

Minutes from the Darien Parks and Recreation Committee

October 29, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 7:48 p.m. with 9 of 14 members present constituting a quorum. The following Parks and Recreation members in attendance were: Patti Bumgardner; Diane Conologue; Cheryl Russell; Adele Conniff; Sue-Ellen Mitchell; Sandy Savage; Jennifer Moller; Emily McDermott; and Bill Van Loan. Members of the public in attendance were Janienne Hackett, Nancy Stein and Delia Bolotin.

The purpose of the meeting was to assess where the committee stands on the major components of the Pear Tree Point Beach improvements plan.

More than two thirds of the committee felt they could not support the current plan for the buildings which includes building an elevated structure. Those members felt the renovation budget should be used to rehabilitate the bathrooms and the remaining money used to rehabilitate the concession building to the extent the funds available allowed. It was suggested further renovation of the concession building could occur in three years. Building the concession upstairs was voiced as a safety concern for children. The elevator was thought to be too expensive because of maintenance costs from the affects of sand and salt water. In summary, keeping a concession service at grade would be preferable to building an elevated structure.

All members supported the boat ramp being fixed and understand that will include dredging though there is no budget yet for the dredging.

Expansion of the beach was discussed. Replacement of trees on the south beach as soon as possible was supported. Plans for plantings to hold the sand in place in the expanded west beach area was accepted, but many thought expanding the south beach by 5 feet was not necessary, and if eliminated, could save parking space. Many members thought the loss of 31 parking spaces would negatively affect the boat club.

A significant number of the members thought they could not support the decking around the gazebo as it is currently planned. They did support handicapped accessibility of the gazebo. As minimal ramping as possible was suggested. Finally, the handicapped access to the picnic area was supported only if it did not overwhelm the picnic area.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Sue-Ellen Mitchell