

# **TOWN OF RED HOOK RECREATION COMMISSION**

**7340 South Broadway, Red Hook, NY 12571**

**Phone: 845-758-4625 Fax: 845-758-5313**

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## **RECREATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**Monday, 12 October 2015**

Submitted by John D. Kuhn, Park and Programs Director

### **Website Updates**

Information on the Recreation Commission section of the Town of Red Hook Website is dated and requires change. A review of the site and possible additions considered.

### **Recreation Park Tree Trimming**

Qualified members of the Red Hook Tree Committee trimmed many of the trees at the park. Proper trimming promotes better tree development.

### **Park Perimeter Trees**

Park Staff is currently removing dead and damaged limbs from the trees along the west border of the park. They are also removing the multitude of maple trees that have grown underneath the pines that will become a problem later on. Brush piles under the trees that can become fire hazards will also be removed. The areas beneath the trees will be mowed to discourage poison ivy and weed growth. This is a major project that takes time and patience.

### **Recreation Park Rules**

The Park Rules are due for review. Copies are attached to this report for your convenience. Any changes, additions, or deletions can be updated on the Town of Red Hook Website.

### **Central Hudson Tree Trimming**

I met with the Central Hudson Forester Peter J. McFarland at the Recreation Park to discuss the trimming of the trees by Lewis Tree Service at the Park Entrance. He did provide a very thorough explanation of the Central Hudson approach to line clearing that made sense but certainly was not satisfying from an aesthetic point of view. He further explained that if more than 2/3 of a limb is removed, it should be cut back to the trunk. This was not always done by Lewis Tree Service and that contributed to the alarming appearance of the maple by the Park Entrance. The unfortunate fact remains that trees encroaching upon the power lines must often be trimmed in ways that make them unsightly. More care taken when trees are selected and planted for canopy and mature height can do much to avoid these problems in the future.

### **Tulip Tree by Recreation Park Sign**

While Peter J. McFarland was at the Recreation Park, he agreed to provide a free professional evaluation of the trees in and around the entrance and sign. One of his observations was that the tulip tree on the north side of the Park Sign is too close to the mature maple. The tulip tree is already growing at an angle away from the maple that will only become more pronounced over time. McFarland noted that tulip trees are the tallest hardwood trees in eastern North America reaching 200 feet in height with a canopy of 50 feet. Also known as yellow poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) this tree should be planted where it does not compromise other trees and can grow without restriction. In its location the tulip tree will not grow properly and will also compromise the well-being of the existing mature maple. McFarland recommended removing the

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tulip tree now before it becomes an even bigger problem. I must say that his explanation was compelling, and I believe we should follow his recommendation.

## **Plaques on Posts by Recreation Park Sign**

The plaques on posts and covered with Lexan are not weathering well. The covers are discolored and scratched, and the bases are water-damaged. We have replaced the backer boards twice, but because they are nearly flat they just don't last. I propose that we move the plaques to the Recreation Park sign and remove the posts.

## **Donald Whipple Service Recognition**

Don Whipple worked at the Recreation Park for 25 years. His conscientious work at the park contributed in a major way to its success. The Recreation Commission may want to consider recognizing Don Whipple's contribution and years of service.

## **Tree Guards**

Deer are damaging the young trees at the park. Agway sells tree guards for \$13.00 per pack of 12.

## **Linden Avenue Bridge**

The Linden Avenue Bridge is now closed to all but pedestrian and bike traffic. We can still use the bridge for running and I biking event routes. Dutchess County DOT moved the concrete barriers for us to accommodate the Catch-A--Rae Run and will do so again upon request for other events. Walkers, runners and bikers continue to come to the Recreation Park via Linden Avenue every day. We periodically clean off the road and sidewalk of accumulated debris to make the route safer for all.

## **Wetlands Mitigation Project at Recreation Park Extension**

D.J. Vosburgh Enterprises, LLC completed their portion of the project last week. Now we must purchase and plant 15 Autumn Blaze Maples, 7 Spicebush, 20 Winterberry, and 20 Pussy Willow shrubs. I ordered the maples from Schichtel's Nursery. They will arrive mid-morning on Wednesday, 4 November 2015. We will plant them as soon as possible. I ordered the shrubs from Northern Nurseries, Inc., a wholesale supplier in Schenectady. The trees must be staked, and the shrubs may require some protection from deer and insects. I am looking into what will be required to protect the plantings. All will require watering.

## **Equipment Service**

As the mowing season winds down, we have begun the servicing of all equipment. This will be an ongoing process until the park closes in November.

## **South Parking Lot Light**

This light is not working yet again! This is the third time in three years that this light has gone out. We have replaced both ballasts and bulbs in this light. It may be time to consider replacement with a more reliable fixture.

## **Tennis Court Lights**

The southwest tennis court light is out. This is the same one that failed last year. In the spring this will have to be addressed.

## **Basketball Court Lights**

After studying the lighting panel for the Basketball Court, Howard Callies determined that the problem with the lights is simply someone turning off the

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switch located outside the control box. Why is this switch necessary? Once turned off the lights will not come on again even if the switch is turned back on. Howie suggests that this switch be removed unless there is a compelling reason for it to be there.

## **Ball Field and Tennis Court Lights**

Problems still exist. The south west light on the tennis court is out again. The ball field lights lack enough lumens to prevent dark areas in the outfield. The Over-40 Softball League will donate toward the cost of adding a fourth light to each outfield pole. I am researching the cost of doing this with Red Hook Electric. Lighting repairs and installations tend to be expensive. Stanford Line Construction came in with a bucket truck and repaired two lights on the Tennis Courts and one light on the Middle Field. One Tennis Court light had shorted out and required wiring repair. They also adjusted the light on the Middle Field after replacing the 1000-watt bulb. The total cost was \$640.00. Again, this is one of the subtle costs of Rec Park maintenance.

