

**Skateboard Advisory Committee  
December 3, 2015  
Parks & Recreation Office**

**Skateboard Advisory Committee Members Present:** Thomas Bubier, Michael Cannon, James Duane, Betty Funk, Judy Grove, Robert McArthur, James McCarthy, Joan Rastani, Jason Smith, Cheryl Tully Stoll

**Others:** Thomas Begin, and James Snyder - Please see attached sign-in sheet;

**Members Absent:** Kathy Hauck

Chairman Jason Smith called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm and read the agenda into record.

**Designer Proposal Evaluation Forms**

Mr. Smith explained that the Purchasing Department has requested Committee members to complete an evaluation form for each Designer Interview. The Committee discussed the September 24<sup>th</sup> meeting in which the Committee discussed each member's review of all RFQ submittals. Chairman Smith asked the Committee to fill out the forms and submit them to Committee Member James Duane as soon as possible to fulfill Purchasing Department's requirements.

**Review/Approval of Minutes for October 8, 2015 and November 5, 2015**

**October 8, 2015**

The Committee discussed the draft minutes and gave edits to the minutes.

***Committee Member Betty Funk moved to approve the minutes of October 8, 2015, with edits; Committee Member Cheryl Tully Stoll seconded the motion; the Committee voted 8-0-1 (Committee Member Michael Cannon abstained) for said motion;***

**November 5, 2015**

The Committee discussed the November 5, 2015 minutes and offered edits. Committee Member Judith Grove explained Committee Member James McCarthy had stated during the November 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, :

*".. he selected Spohn Ranch as the designer as he felt he could work better with Spohn than he could with Pillar Design. Mr. McCarthy further felt that Spohn Ranch was fully prepared for the presentation and pointed out that they provided extra material after the interview for the Committee to review. "*

Ms. Grove asked that this be added to the minutes.

***Committee Member Joan Rastani moved to approve the minutes of November 5, 2015, with edits; Committee Member Michael Cannon seconded the motion; the Committee voted 10-0-0 for said motion.***

### **Site Selection Discussion**

Chairman Smith discussed previous meetings in which the Committee held discussions on potential sites for a skatepark. He explained it is the goal of the Committee to identify three locations to submit to the Designer for study and vetting. Mr. Smith explained his three choices are Farm Pond, Mary Dennison Park and Butterworth Park. He believes Farm Pond Park is far above the other two sites but feels strongly that the Park should not be constructed too closely to the road along Farm Pond due to potential safety concerns. From an infrastructure standpoint, Mary Dennison is the only location where park users have access to stores in walking distance to purchase a drink or snacks. He would like to ensure the location is properly zoned for a skatepark.

Committee Member Robert McArthur discussed the water table at Farm Pond and potential jurisdiction of Conservation Commission over construction of a park in this area.

Committee Member Joan Rastani believed that the Butterworth Park neighbors would not be in favor of a skatepark at this location.

Committee Member James Duane explained that his understanding of the site evaluation documents that were prepared by the Committee was meant to be used as a reference tool and not a requirement to have each member complete them. As a result, he did not fill them out. He believes that Farm Pond Park is the top rated area for him because of the following: there is appropriate infrastructure to and from downtown; the overall amenities in the area along Dudley Road would lend itself to the addition of a skatepark and only enhance recreational offerings in this area; he does not believe that a 15,000 square foot skatepark would be suited for this site but feels the Town could build satellite "skate dots" at other locations in the future. He ranks Mary Dennison as the number two location as a result of it not being shovel-ready at this time. He would consider ranking it higher if this was not an obstacle, and believes that this location offers access, has wide open site lines, existing infrastructure to support this type of amenity, offers plenty of lighting, is situated in a heavy residential area that houses many interested users, and is close to many other amenities such as food and beverages. He ranks Butterworth Park as a distant 3<sup>rd</sup> and believes there are major challenges to locating a skatepark at Butterworth, not the least of which are potential concerns of neighbors.

Committee Member Tom Bubier explained he looked at the evaluation forms as a guideline and did not fill them out either. He has ranked Farm Pond Park as his first location for the following reasons: no direct neighbors which will eliminate noise concerns; plenty of parking in the area to accommodate park users; highly visible; and offers plenty of space to build a skatepark and potentially add on amenities in the future. He ranks Butterworth Park as the number two location. He believes it is somewhat centralized, accessible to commuters with the train relatively close by, and close to downtown. The issues to him are: close proximity to neighbors, not a lot of space to build the first facility (in his opinion) and if a park was built at this location, it could potentially require the removal of current amenities and trees at the park.

Committee Member Joan Rastani explained Mary Dennison is her first choice, and believes the project could receive potential grant funding for a park at this site. She further explained that Farm Pond is her second choice but is very skeptical due to the potential of water issues at this location and would like to see what the Town's professional staff determines. Butterworth Park is her third choice but only if the neighbors of Butterworth Park would be on board with this project. She believes this location would be suitable for a smaller park, perhaps a "skate-dot".

