



Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting
May 10, 2021
6:00 p.m.



Via Remote Participation

Commissioners Present: Jane DeBarbieri, Kenneth Magarian, Douglas Morash, Vincent Olinski, Michael Tirrell, Sara Unger and Robert Veronesi

City Council Liaison: Nicholas Morganelli

Commission absent: Scott LaBombard

Staff: None

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. via remote participation with Michael Tirrell, Chairperson presiding asking commissioners for a voice roll call by calling out a "Yes".

Sara Unger yes, Jane DeBarbieri yes, Vincent Olinski yes, Robert Veronesi yes, Michael Tirrell yes, Douglas Morash yes and Kenneth Magarian yes
Motion passed.

Michael Tirrell asked if anyone had any questions regarding the zoom April 12, 2021 meeting minutes. He called out each commissioner for a roll call vote. Motion made by Kenneth Magarian to accept the minutes of April 12, 2021 motion seconded by Robert Veronesi. Roll call vote as follows: Sara Unger yes, Jane DeBarbieri yes, Vincent Olinski yes, Robert Veronesi yes, Michael Tirrell yes, Douglas Morash yes, Kenneth Magarian yes
Motion passed.

Public Participation via zoom:

1. Tina Gorman, Christopher Clark, Kelly Simon, Kelsey Emhett, Dennis Aitkens and Kathy Bradford. (Not on agenda)
2. On agenda- Cindy Gaylord, Kristen Mello, Madeline Calabrese, Cheryl Crowe, Kathleen Hillman and Frank Spósito (Crystal Miller did not attend)

City Council Communication if any:

1. Michael Tirrell welcomed Nicholas Morganelli who brought up outdoor sports and the state's Energy and Environmental Affairs website where ball players do not need to wear a mask outdoors when playing and Mass Gov. website has it kids can remove masks outdoors. Discussion was made and Robert Veronesi he responded that the MIAA sets the masks rules and they are still asking everyone to wear masks, umpires, children and adults when playing baseball or softball. Michael Tirrell said the schools follow the MIAA guidelines.

Business or Items for Discussion:

1. Michael Tirrell asked meeting attendees on the agenda if they wanted to speak up. Tina Gorman-Council on Aging Director voiced her concern in support of the Pride Flag and read a statement on LGBT and older members. Christopher Clark read a statement about LGBTQ month and went over

his life as a child and is in support of the Pride Flag. Kelly Simon went over her support of the Pride Flag and said Westfield welcomes new people to the city and by having the flag it will show that the community cares. Kelsey Emmett is in support of flying the Progress Pride Flag and said Westfield State students will be happy to see the support from the community. Kathy Bradford has lived in Westfield 40 years and said she is in support of the Pride Flag and there are a lot of elderly people that are members of the LGBTQ and just want to be accepted and Westfield is a great city of love and be loved to everyone. Dennis Aitkens went over his childhood and adult life and says people think suicidal thoughts or actually commit suicide because they don't feel welcomed or accepted when they are different. By flying the Pride Flag they will see it, be happy and feel they are accepted in Westfield. He said City Hall raised the Pride Flag last year and everyone was very pleased.

2. Michael Tirrell welcomed Cindy Gaylord, Chairperson Westfield Historic Commission. She thanked the commission and is here tonight requesting approval of an interpretive sign to be placed at Mechanic Street Cemetery that would have four legs and have a short description of prominent names in the cemetery. She showed a picture map and then held up her phone picture as an example. She said this new sign will help people by showing visibility location of prominent graves. The sign will go out to bid if the commission approves. She said a company out of Indian Orchard will build it and set it up in the Mechanic Street Cemetery.
3. Michael Tirrell thanked her and asked commissioners if they have any questions. Cindy Gaylord said they are excited about the project and they are paying from the ghost tours money they have each year. She also said they will clean the head stones in the fall.
4. Doug Morash asked about the timing of the project. Cindy Gaylord responded about three months and they hope to get it completed before fall and before the 2021 ghost tours.
5. Michael Tirrell asked if anyone had any questions and called out for a roll call vote.

