

RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING
SEPTEMBER 11, 2002

I. Call TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

A meeting of the Town of Palm Beach Recreation Advisory Commission was held on September 11, 2002, at the Recreation Center. The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Gail Coniglio, Chairperson at 10:00 a.m. Commission members in attendance were Mrs. Coniglio, Mr. Gavigan, Mr. Gross, Mr. Ochstein, Mr. Spaziani and Mr. Shulman. Alternate members in attendance were Mr. Bone and Mr. Fishman. Absent from the meeting were Mrs. Morris and Mrs. Agnello. Staff members in attendance were Mr. Bitzer, Mr. Brown and Mrs. Walkowich

II. WELCOME NEW MEMBERS - Mrs. Coniglio congratulated Mr. Spaziani on his appointment to a regular member and Mr. Bone on his appointment to alternate member.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Mrs. Coniglio asked for a motion for the approval of the agenda. Mr. Spaziani made the motion to approve the agenda. Seconded by Mr. Gross, all were in favor.

IV. APPROVAL OF MAY 15, 2002, MINUTES - Mrs. Coniglio asked for a motion to approve the May 15, 2002, minutes. Mr. Gavigan made the motion to approve the minutes. Seconded by Mr. Gross, all were in favor.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. **Palm Beach Public School Building Project Update**

Mr. Bitzer reviewed the Palm Beach Public School Building Project and reminded the commission members of the workshop meeting on Tuesday, September 17, 2002, at 9:30 a.m.

Mr. Gross asked if the School Board would have to get permission from planning and zoning before they do any alterations to that building. Mr. Bitzer said that he thought there may be certain things that would have to get approved if variances or special exceptions were required. However, this would be a question for Building and Zoning.

Mrs. Coniglio recognized Mrs. Margie Lewandoski, a resident. Mrs. Lewandoski asked Mr. Bitzer if he was dealing with Mrs. Garrison from the school board about getting a copy of the plans. She asked if the school board had hired someone to do a traffic study and if so did that person ever contact the recreation staff. Mr. Bitzer said yes he had been dealing with Mrs. Garrison and that he had requested a plan. He said that to the best of his knowledge the School District did do a traffic study but that he was never contacted. Mr. Bitzer said that he was of the opinion that since the beginning of the planning process, parking and traffic were the key issues that were being addressed. Unfortunately, he didn't think that open green space was thought of as a priority early in the planning process.

Mrs. Lewandoski asked, "Where does the staff for the recreation center park?" Mr. Bitzer said that depending on the time of year, staff will park either on Seaview Ave or in the Royal Palm Municipal Parking lot, and during the busy season staff members park at the four arts library. He said that the four arts has given us some parking for employees so that we can provide more parking for our customers. Mrs. Lewandoski, asked if the Town ever rented parking spots for the staff. Mr. Bitzer said, "No."

Mr. Fishman said that he had a few issues to be brought up regarding the expansion of the school. He said that the expansion of the school facilities doesn't benefit the residents of Palm Beach with supposedly only 1 to 3% of resident children attending the school. Mr. Fishman said he would like to see a list of the names of the resident children who attend the school. He said that in his opinion this expansion issue was of enormous importance to the residence of Palm Beach, "Our wonderful recreation facilities and programs are really being threatened by this proposed school expansion." Mr. Fishman said that if the expansion is allowed, it's going to constitute not a minor but a significant infringement upon the high quality of life we enjoy in the Town.

He said that we already have parking and traffic problems around the recreation facility and there's enthusiasm for expanding the recreation facilities not having them down graded. Therefore there was no logical justification for permitting an encroachment on our recreational greenery, space and the tranquillity at the tennis courts.

Mr. Fishman said, "I believe it's incumbent upon the members of the Town Council and I think we have to express this, those who agree on this on Tuesday, to do the right thing and prevent this proposed action which is clearly not in the best interest of the residents."