Committee Member Robert McArthur explained Butterworth Park is his first choice due to its central location within Town, but understands there will be resident concerns. He explained potential Conservation Commission issues would be centered on the potential stream or drainage swale along the northern board of the park. His second choice is Mary Dennison but the timing for construction is an issue as Mary Dennison is not shovel-ready and will take a year or two before it is. He noted potential Conservation Commission concerns would be focused on Beaver Dam Brook and its 200 foot buffer zone and flood zone requirements. He explained Farm Pond has a few issues from a Conservation Commission aspect due to its current pervious surface and large green area. He does not believe the water table will be an issue at the currently proposed location along Farm Pond but the geotechnical testing would determine that.

Committee Member Cheryl Tully Stoll feels that Butterworth Park is the best site for a skatepark due to its clear-line of sight, location within Town, and accessible to neighboring children. Mary Dennison is second to her due to its proximity to residents and current status of not being ready for construction any time soon. She explained Farm Pond is third on her list due to its proximity to Dudley Road and believes it is not fully visible from the road.

Committee Member Michael Cannon explained that Mary Dennison is first on his list and is less concerned about the fact that this park is not shovel ready and would like this project to succeed by taking its time and selecting the best location and design for residents. Temple Street Playground is second on his list. He likes the fact that the park abuts the Mass Pike and has very few neighbors in proximity to it. If a skatepark was located there, he would insist on having the playground remain there. His third preference is Butterworth Park but he is concerned with potential issues this type of usage would create from neighbors due to its proximity to abutters. He does not see Farm Pond as an option due to its proximity to the roadway and is concerned with public safety to users who would be riding skateboards, walking, or biking to the site.

Committee Member James McCarthy explained his first choice is Farm Pond. Farm Pond is ideal to him for many reasons including its accessibility with sidewalks along Dudley Road, and believes it is very visible from the street. He lists Cushing Memorial Park as his second preference. There are many open spaces at Cushing that could be utilized for the construction of a skatepark. He feels that the Committee does not fully understand what skateboarding is all about and further feels that he has not been given the opportunity to speak his mind on the subject during meetings. He would equate skateboarding to a form of martial arts and a practice of mediation.

Committee Member Judy Grove explained her first choice is Farm Pond and second choice would be Mary Dennison. When she original brought this subject up and created the citizens petition to Town Meeting, she had listed Mary Dennison as the potential location for the skatepark. However, she does not want the kids to wait another 5 years by waiting until Mary Dennison is ready for construction. She would like a potential second park located at Mary Dennison and warned the Committee that if the first

park is not large enough for proper usage, it will fail. Mr. McCarthy discussed the new Lynch Skatepark in Boston and explained it is very large and highly used by kids on a daily basis by all types of skaters. He does not want the Committee to underestimate the needed size of this skatepark to ensure it will succeed.

Ms. Grove explained Farm Pond is a beautiful location and has perfect terrain for many possibilities of a skatepark. She would like to have a park built at this location to give the kids a beautiful location to go and skate as they deserve it. She lists Cushing Memorial Park as her second preference as there is plenty of open space and room for a sizeable skatepark. She lists Butterworth Park as her third preference. She has had conversations with Chief Ferguson about Butterworth Park and explained his concerns were with the neighbors and their issues with potential noise from skaters.

Mr. Bubier explained he was looking online and came across the Cushing Master plans and found that a potential phase was the purchase of land behind Cushing Chapel to add to the park and asked if that was still a possibility. Mr. Duane discussed that property and explained it is owned by neighboring Brookdale. He and Town Manager Bob Halpin have had conversations with representatives from Brookdale and found they are not interested in selling this land to the Town at this point but are willing to work with the Town on a mutual use agreement. They were very clear that if anything were to be located at this section of land that conflicted with existing usage at the park, they would be completely against it.

Committee Member Betty Funk explained if it was possible, but she believes it is not at this time, then Mary Dennison would be her first choice and believes it is the safest place for a park. She believes this location is large enough for a sizeable park but understands it will be a lot more time before there is a clear understanding of what can or cannot be located at the park. As a result, the locations she is interested in seeing considered are Farm Pond and Butterworth. She is very familiar to Butterworth as her family once lived on Grant Street. She believes neighbors will have a concern with this type of usage at the park but there are many positives to locating a skatepark there including plenty of parking, highly visible, close proximity to a large population of kids. However, this is not her first choice. Farm Pond is attractive due to it being very accessible and visible but would like to wait to make any decision until the designer is present at a future meeting. She is not opposed to Farm Pond, Mary Dennison, or Butterworth Park but is very opposed to Cushing Memorial Park.

Mr. McArthur explained there are wetland concerns at Temple Street Park as well as Butterworth Park.

Mr. Duane explained he does not believe a listing of sites would incur costs but geotechnical studies for each location would be very expensive. When he negotiated the contract, he indicated there would be three locations forwarded to the designer for review as that was what the Committee had discussed. He can have that conversation with the designer about potential costs increases due to submitting more than three sites, but recommends the Committee forward three locations as that is what the designer is expecting.

