



## ***Parks & Recreation Committee - Board of Representatives***

Jennifer Matheny, Chair

Daniel R. Sandford, Vice Chair

# **Committee Report**

**Date:** Thursday, November 30, 2023  
**Time:** 7:00 p.m.  
**Place:** This meeting was held remotely

The Parks & Recreation Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Chair Matheny and Committee Member Reps. de la Cruz, and Weinberg. Also in attendance were Reps. Adams and Tomas; Lou Casolo, Engineering Dept.; Matthew Quiñones, Director of Operations; Kevin Murray, Director of Parks & Recreation; Erin McKenna, Planning Dept.; Melanie Hollis and Mike Tedder, Parks & Recreation Commission; Gregory Kramer, Darrin Wigglesworth, and Joseph Siciliano.

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Committee Action</b>
1. <a href="#">PR31.028</a>	REVIEW; Proposed Scalzi Park Bocce Court Reconstruction Plan, along with Associated Costs. 10/04/23 – Submitted by Reps. Matheny and Tomas	<b>Report Made</b>

Mr. Casolo discussed the cost proposal received by SLR, the consultant chosen to facilitate the design of the bocce court renovations. SLR's contract includes construction support services after the job is bid and awarded during the project. He feels that there isn't enough funding in the capital account to complete the project.

The current condition of the bocce court was discussed as being insufficient in regulation size. A more durable rot resistant material was confirmed as a replacement for the deteriorated court. The drainage system and lighting will also be replaced, and benches will be added to the court.

The preliminary funding estimate that was prepared by SLR exceeds what is in the capital budget. Mr. Murray requested additional funding through the capital budget process and the true cost of the project will not be known until the project is publicly bid. Details regarding the project will be available through the City's purchasing software, Procurement.

Mr. Murray confirmed there's approximately \$460,000 of funding that was approved last year and is not bonded as of yet. In response to Rep. Weinberg, Mr. Murray suggested ways of cutting costs such as reducing the number of benches, keeping the chain link fence, and allowing the Parks Dept. to perform some of the project demolition, all of which could save around \$130,000.

In researching previous bids, Mr. Casolo concluded that the six-inch HDPE piping which costs \$40 per linear foot is in line with other public bids. Unit pricing for the benches is \$3,000 each, which is half the cost of the benches for the Mill River Trail extension project. The light poles replacing the current lighting are \$5,000 each which is in line with the cost of the City street light poles and the lighting for the Mill River Trail project as well.

To Rep. Weinberg's concern regarding the expensive cost of the benches and lighting, Mr. Casolo pointed out the benches and lighting are commercial quality that is specialized for city infrastructure projects and are not residential quality. Rep. de la Cruz questioned if solar panels were considered for the lighting. Mr. Casolo confirmed that solar was not in the project scope and that LEDs will be used due to the need for consistent lighting.

Rep. Tomas questioned if the project could be completed in phases. Mr. Casolo explained that project phasing increases the cost of a project. Director Quiñones mentioned that a more streamlined process to facilitate contributions from a private sector for different projects is a possibility. Lou also discussed that while current construction and design contingency percentages may be higher now, as the project moves into construction, those percentages usually decrease or are redirected as the unforeseen issues begin to lessen.

Chair Matheny questioned the possibility of separating the construction costs of the RFP from the more tangible costs such as the benches in order to increase the opportunities to receive private money.

Ms. Hollas inquired about how the park projects are prioritized, noting that both the bocce and tennis court project may not be funded. Director Quiñones explained that the overall cost of each project determines the priority, not the capital budget.

2. PR31.027      REVIEW; Arrangements with the Town of Greenwich for Shared Parks, Covering Maintenance, Pesticide Use, Invasive Species Removal, Capital Improvements, Use Permit Requirements, Insurance, Ordinances, and Law Enforcement.  
08/09/23 – Submitted by Rep. de la Cruz  
08/14/23 – Moved to Pending

**Report Made**

Ms. McKenna confirmed that the shared parks (Mianus River Park and Rosa Hartman Park) are in the park strategic plan. Both parks are passive use parks and therefore managed differently. There is no formal management agreement in place between Stamford and Greenwich with regards to Rosa Hartman Park.

In 2006, Stamford and Greenwich created a management plan for Mianus River Park. It was funded with a Connecticut Recreational Trails grant. Current funding is provided through the efforts of the Friends of Mianus River Park, a non-profit organization that also works with Mr. Kramer and the city of Greenwich to manage and maintain the park.

The Friends of Binney Park are working on facilitating the creation of a path to connect both Binney Park and Rosa Hartman Park.

Rep. de la Cruz questioned if Mianus River Park and Rosa Hartman Park were included in the tree inventory project and the tree planting project. Ms. McKenna confirmed that the tree inventory project is for the entire city and will include as many parks as possible. She informed that the tree planting project is for the environmental justice neighborhoods that sit below Interstate 95. Similarly, Greenwich is in their third year of their tree inventorying program.

Mr. Kramer confirmed that Greenwich uses only organic nontoxic applications in their parks. Rep. de la Cruz suggested that having a formal agreement between Stamford and Greenwich in regards to maintaining the shared parks would be beneficial. Mr. Kramer agreed that having and adhering to a schedule or maintenance plan would be helpful as well.

Rep. de la Cruz made a motion to recommit Item No. 2 to Steering but a vote could not be taken because there was not a quorum. Chair Matheny will speak to the Board Office regarding keeping Item No. 2 as a pending item.

Chair Matheny adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jennifer Matheny, Chair

This meeting is on [video](#)