Mr. Fishman said that the Town Council is charged with acting in the interests of the residents of the Town and the negatives of this proposal far out weigh any positives. Town Council should protect the residents. He said that Councilman McDonald had questioned if the school was Town serving. Mr. Fishman felt that it was not. He said, "Mayor Lesly Smith defended the school saying we jeopardize our heritage and legacy

if the school's moved off the island. My question is what does that mean. This isn't the Jefferson Memorial or the Liberty Bell, this is an antiquated school building and if only 1 percent of the children in Palm Beach go to that school why do we need it here. It would be nice to have maybe a library as part of the facilities here that could benefit all the children of the Town. I don't know if everybody realized the tremendous loss, of green space that this proposed expansion would constitute."

Mr. Fishman stated that he was very involved in the tennis program here at Seaview and that he volunteered to help coordinate a morning tennis group. He stated that parking was impossible now and would only be worse.

Mr. Fishman said that once this green space is gone it's gone forever. He said, "If the Town could buy these facilities from the school board, give an opportunity to expand, I think that would be welcomed by the Town residents and would benefit the children of the Town, that's the primary focus. We want to look out for our children for the present and the future. We want them to simultaneously be able to play soccer in one area, or lacrosse in one area, baseball in another area. Why should they have a tiny little field, it makes no sense and it doesn't benefit our children at all to have an expansion of the school.

To me there's no gray area in this proposal it's a slam dunk that an enhanced recreation situation would far out way any expansion of the school, and I feel that it can't be justified on any basis whatsoever."

Mr. Fishman said, "In closing, in my view there's a total imbalance of the negatives that would be caused by this expansion and it would be a blatant dis-service to the citizens of the Town for the Town Council to vote in favor of it."

Mr. Gross asked if there was another location the school could be moved to where the recreation center could have this entire property. Mrs. Coniglio said that, that was something that should be addressed next week since no one here could answer that question. Mr. Fishman said that it was not our problem. He said, "Were not saying the school has to leave, that's their option. We don't have the right to say leave, but we do have the right to say you can't expand, and hopefully they will decide to stay. But it's not our job to find them an alternate site."

Mr. Spaziani asked if the expansion is approved and we have to move the baseball field, who would be responsible for it's maintenance. Mrs. Coniglio said that the field would definitely have to be moved. Mr. Bitzer said that the recreation staff maintains and schedules use of the field.

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Mr. Gavigan said that at the last meeting the commission discussed this expansion at some length and that at that time the commission decided that it was not necessarily against the expansion of the school but how the expansion was going to effect the recreation facilities and to try to limit the expansion to less drastically effect the use of that space.

Mr. Fishman asked if that was in the minutes, that we wouldn't object to the expansion of the school and if the commission took a vote on that?

Mr Gavigan said that it was decided that it was not the commission's function to take a position whether the school should be there or not, whether it should move or whether it should expand. Our position was going to be that we would want to have input on and make suggestions, positive suggestions, to limit the invasion of green space.

Mr. Fishman said, "I respectfully disagree Jaime, if their encroaching at all on what's now recreation property that we own we have a right to object to the expansion. We can't tell them what to do on their property but they can't do this project without using some of our property."

Mrs. Coniglio said "I think the point that Jaime is making Ken is that it is not our decision as to whether they expand or not." Mr. Fishman said, "But we can object to it."

Mrs. Coniglio said that, we can object to the implementation of the scheduled expansion as to how it effects the recreation center, but they do have a right to expand to their property line, which at that point we lose our baseball field. She said that they are expanding on to their own property not on to Town property.

Mr. Fishman said, "But let me ask you this Gail, the Town Council has the right to approve or dis-approve the expansion on no matter whose property? If we feel or if any individual feels that this expansion would adversely effect the recreation program for the children and adults of Palm Beach, shouldn't that person be allowed to argue that, that would be a negative for the recreation program and the expansion shouldn't happen?"

Mrs. Coniglio, said she agreed, but that the commission is not dealing with that and our motion was: "The commission is totally, vehemently opposed to the current conceptual expansion of the public school, the motion passed unanimously". Mr. Gavigan said that the commission was totally against the current conceptual plan of the expansion of the school and pointed out that at that time the commission still had not been given the plans. Mr. Fishman said, "And we still haven't." Mrs. Coniglio said, "And that is what I find most disappointing."

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Mr. Gavigan said that the school has a lot of property and if they build up to that property line we lose a lot of green space and worst than that they are still going to use these facilities, and they are going to want to use the field and that field already has a heavy use.

