

**Town of Needham
Board of Selectmen
Minutes for February 23, 2010
Needham Public Library**

6:45 p.m. Informal Session: No Activity

7:00 p.m. Call to Order:
A meeting of the Board of Selectmen was convened by Chairman Daniel P. Matthews. Those present were Gerald A. Wasserman, John A. Bulian, Denise C. Garlick, Maurice P. Handel, Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick, and Recording Secretary Mary Hunt.

7:00 p.m. Public Hearing: Removal of seven (7) Public Shade Trees located along Greendale Avenue from the driveway of the Henry T. Lane Rink to the main driveway of Saint Sebastian's School.

Mr. Lance Remsen, Tree Warden/Parks & Forestry Superintendent and Mr. David Miller, ASLA, LEED AP, Robert Olson & Associates representing Saint Sebastian's School appeared before the Board of Selectmen to discuss the removal of Public Shade Trees for the purpose of installing four light poles.

Mr. Matthews summarized the situation thus far, stating a petition was received by Mr. Remsen requesting removal of the seven trees. After reviewing the proposed project, Mr. Remsen said that he did not feel that the removal of the trees was warranted. Mr. Matthews stated that a compromise had been reached, and asked Mr. Miller to explain the newly revised design.

Mr. Miller stated the purpose of the project is to install new lighting and trees in the Greendale Avenue right-of-way east of the Hockey Rink. Mr. Miller also stated the proposed work at the rink site is part of a traffic-calming project developed to improve pedestrian safety and help drivers in the school zone along Greendale Avenue. Mr. Miller stated he and Mr. Remsen have agreed to the removal of a select number of trees, and some minor pruning to improve the openness of the campus entrance way.

Mr. Remsen reviewed the listing of trees for possible removal and stated that the agreed upon proposal allows for the removal of three (3) trees. Mr. Remsen stated the new proposal allows Saint Sebastian's to install the poles for lighting and keeps more trees in the area.

Mr. Matthews summarized the situation, stating the applicant originally applied for the removal of seven trees, but that an agreement has been reached in which three trees are to be removed, with additional trees planted. Mr. Matthews asked for comments from residents.

Marion Wasserman, resident, thanked Mr. Remsen for the changes made to the original plan. She stated she has lived near St. Sebastian's for 20 years and has seen many changes to the area over the years. She asked if the oak tree was going to stay, and Mr. Matthews confirmed that it would not be removed. Ms. Wasserman showed the Board photographs she took and asked why the largest pine tree needed to be removed.

Barbara Cross, resident of South Street, also thanked Mr. Remsen and stated his actions have put her mind at ease. She asked how long it would take for the new plantings to mature, and what type of lighting would be installed.

Mr. Miller stated the pine tree needed to be removed as it is close to the proposed lighting pole. He also commented the new hornbeams, to be planted at the bottom of the parking lot close to the cars, would grow 8 feet to ten feet in breadth, with a 3 ½ to 4 inch diameter, and are densely branched down to the ground. He stated it would take 10-12 years for the trees to mature and would be planted 17 feet on center. He commented the lighting is a Poulsen pole mounted fixture, 14ft high with a cut off laminar top. He commented the lighting schedule has not been set.

Ms. Wasserman commented on the placement of the hornbeams and asked why the light pole had to be placed in the spot of the largest pine tree? Mr. Miller stated the hornbeams will create a screen over time, and grow twelve to fourteen feet high to form a hedge. Mr. Remsen commented the pine tree is somewhat "squatty" at twenty feet tall and that this particular tree can not be pruned. He stated the oak trees are taller and the hornbeams to be planted would be shorter.

Mr. Matthews thanked everyone for their work on this issue.

**Motion by Mr. Bulian that the Board vote to approve the removal of three (3) Public Shade trees as outlined on Mr. Remsen's report.
Second: Mr. Wasserman. Unanimously approved 5-0.**

Consent Agenda:

Motion by Mr. Bulian that the Board of Selectmen vote to accept the Consent Agenda as presented.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approve One Day Special All Alcoholic Beverages license request from Patricia Hadge of St. Sebastian's School for an Alumni Reception and Dinner, on March 9, 2010 from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at 1191 Greendale Avenue, Birmingham Academic Building – Ward Hall, St. Sebastian's School, Needham.
2. Approve One Day Special All Alcoholic Beverages license requests from Patricia Hadge of St. Sebastian's School for an Alumni Reunion 2010, on March 14, 2010 from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and March 15,

2010 from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at 1191 Greendale Avenue, Birmingham Academic Building – Ward Hall, St. Sebastian’s School, Needham.

3. Approve One Day Special Wines & Malt Beverages Only license request from Jillian Erdos of Hillside Elementary School PTC for its March Madness Winter Social/Auction, to be held on March 20, 2010 from 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. at The Village Club, 83 Morton Street, Needham.
4. Approve One Day Special Wines & Malt Beverages Only license request from Anne Jarvis for a fundraiser to benefit the Avon Walk. This fundraiser will be held on April 3, 2010 from 7:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. at The Village Club, 83 Morton Street, Needham.
5. Approve One Day Special All Alcoholic Beverages license request from Rabbi Mendel Krinsky of Chabad Jewish Center for its Purim in the Palace event, to be held on February 28, 2010 from 4:30 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. at The Village Club, 83 Morton Street, Needham.

Second: Mr. Handel. Unanimously approved 5-0.

7:30 p.m. Public Hearing: Removal of (6) Trees on Town Property, between the asphalt roadway and the property line of 202 High Rock Street.

