

# **Middletown Open Space & Fields Committee**

## **Minutes of Meeting**

**February 20, 2013**

**A meeting of the Open Space & Fields Committee took place on Wednesday, February 20, 2013 at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the Middletown Police Station, 123 Valley Road, Middletown, Rhode Island. The meeting was called to order by Mason Hawes, Chairman**

**Member Present: Cheryl Boergesson, Nicholas Coogan, Austin Prendergast, Michael Richards, Ed Sisk and Ralph Thomas**

**Members Absent: Barbara Barrow and John Pinto**

**Ex-officio Members:**

**Present: None**

**Absent: Dick Adams, Town Council Liaison and Robert Johnson, Conservation Commission**

**Town Officials: None**

**Others Present: Barbara Gifford, Park Steward, Linden Park**

## **Agenda**

**Approval of Minutes of January Meeting: Approved as drafted.**

**Old Business:**

- Memorial Policy Update. Mason indicated he had provided an**

**updated draft memorial policy to the Beach Commission and Tree Commission and was awaiting their comments.**

- **Standards for Park Benches. Awaiting input from Tim Shaw.**
  - o **Selection and Location of Benches in Middletown Parks.**
  - o **Memorial Bench Policy.**
  
- **Revision of Open Space and Recreation Acquisition Policy Scoring Sheet. Deferred to March meeting.**
  
- **Purgatory Chasm Walkway/Scenic Vista Update. Mason advised that while there was considerable interest in the project, there had been no forward movement and the issue of title to the property had not yet been resolved. He indicated that a meeting of all interested parties, to include St. George's School, might be convened in an effort to get things moving. Mason indicated that he believed the Department of Environmental Management would support construction of the walkway once the title question was answered, but was less certain about removal of substantial portions of the underbrush that blocks the vista, because to do so could potentially create a water runoff problem.**
  
- **Properties Updates.**
  - o **Demery Park. No update available.**
  - o **Planning for Tibbets/Boulevard Sustainable Use. No update available.**

o **The Valley—Moving Forward.** Decision is still pending on the grant application for trail construction that was submitted to the state. The decision on a similar grant for Paradise Valley Park is also still pending.

o **Other Parks.** No updates available

• **Beach Facility Advisory Committee Report.** No action had been taken by the Advisory Committee since OS&F's January meeting.

#### **New Business:**

• **Election of Recording Secretary.** Ralph Thomas was elected to serve a two-year term.

• **Perpetual Conservation of Middletown Land.** The committee discussed the potential formation of an ad hoc committee to examine the issues associated with perpetual conservation of Town-owned land. If formed, the ad hoc committee would report to the OS&F committee as a whole and the committee could alter, add to and delete any portion of the ad hoc committee's findings and recommendations. The ad hoc committee's role would be to research and determine the available methods for ensuring perpetual conservation of land and to identify the advantages and disadvantages of each. If the findings were considered significant enough, they would be presented to the Town Council. Mason indicated he had spoken to Barbara Barrow, who said she would chair the ad hoc committee if established, and to Nick Coogan, who

said he would serve on it.

The committee then discussed what departments, agencies and organizations might be interested in having representatives attend committee meetings to provide their views. These included the Town's Planning Department, Conservation Commission and Beach Commission; Aquidneck Land Trust; and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It was also suggested that State Senator Louis DiPalma and State Representative Linda Finn might be interested in participating.

It was decided to continue the discussion at the March meeting.

- **Proposed Agenda Items for March Meeting.**
- **Purgatory Chasm Walkway/Scenic Vista Update**
- **Perpetual Conservation of Middletown Land**
- **Standards for Parks Benches, Location and Memorial Benches**
- **Town Memorial Policy**
- **Revision of Open Space and Recreation Acquisition Policy Scoring Sheet**
- **Properties Updates**
  - o **Planning for Tibbets/Boulevard Sustainable Use**
  - o **The Valley—Moving Forward**
  - o **Other Parks**
- **Beach Facility Advisory Committee Report**
- **Proposed Agenda Items for April Meeting**

**Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 6:50 PM. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, March 20, 2013 at 5:30 PM in the second floor conference room at the Middletown Town Hall, 350 East Main Road, Middletown.**

**Ralph Thomas**

**Recording Secretary**