Mr. Gross said that the commission should wait until they see the plans before making a decision. Mr. Fishman said, "Well isn't it convenient that they are not showing the plan or giving it to anybody until the 17th. Wouldn't you think that everyone should see the plan ahead of time." Mrs. Coniglio said "And as a commission we have repeatedly asked for those plans, subsequent to the last meeting, Russ and I have asked repeatedly for those plans."

Mr. Bitzer said that he had contacted the school district representative for the project on August 6, 2002, requesting a copy of the plan so that the commission would have an opportunity to review it. The school district said that they would not be releasing the plan until after September 12, 2002. He said that he was going to call the school district on Friday, and if we can get the plan, we will pick it up and it will be in his office if any of the commissioners wanted to review it.

Mr. Gavigan asked if the meeting on the 17th was just a presentation or will a vote be taken. Mrs. Coniglio said that she understood that it was a workshop and presentation. Mrs. Walkowich read from a copy of the letter sent to the commission from Mr. Elwell dated August 9, 2002, "The purpose of the workshop will be to conduct a conceptual review of the revised site plan for the replacement of the Palm Beach Public School facilities, it is my understanding that the school district staff and consultants will further revise the site plan as needed following the work shop and then officially transmit the proposed plans to the Town for formal review and action."

Mr. Bone said that after reading the minutes of the last meeting it is was his impression that the commission was divided on the specific question as to whether the school should remain. There was however unanimous opinion that an expansion would effect the recreation facilities negatively. He asked, "Did we decline to take a vote on whether the school should remain in the Town because we felt that it was not the position of the commission or because it was one of those things that we were so divided on." Mrs. Coniglio said that it really was not a decision for the commission to make.

Mrs. Coniglio said that the questions we have raised today are the same ones that were raised at the last meeting. She said that it was a terrible disappointment that the Town Council had made no effort to contact the commission that actually works with them for the benefit of the town residents. She said, "I hope that all of us will attend the September 17th meeting. It is my belief that at this point we will carry more clout than any appointed or salaried employee

of the Town of Palm Beach and I think its very important that we talk not only with the Day School people and our neighbors, but with any resident that might have some opinion on this.

Mrs. Coniglio recognized Mrs. Lynn George, a resident. Mrs. George said, "I am impacted by my attempted use of this facility, I gave the first contribution to build it and I intend to use it until I see myself out, and I don't have parking that is available to me during the season and I can't get here, it's impossible. So my question is, about the things that you raised that I really didn't consider, are there any pertinent contracts that the Town will be required to give to the school before they are willing to put their facility here. As far as use of this or is it grand-fathered in so to speak that they will automatically have the use of this field. Where is the tennis group that should have objections to this for their parking or did we give them specified parking for the tennis teams over here."

Mr. Fishman said that there is no specific parking, parking is already impossible extremely difficult it's inadequate and can only get worse. Mrs. George said, "But where are those objections and voices from those tennis people. Mr. Spaziani said, "He's it, he's representing the tennis players." referring to Mr. Fishman.

Mrs. George asked how may people are required to go to that school to make it Town serving and was that a requirement. Mrs. Coniglio said that she didn't think it was a requirement. Mrs. George asked, "Must we give them a contract before they can build this for the continued use of this property or are they grand-fathered in?"

Mr. Bitzer said that the Town has a joint use agreement with the Day School and Public School. Mrs. George asked if is it was one sided or is it double faced, if they are required to let us use their baseball field. Mr. Bitzer said that the agreement basically allows them to use our property and us to use their property because our properties merge together and are jointly shared. Each agency accepts liability for the activities they are conducting. Mrs George said, "So then our joint use impact will not be joint use anymore. It will be a one way street because we will not have use of their property anymore because of the expansion."

Mr. Gavigan said that, if the school board can't do this expansion and they are considering not being here, the position we should take as a committee is that we would want the land for the recreation department. Mrs. Coniglio said that this item had been addressed in a motion at the last meeting. Mr. Fishman said "That's another reason why we should take the stance against the expansion and maybe we could get this property to expand the recreation facilities, have adequate parking, improve the traffic situation, and improve the facilities for the kids."