Motion made by Vincent Olinski to approved the interpretive table style sign of prominent stones and installation as presented. Motion seconded by Robert Veronesi. Vote as follows: Sara Unger, yes, Jane DeBarbieri yes, Vincent Olinski yes, Robert Veronesi yes, Michael Tirrell yes, Douglas Morash yes, Kenneth and Magarian yes

Motion passed

6. Michael Tirrell welcomed Kristen Mello, City Councilor and Westfield Pride Alliance member requesting to place a 5'x8' Progress Pride Flag at Park Square for the month of June 1 through June 30.
7. Kristen Mello thanked Peggy Goralczyk from the department for the flag size information and stated that no one has ever asked to fly the Progress Pride Flag at Park Square. She thanked staff for communicating with her and is requesting to fly a 5'x 8' flag and have a prayer date when raising the flag. She went over the history of LGBTQ and said the letters stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer or Questioning. She explained the youth they get bullied, some have committed suicide, or think about it often, they get made fun of and are not accepted by family members as well. She said that for many years the gathering place has always been at Park Square for over 100 years. She said that City Hall allowed the Pride Flag last year and the Westfield Pride Alliance members received many compliments as being accepted in Westfield as a community. We want to send the message and give people hope and the Westfield State students that attend here we will make them feel accepted by all in the community and the LGBTQ in Westfield Pride Alliance members are reaching out for that support to them and by offering to fly the Progress Pride Flag at Park Square for a month would be a good way to spread that message of acceptance and honor them for the month of June.

8. Michael Tirrell asked if there were any questions and called for a roll call vote Kenneth Magarian said we have to follow the city policy and ordinance regarding flags.
9. Michael Tirrell said that he went through the city charter and could not find an ordinance with specific guidelines other than a metallic flag.
10. Nichols Morganelli responded that a request for gold ribbons at Park Square was denied a few years ago and he could not find any flag specifications or city ordinance on city property. They are listed for businesses and homes.
11. Michael Tirrell said it can't be larger than the US flag and that he is checking with city hall.
12. Kristen Mello responded that the US flag is 10'x15' and the Mass flag is 6'x10'. She said the size of the Pride Alliance flag is 5'x8'. She stated that no one has ever requested to display a flag at Park Square to her knowledge. She said banners are at Parker Memorial Park and are displayed all year round.
13. Sara Unger brought up banners requests are approved to put up day of event and taken down after the event. We have denied some banners because they were not appropriate. Her hesitation is if we approve for one we have to approve for all.
14. Michael Tirrell said he does not agree with that statement if we don't approve for one we don't approve for all he feels requests need to be equal. What is legal and what is illegal regarding to banners and flags. We do try to be consistent especially with banners and events because we don't want them vandalized.
15. Robert Veronesi responded we may get other requests for breast cancer month, prostate cancer, etc.
16. Kenneth Magarian asked what flag pole at Park Square. Kristen Mello responded there are two flag poles and whatever pole we approve she will be happy.
17. Michael Tirrell said that he will reach out to the Mayor with the specific guideline of flags on city property and request we have a special flag meeting next week with the update. He is requesting we table the flag request until after the special meeting. If city hall has flag guidelines then he will bring them back at the meeting after he talks to the Mayor.
18. Sara Unger responded we can't control who asks for permission and we need to see if there are rules at city hall and can we use those rules and are they appropriate as a guide for us to follow.
19. Michael Tirrell said city property parks would follow under the same ordinance and he will do a follow up due to the sensitivity of this and timeline.
20. Robert Veronesi said he is not in favor of flying the flag the whole month. Dennis Aitkens said June is pride month city and worldwide for all LGBTQ.
21. Kristen Mello responded she appreciates all the commission can do and can wait until after the special flag meeting.

Motion made by Kenneth Magarian to table request for Progress Pride flag until next meeting. Motion seconded by Robert Veronesi. Vote as follows: Sara Unger, yes, Jane DeBarbieri yes, Vincent Olinski yes, Robert Veronesi yes, Michael Tirrell yes, Douglas Morash yes, Kenneth and Magarian yes
Motion passed

22. Michael Tirrell brought up tree art sub-committee and said some were not able to attend due to Mother's Day and will reschedule.
23. Madeline Calabrese, Curator, Harold Grinspoon Sculptures and Cheryl Crowe regarding tree art. Discussion was made regarding the location at Gateway Park across from the 9/11 monument and if a revisit of the area might be a good idea. Possibly another spot where there is no irrigation for a In ground sculpture at that area. Madeline Calabrese said possibly Scott Hathaway could meet up with sub-committee members to see if irrigation is present and mark them or map out for installation. She could see if a free standing sculpture is available with Harold Grinspoon, he chose one for the planter like the other one as originally requested. She did say other businesses in Westfield have reached out to them for a tree art such as Westfield University and Mestek. One on each side of the city.
24. Madeline Calabrese went over the pictures of "Freedom" tree art and said that it is an in ground sculpture. It would be extra work for Mr. Grinspoon and costly to change it to a free standing form like the other location.
25. Cheryl Crowe responded that Westfield State University is excited for Mr. Grinspoon's tree art sculptures. She asked about how deep the rods go in the ground for the in ground sculpture. Madeline Calabrese responded about four feet.
26. Kenneth Magarian suggested the opposite side of the monument.
27. Robert Veronesi responded that he is not in favor of a tree art sculpture because it distracts the drivers.
28. Michael Tirrell said he will follow up with Scott Hathaway and is hesitant to approve any tree art and location until we meet again with sub-committee members. Possibly we can do a follow up next month have the tree art installation this summer.
29. Douglas Morash suggested we table it until the sub-committee members meet again and revisit areas.