The Committee held a discussion centered on how many locations to forward to the designer for review and consideration.

***Committee Member Joan Rastani move to direct Pillar Design to study both Farm Pond and Butterworth Park, with respect to having a skatepark located at these locations; Friendly Amendment: if there is no additional cost or issues, direct Pillar Design to give a brief review of a potential skatepark at Mary Dennison. Committee Member Robert McArthur seconded the motion; the Committee voted 10-0-0 for said motion.***

Mr. Smith asked Mr. Duane to inquire with Pillar Design if there is a cost savings to remove one site from review.

Mr. Duane updated the Committee on the Town's efforts in promoting the upcoming Skatepark Public Design meeting on December 16<sup>th</sup>. He asked the Committee to help in getting the word out to the public and the skating community. He asked the Committee to review the draft flier (attached) that will be circulated to the public and asked the Committee to approve the flier for circulation. The Committee approved the flier for circulation.

Mr. McArthur explained he will not be present for the December 16<sup>th</sup> Public Design meeting or the December 17<sup>th</sup> SAC meeting due to a prior commitment.

Ms. Grove explained she is resigning from the Committee and submitted her resignation letter into the record (attached). She has three issues with the Committee that she cannot handle anymore. She takes issue with how the Parks Commission appointed their representatives to the SAC; her belief that there is no parent on the Committee; and she feels she has been bullied by a SAC member. She believes there are too many elements of this Committee that make her have headaches when she attends the meetings. She believes in honesty that she cannot condone the decisions the SAC has made and takes issue with the designer selection process. In addition, Ms. Grove takes exception with how the Committee was formed. In particular, she believes that the Parks Commission had voted for the appointees to this Advisory Committee by secret ballot. She discussed her objections to the State Attorney General, and as a result of her objections, the Parks Commission then re-voted for who they were appointing to the Advisory Committee. She stated that she felt it was unfair that Mr. McCarthy, Mr. Bubier, and she were the only people who had to come in front of the Parks Commission to be appointed to the Committee. She also objected that, in her opinion, there was not a parent of a skater on the Advisory Committee. She heard a rumor that the SAC was not selecting Spohn Ranch as people felt that she knew them and was working with them. Mr. Duane stated that is absolutely incorrect. He voted on Pillar Design based on what he saw in the interviews and responses he saw in the RFQ's. He does not agree with Ms. Grove's accusations and does not want her to speak for other people on the Committee and how they voted. If the Committee wants to speak they can do so independently. He explained he picked Pillar Design based off of his belief that they gave a better interview and presentation than Spohn Ranch.

Mr. McArthur asked Ms. Grove to reconsider and think about her decision and give it some time to which many committee members agreed and stated that the Committee would not be in existence without her.

***Committee Member Joan Rastani moved to adjourn at 8:31 pm; Committee Member Cheryl Tully Stoll seconded the motion; the Committee voted 10-0-0 for said motion;***

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Begin

The following documents were distributed to each of the SAC members during the meeting and are available at the Park & Recreation Administration Offices:

1. Reasons for Resigning from Framingham Skatepark Advisory Committee, J.Grove, 12-3-2015;
2. Draft Minutes for October 8, 2015 & November 5, 2015;
3. Email chain from November 30, 2015, subject: "JS – Next SAC Meeting?"
4. Draft Framingham Skatepark Public Design Meeting flier;
5. Site Criteria Sheet;
6. Evaluation Form from Purchasing;



# Town of Framingham Annual Town Meeting April 28, 2015

## ARTICLE 26

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds or borrow for the Framingham Skatepark Building Project.

Pass any vote or take any action relative thereto.

**Sponsor: Citizens' Petition (*J. Grove*)**

**May 19, 2015 Voted:** That the Town raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds or otherwise provide \$50,000.00 to pay for design and engineering services to conduct a site study, compile appropriate plans and specifications, and identify cost estimates for a Framingham Skate Park that would be operated under the auspices of the Framingham Parks and Recreation Department; said plans to include the costs of construction, furnishings, fixtures, construction management, and any incidental and related expenses for the Skate Park; and further, that the Town Manager and Parks and Recreation Commission be authorized to create an eleven (11) member advisory committee composed of three members who live in Framingham, one member of the Board of Selectmen, two members of the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Conservation Administrator, one member each of the Finance and Capital Budget Committees, the Director of Parks and Recreation or his designee and the Town Manager or his designee; and further, that said Skate Park Advisory Committee report to the Town Meeting no later than the 2016 Annual Town Meeting.



# Town of Framingham Annual Town Meeting April 28, 2015

## **ARTICLE 26 ADDITIONAL MOTIONS/AMENDMENTS**

**May 19, 2015 Failed:** I move to add two members from the Framingham School Administration to be appointed by the School Committee to the 11 member Skate Park Advisory Committee.

**Robert Bois, Precinct 5**

# 5 Skate park Advisory Committee

(Sign-In sheet - 12-3-15)

Name

GEORGE LEWIS  
Ronda H. Andrews