Mr. Lance Remsen, Tree Warden/Parks and Forest Superintendent and Mr. Anthony L. Del Gaizo, Town Engineer, representing the Department of Public Works, appeared before the Board requesting permission to remove (6) Public Shade Trees, which would be impacted by the proposed construction of the continuation of the High Rock Street sidewalk between Chestnut Street and Richardson Drive. The construction effort includes curbing, grass berm, and sidewalk.

Mr. Del Gaizo stated continuation of the sidewalk is part of the Chestnut Street rehabilitation project. Mr. Remsen stated the town tries to preserve trees where possible, and a sidewalk in this area will have minimal impact.

Mr. Matthews asked for public comment.

Mr. Matt Fogelman, 185 High Rock Street stated he is in support of the sidewalk project as it is currently unsafe to walk from Richardson Drive to Emerson Road and that High Rock Street is a busy road. He said the project is a positive development for the neighborhood.

Ms. Vicki Krupp, 50 Richardson Drive, agrees with the comments made by Mr. Fogelman, and said there are many dog walkers and runners in the neighborhood. She commented the corner at Richardson Drive is very dangerous due to its curve.

Motion by Mr. Wasserman that the Board vote to approve and sign the Public Shade Tree Hearing form for the removal of the (6) trees

between the asphalt roadway and the property line of 202 High Rock Street.

Second: Mr. Bulian. Unanimously approved 5-0.

7:40 p.m.

Town Manager:

Ms. Fitzpatrick appeared before the Board with 4 items for consideration:

1. Highland Avenue Turnback Project

Ms. Fitzpatrick updated the Board on recent developments concerning the reconstruction of the state-owned portion of Highland Avenue. Ms. Fitzpatrick said discussions with the state concerning this portion of the roadway go back 20 years. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated roadway improvements in this area, as well as the “add-a-lane” project on Route 128 will help in the rehabilitation of the NEBC. She noted that the newest plan departs from a plan developed previously that was reviewed with abutters. A date for a public hearing on the project has not been set, but will be posted accordingly on the Needham website.

2. Memorial Park Baseball Diamond

Ms. Fitzpatrick updated the Board on plans for improving the screening of the ball diamond at Memorial Park. She stated baseballs were not remaining in the park and that the town is working to address the issue before baseball season is well under way. She stated the town is planning to install more netting along the 1st and 3rd baselines, and extending the fencing along Highland Avenue.

Mr. Wasserman commented it is necessary to address the issue, but is concerned about the aesthetic look from Highland Avenue.

3. FY2011 Budget Update

Ms. Fitzpatrick updated the Board on the status of the fiscal year 2011 budget. She stated the Finance Committee transmitted its preliminary balanced budget on February 22, 2010, and will provide a final budget on March 15. She said that the balanced budget included no new head count, and no cost of living increases. She highlighted several additional items, and said more would be known by May. She summarized that while there is some discomfort in the budget, it is not as bad as some of the surrounding communities. Mr. Matthews thanked the Town Manager for the report.

4. Local Option to Change Demand Charge for Delinquent Taxes

Mr. David Davison, Assistant Town Manager/Director of Finance and Ms. Evelyn Poness, Treasurer/Collector appeared before the Board to discuss an increase in the demand fee for delinquent tax accounts. Mr. Davison stated that in 2008 the Commonwealth gave authorization to allow communities to increase the fee from \$5 up to \$30. Mr. Davison distributed a listing of demand fees for surrounding towns, some having adopted the increase and some that have taken no action. Mr. Davison commented that 62 towns have adopted an increased amount, with the

median in the \$15 range. Mr. Matthews stated it is the responsibility of the Board to recommend rather than set the amount, and asked how many demand notices are sent out annually. Ms. Poness said the town sends out approximately 3,200 notices annually. Mr. Wasserman feels a fee increase should not generate revenue for the town, but should encourage people to pay on time. Mr. Matthews agreed with Mr. Wasserman, and stated the amount should incent people to pay in a timely manner, and recover the cost of collection. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated the town is currently considering the amount of increase. Mr. Handel commented the penalty should be high enough to incent people to pay on time. Ms. Garlick asked how the town keeps track, and if help is offered to people unable to pay. Ms. Poness said after 3 letters are sent, and that both her office and the assessors office will reach out to those struggling to pay the bill.

8:05 p.m.

Board Discussion:

Needham Public Library

Mr. Bulian stated the Needham Public Library is in the process of updating and reviewing its five year strategic plan. As a member of the Strategic Planning Committee, Mr. Bulian asked residents to take part in the comprehensive on-line survey on the Town's website, available through the end of March. Hard copies of the survey are also available at the library.

Senior Center

Ms. Garlick updated the Board on the progress of the new Senior Center. She stated Bargmann Hendrie & Archetype has been chosen to begin feasibility on the three potential senior center sites. Ms. Garlick commented the matrix from Bargmann Hendrie & Archetype will allow the Town to look at the three potential sites and the pros and cons of each location. She stated the timeline is very aggressive. A feasibility report to the PPBC is anticipated by early June. Ms. Garlick stated a lot of information will be forthcoming and she will continue to update the Board. Ms. Garlick noted that the PPBC meetings are open to the public.

8:10 p.m.

Adjourn:

Motion by Mr. Bulian that the Board of Selectmen vote to adjourn the February 23, 2010 Needham Board of Selectmen meeting.

Second: Mr. Handel. Unanimously approved 5-0.