Michael Tirrell called for a motion and rollcall vote: Motion made by Jane DeBarbieri to table the tree art sculpture until next meeting. Motion seconded by Douglas Morash. Vote as follows: Sara Unger, yes, Jane DeBarbieri yes, Vincent Olinski yes, Robert Veronesi yes, Michael Tirrell yes, Douglas Morash yes, Kenneth and Magarian yes

Motion passed

30. Michael Tirrell welcomed Kathleen Hillman who is interested in restoring the fountain at Women's Temperance Park and asked her to go over her request.
31. Kathleen Hillman thanked the commission and went over the history of the Women's Temperance fountain back in 1897. She showed a picture of the original fountain with two pieces of a top and bottom. She stated that the fountain does not work as a drinking fountain and she would like to find the other piece to it and restore it to working order. She said with the bike trail going in people can get a drink from the water fountain like they used to when it worked. She also said there is no sign of the park name Women's Temperance Park and not many parks are about women just men and she wants the park recognized by a sign and fix the fountain. She likes the bike trail signage with written history behind it.
32. Sara Unger said we have a certain type signage for all our parks and Kathleen can contact Jim Blascak.

33. Kathleen Hillman said she wants the sign to have the history listed on it like the Columbia Bike trail has to educate people. She has gone to Smith monuments to get an estimate but she needs approval from the commission first to restore it and add a sign. She said Mark Cressotti, Engineering dept. said it was a nice drinking fountain at one time.

Michael Tirrell went over his meeting he attended and has talked to Cindy Gaylord, Historic Commission Chairperson and this fountain is history in Westfield and potentially we can take the funds out of the Community Preservation fund and suggest we vote to proceed with the project. He told Kathleen Hillman to come back to another meeting when she has all her plans together. He called out for a roll call vote: Michael Tirrell called for a motion and rollcall vote:

Motion made by Kenneth Magarian to accept the request of Kathleen Hillman and a quote of repairing the Women's Temperance fountain with signage and the feasibility of restarting the fountain to working order and will revisit when Kathleen Hillman has more information. Motion seconded by Sara Unger. Vote as follows: Sara Unger, yes, Jane DeBarbieri yes, Vincent Olinski yes, Robert Veronesi yes, Michael Tirrell yes, Douglas Morash yes, Kenneth and Magarian yes
Motion passed

34. Michael Tirrell welcomed Frank Sposito requesting to place a banner at Park Square for the graduating students at the schools and asked him to go over it.
35. Frank Sposito thanked the commission and said last year the banner was posted at City Hall. He said the banner is 4 ft. x 12 ft. and he is requesting it up for two weeks at Park Square. No photos just names with congratulations to all students at Westfield High School, Technical Academy and St. Mary's High Schools. Frank is asking for May 29 and take down one week later.
36. Sara Unger brought up signs and how long it can be up and can we follow city hall guidelines.
37. Nichols Morganelli brought up city ordinance and we could amend banners for next year.
38. Michael Tirrell said he does not have a problem and to talk to Scott Hathaway of where he wants the banner to go and if there are posts in the ground and if anyone had any questions and called for a roll call vote:

Motion made by Jane DeBarbieri to approve graduation banner at Park Square as presented. Motion seconded by Douglas Morash. Vote as follows: Sara Unger, yes, Jane DeBarbieri yes, Vincent Olinski yes, Robert Veronesi yes, Michael Tirrell yes, Douglas Morash yes, Kenneth and Magarian yes
Motion passed

39. Kenneth Magarian asked that we put down on the agenda next month on the public participation speaking time since so many people went over their time tonight.

Schedule of bills-Michael Tirrell asked if everyone had a chance to go over them. (Emailed)

Reports-Emailed- He read both reports since staff was not in attendance.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 14 -Via zoom

Documents used:

Schedule of bills-Emailed

Staff Reports-Emailed

Pictures emailed
Banner picture Class 2021

Reviewed by Douglas Morash, Secretary of Commission

Typed organized by zoom video: Peggy Goralczyk, Head Clerk