Sbrega) to get clarification and discuss. Gene will follow up with HLL and report back to the Commission.

Joanne asked Aaron for an update on building a bocci court at Riverview Park that was approved as part of last year's capital budget. Aaron shared that the

Parks department personnel has been stretched thin in tackling the many projects of the department in addition to supporting the Hillside Woods project and part time parks staff often being reassigned to support the Village DPW department. Joanne reminded all that this is still a project that we support, funding was approved, and we do want to move this forward.

\* NEXT COMMISSION MEETING - December 19th, 8pm

5. Adjournment - 10:15pm

Next P&R Commission Meeting: Thursday, December 19 @ 8:00pm - JHCC

November minutes prepared by A. Reeve

November minutes adopted 1/16/2020