Mrs. Lewandoski said that it was her understanding from newspaper articles, that the current school does not meet state regulations and so that if they can't do this improvement the state

will close the school. She said that the state would be obligated to put the property up for bid, they cannot just put the property on the market because it's government property.

Mrs. Coniglio asked if there were any other comments. Mr. Gavigan said that the point Mrs. Lewandoski made scared him and said that if the property does go to open bidding anyone could purchase that property. Mr. Fishman said that the zoning would effect what could be built on the property. Mr. Bone said, "Can't the Town zone the property now so that it could only be used for school or recreational use?"

Mr. Brown said that the property was zoned RB, residential low density, and according to the building department, in order to change that it would have to be done during the normal zoning schedule. They said the first thing that would be required would be an amendment to the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Bone made the motion that the Town take steps to zone that property that is currently being used as a public school for limited use to be only recreational or its current use that is a school. Seconded by Mr. Fishman. After some discussion the motion was changed to read; that the Town Council take immediate steps to change the zoning of the property contiguous to the recreation center so that it's future use is limited for recreational use. All were in favor, motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Coniglio reviewed the issues to be brought forth at the September 17th meeting. They were as follows: the existing parking problems and the effect this expansion will have on increasing these problems, the safety of the children, the increase in traffic and congestion, the loss of green space, the loss of the baseball field, the reduced joint use agreement, first right of refusal on the property and the zoning issue, the pavilion location and the creation of more noise and it's infringement on the tennis facility. The commissioners agreed that Mrs. Coniglio should speak for the commission at the September 17th meeting reiterating that the commission is against the current conceptional plan for the expansion of the public school for the reasons that Mrs. Coniglio had just mentioned.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. **2003 Meeting Schedule** - (The schedule is attached) Mr. Gross made the motion to keep the meetings as they are currently scheduled. Seconded by Mr. Bone, all were in favor.
- B. **Fall Program Report** - Mrs. Coniglio asked the commission if they had all received a copy of the program report. She asked for a motion to accept the report into the minutes. Mr. Spaziani made the motion to accept the program report, seconded by Mr. Ochstein all were in favor. (This report is attached.)

(Recreation Advisory Commission Meeting - 9/11/02)

VII. ANY OTHER MATTERS

Mr. Gross said that there was a mention of additional tennis facilities at the south end of Town and I understand that there were going to be additional courts put up at the end of this year. Mr. Bitzer said that no additional courts are budgeted for this year. However, the tennis pavilion and shop should be completed by the end of the month. He said that the facility currently has three courts and when completed, it will be a wonderful addition to the Town's recreation facilities.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
Record of Attendance 2002

<u>Regular Members</u>	1/9	3/13	5/15	9/11	11/13
Gail Coniglio	P	P	P	P	
James Gavigan	E (legal)	E (legal)	P	P	
Arthur Gross	P	P	P	P	
Eileen Morris	P	E (illness)	P	E (illness)	
Larry Ochstein	E (illness)	P	P	P	
Michael Spaziani	E (illness)	P	P	P	
Stuart Shulman	P	P	E (illness)	P	
<u>Alternate Members</u>					
Milissa Agnello	P	P	P	E (illness)	
Bill Bone				P	
Ken Fishman	P	P	P	P	

LEGEND: P = Present
 E = Excused
 U = Unexcused
 A = Absent Pending Classification as "Excused" or "Unexcused"

RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
Conflict of Interest Record 2002

<u>Regular Members</u>	1/9	3/13	5/15	9/11	11/13
Gail Coniglio					
James Gavigan					
Arthur Gross					
Eileen Morris					
Larry Ochstein					
Michael Spaziani					
Stuart Shulman					
<u>Alternate Members</u>					
Milissa Agnello					
Bill Bone					
Ken Fishman					

LEGEND: X = Conflict of Interest

Program Report
Recreation Advisory Commission Meeting
Wednesday, September 11, 2002