## **Pavilion Roof**

As noted previously the Pavilion Roof is leaking and delaminating the plywood ceiling. The obvious spots on the roof have been repaired, but the leaks continue. It may simply be that the shingles have lost integrity. The roof is about 25 years old. I recommend that this roof be replaced next year and that the cost be included in the maintenance budget for 2016 or approved at a Parklands Funds Capital Improvement Expense.

## **North Field Third-Base Dugout Roof**

This is the last dugout roof left to replace. It is scheduled for this month!

## **Maintenance Building Roof**

The roof on the Maintenance Building requires replacement. I believe that this smaller roof can be done by the park staff. I will get an estimate done for shingles, ice shield, nails, drip edge, etc., but I think there will be enough money in the 2015 maintenance budget to cover the project. This is still on the agenda for this fall!

## **Rahn Groomer Actuator**

The actuator that raises and lowers the groomer on the back of the John Deere Gator failed after over ten years. This is a major problem since fields are groomed every day. I ordered a new actuator and sent the broken out to be rebuilt. I have not heard from them yet despite repeated emails as recent as Friday, 9 October. We need to have a backup actuator on hand at all times.

## **Inter-Municipal Agreement with RHCS D**

The current agreement expires on 31 December 2015. Harry Colgan, Doug Strawinski, and I met with representative from the RHCS D to discuss the terms of a new agreement. The town's position was clearly defined and supported with documentation. We have not heard back from the RHCS D as of yet. Ann Conway is beginning 2016 budget preparation, and she would like to know what paid fees she can expect from the RHCS D.

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## **Fall Flag Football**

The fields were lined by the Knight of Columbus. Practices and games began last week. The season ends 14 November 2015.

## **Fall Baseball**

Joe Berry is running the fall baseball team. Practices and games on the Baseball Field end 14 November 2015.

## **Fall Softball**

Brian Kent is running the Girls' Softball Majors (ages 11-12) for the Red Hook team. Practices and games have started with the last home game scheduled for Saturday, 7 November.

## **Men's Basketball League**

This league ended in August. Director Kevin Moul paid the Recreation Usage Fee of \$675.00 on 18 August 2015. I watched many games this past season, and I can attest to quality play and good sportsmanship. Kevin Moul just completed his 25<sup>th</sup> year as the director of this program.

## **Baseball Field Pitcher's Mound Project**

We continue to try different approaches to improve the area in front of the mound. After all the work and grass seeding, someone pitched batting practice in front of the mound and destroyed all the work done. Now that practices and games are going on nearly every day, we will just have to live with conditions as they are until play ends.

## **Film Project at Roller Hockey Rink/Skate Park**

Rescheduled to Thursday, 17 September the film crew arrived at the Recreation Park at 7:00 a.m. and concluded around 6:00 p.m. Several large equipment trucks, a catering truck, and over 30 actors, directors, and technicians were on scene. I was told that one of the actresses had a significant part in the *Hunger Games* film. This is the same group that filmed last year. An Insurance Certificate for the filming is on file at the Town Hall.

## **Red Hook on Ice at St. Margaret's Home or the Recreation Park Rink**

Supervisor Crane has requested that the Recreation Commission review this proposed project. Many issues come into play with this proposal that requires careful study and consideration and the Supervisor wants the Recreation Commission involved in the decision-making process. A possible alternative could be the Roller Rink at the Recreation Park with some careful study and planning.

## **Volleyball Nets**

I ordered new nets at a cost of \$250.00. The old nets were not vandalized for over five years of use. Hopefully the new nets will be left alone.

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## **Green Stuff in Hudson River**

After receiving inquiries about the “green stuff” that appeared in the Hudson River the last few weeks from those concerned about recreational safety, I contacted Dr. Erik Kiviat at Bard College for a definitive answer. His reply is as follows:

Dear John,

Thank you for the question. I've received several questions and comments about this, and I observed it a week ago from the Kingston Bridge.

Based on the color and some other knowledge, I'm sure it's mostly duckweeds, with a mixture of dead water-chestnut material and probably some algae, dust, and so on. The yellow-green color is typical of duckweed.

Duckweeds build up among the water-chestnut leaves on quiet coves of the river, and on ponds, and when the water-chestnut is decaying the duckweed washes out into the river. Because it was very dry and then there were a couple of big rains, the duckweed etc. would have washed out in a larger more sudden plume than usual.

I am confident this is not a pollution event or something else hazardous.

Best wishes,

Erik

This information was passed on to those concerned. It is convenient and fortunate to have the resources of Bard College available to answer questions like this.

## **Recreation Park Extension**

We have begun the annual “bush hogging” of the site to prevent losing the progress made so far clearing the land. Locust trees other sorts of shrubs and brambles threaten to repopulate the entire site and grow at an amazing rate.

## **Cross-Country Skiing at the Recreation Park Extension**

If this is offered the North Parking Lot will have to be plowed for parking since to no one can park on the Rec Park Extension Site without a Dutchess County approved entrance and exit.

## **Aspinwall Access**

Three culverts were installed and tailings and Crushed Stone Item #4 were placed on the trail. We may need an additional 15+ tons of Item #4. Howard Callies and the Greenway and Trails Committee are managing this project.

## **St. Margaret's Home Interim Maintenance Report**

I can email a copy to anyone interested in this report.