

## Playground Committee Meeting, January 2015

In attendance: Dela Bryan, Dave Nordheimer, Mick Fitzharris, Jeff Politis, Jim Laurino  
visitor- Bill Theis

Jim Laurino opened with the fact that in March we will need more 3 people to run on this committee. We discussed who is willing to stay on for another term.

1. We presently have a challenge. How do we keep playgrounds safe without a budget?
2. Equipment needs: new bearings, swing seats, paint and mulch.  
Spray paint is less expensive and easier to apply.
3. Jim looked into the cost of playground mulch if a new traditional slide is installed. The decision to use mulch for protection is estimated to cost the town, in today's dollars, almost six times the initial cost of the mulch, due to the cost of maintaining the mulch over the life of the slide. This cost will be born entirely by the town, unlike the installation cost of the slide, where the state will pay half.
4. We are proposing:  
  
To place a beautiful terrain slide on the green that:  
will be safer than a standalone slide.  
will be less expensive to maintain, since it does not require a mulch bed,  
and will be fun for all generations.
5. We discussed where to place this natural slide. We agree near the path from the Craft shop, about 20 feet away from Cherry Lane, where the base will lay several feet below the level of the road. We all agreed on a gentle slope/rise that will be safe and inconspicuous.
6. The Wilmington Montessori School on Harvey Road has a small terrain slide. We looked at pictures of it and agreed that it gives an idea of what we are proposing for the Green.
7. It is important that there is a direct sight line from the bench. The steps ideally can be placed on the Miller Road side of the terrain.
8. Talking points:
  1. Safer than a standalone slide. If children fall off then they simply roll down the hill.
  2. Less expensive in the long run. An initial discussion indicated that this would not increase the greens maintenance cost. Jeffrey will touch base with S. Van Neerdan to confirm now that we have a better visual.

3. More fun. Earlier the Arden Green had a tennis court in this area. We want to make the Green a beautiful, fun place to visit for everyone.
4. In order for a new standalone slide to not have a negative impact on the surrounding trees, it would need to be moved from the old location. We believe that it would look odd in the middle of the green.
9. We discussed funding sources. We believe that half would come from the state. The rest would be made up of a combination of fund raising/donations and town funds. Our focus is to limit land rent impact.
10. Jeff Politis said he will contact the Montessori school to find out other companies that bid on the design of their terrain slide, who might bid for this work.
11. It was suggested by a resident that we come to the town meeting with pictures in hand so that people can have a visual idea of what it is that we are proposing.
12. We discussed the possibility of using the steps from the old slide and having them embedded in the side of the hill. We will make sure that the insurance company is okay with this idea first.
13. We looked at pictures of terrain slides- found on the internet, and we revisited Ed Rorhbach's sketch.
14. We hope that the town will think about the slide as us keeping up with the latest trends in playground design. Everyone will enjoy it -- all age groups can walk up the side and enjoy sitting on a small hill - maybe even rolling down it. We think a terrain slide will be wonderful addition to our progressive and innovative community.
15. We hope to have an open meeting before the Town Meeting to iron out our proposal.
16. Bill Theis suggested that we could make a simple mock-up on the green to help us get a better sense of what a terrain slide would look like. We agreed to meet on the weekend and construct one.

Submitted by D. Bryan