Youth & Adult Programs

- Summer Camp was again a great success! We held camp for three age groups - K - 7 year olds (Dolphins), 8 - 11 year olds (Stingrays), and 12 - 15 year olds (Club Teen). The Stingrays were at capacity each of the 8 weeks and the Dolphins and Club Teen were at near capacity. The kids had a safe and fun time with some creative thinking to make up for all the rainy days that kept them inside or curtailed their field trips.
- Fall Youth Programs have started. We have 19 classes scheduled this session. The two popular pre-school programs, Gymboree and Kindermusik, have made some changes to enhance their offerings. Gymboree is moving to Tuesdays from Thursdays, allowing one of the most popular Gymboree instructors to lead the program here at the Recreation Center. Kindermusik has made changes that will allow more of the fun learning lessons to be taught at home in the Our Time (1 ½ to 3 ½ year olds) and Imagine That! (3 - 5 year olds) classes.
- Several Fall Adult Programs have started and most will begin in October and November. We will be offering 18 adult classes this session. Two new classes will focus on emotional self-improvement: Happiness 101 and Joy Can Return: Reflection on Widowhood.

After School Program & Holiday Camps

- The After School Program began on Wednesday, August 14. We are adding enrichment opportunities for the participants by bringing in various entertainment (educational and fun) and planning some field trips (educational and fun). Winter Holiday Camp will take place December 23 - 27, 2002 and December 30, 2002 - January 3, 2003 with the Recreation Center being closed on December 25, 2002 and January 1, 2003, both Wednesdays. Registration begins November 18 for Residents and December 9 for Non-Residents.

Athletics

- Our fall athletic schedule kicks off with Flag Football beginning on September 4th for children from ages 6 to 11. Our ever popular Itty Bitty sports program will begin on September 26th. As usual we are nearly at capacity for that program. These programs will be followed by our most popular sport, Soccer, beginning on October 20th. Last year we had over 150 participants and it looks like we will equal that again this year if early registrations are any indication.

Tennis

- The summer junior clinics were run for 12 weeks with a total of 329 participants. This program is sponsored by the Palm Beach Tennis Association and was a great success again this year.
- The popular Tuesday night Doubles Mixer, organized by Linda McDonald, part time Registration Clerk, was run throughout the summer and will continue to be offered weekly. The time is from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
- Our Women's League teams are now preparing for the start of their 2002/2003 season. Matches begin the last week of September. We have 4 teams - A2, A3, B2 & B3. Each team has 16 to 20 players.
- At the Phipps Ocean Park Tennis Center, Rose Carnicelli, Facility Supervisor, has been running morning round robins that have been very well attended. These will continue to be offered in the Fall.
- UP COMING EVENTS: (Seaview)
 - Parent / Child Round Robin - September 28th
 - North County Tennis Assoc. Tournament - Oct. 19th & 20st
 - Town Junior Singles Championships - Nov. 16th & 17th
 - Town Senior Singles Championships - Dec. 6th - 8th
 - Holiday Doubles Mixer - December 13th

Golf

- Revenues through July 31st are \$630,971 compared to \$674,045 last year. We look for the revenue outlook to greatly improve as tourism and the economy recover.
- The golf course conditions are excellent and the turf is very healthy as we approach the 2002-2003 season.
- Course Improvements:
 - A. Leveling of Driving Range.
 - B. Regrading and sodding area right of #3 fairway
 - C. Improved numerous tee boxes.

Special Events

Our annual Halloween Happenings event is scheduled for Thursday, October 31, 2002, from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. and **you are invited!** This is a family-oriented, fun event. There will be games, mini-midways, bounce houses and tons of prizes and candy, not to mention all the kids and their costumes. If any of you wish to volunteer that evening please contact Rod Gardiner who will be coordinating the event.

September 1, 2002

2003

Recreation Advisory Commission Meeting Schedule

(Meetings are held the Recreation Center at 9:00 a.m.)

Wednesday, January 15, 2003

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Wednesday, May 14, 2003

Wednesday, September 10, 2003

Wednesday, November 12, 2003

NOTE: Disabled persons who need an accommodation in order to participate in this meeting are requested to contact the Recreation Department at 838-5485 or through the Florida Relay Service by dialing 1-800-955-8770 for voice callers or 1-800-955-8771 for TDD callers, at least (5) working days before this meeting.