

Nyack Parks Commission Minutes July 2021

Meeting Held July 27, 2021

Minutes taken by Jim Willcox

Park Commissioners present:

Jim Willcox
Carolyn Cairns
Marie Lorenzini

6:30 PM Meeting (in Memorial Park): Jim started off the meeting wanting to address the recent Facebook discussion about the removal of the eco dock from the marina parking lot.,

Jim recalled that the eco dock was originally built and placed in the marina close to a decade ago, after the River Rowing Association RRA, a not-for-profit rowing organization, found a NYS grant and helped the village to submit an application, which was granted. After installation, the dock was open to the public for any human-powered watercraft, but Jim believes the dock was mainly used (and maintained) by the RRA for rowing skulls.

During the construction of the new Tappan Zee/Mario Cuomo Bridge the RRA was asked to stop rowing near the bridge due to safety concerns, and relocated to Rockland Lake; the Nyack DPW pulled the eco dock from the river, and it sat for several years at the southwestern edge of the marina parking lot, next to a large dirt pile. Both the dock and the dirt pile taking up spaces in the marina parking lot have been the subject of concerns raised in past Parks Commission meetings.

Earlier this season, the RRA relocated the eco dock from the marina to Rockland Lake.

Recently, some residents have raised questions about the eco dock being removed from the marina and relocated to Rockland Lake, and concerns about the process and lack of community involvement in the decision.

The Parks Commission was not directly involved in the decision or relocation of the eco dock. Carolyn believes the Village Board exhibited a lack of clear process and transparency in disposing of the dock, both with the public and the Parks Commission. She said it was critical that the village board establish, and share with the Parks Commission, a clear and transparent process for accepting new assets, determining the

costs and responsibilities for maintaining those assets, and disposing of old or unwanted village assets. She also requested that we consult the village attorney for more clarity about our roles and responsibilities as a commission with respect to such decisions. She also suggested that the village should revisit the issue of returning the dock to the marina with a public forum.

Jim disagreed, saying that returning the eco dock was not in the best interest of the village or kayakers who use the marina. He noted that in all the years the dock was sitting next to the dirt pile, he never received a request for it to be reinstalled. Also, the eco dock was ill-suited for kayakers, as it was often slippery and dangerous due to goose droppings, and that its large size made it difficult and expensive to pull each season and maintain; when not in use it occupied a large number of parking spaces. In canvassing about a dozen kayakers in the marina and on the water, Jim said there was a clear preference for either a small floating dock that could easily be cleaned and maintained, or a soft beach landing that's would make it easier for older kayakers to get in and out of their watercraft. As a result, Jim was not in favor of returning the eco dock to the marina, and instead preferred holding a workshop to determine what kayakers really wanted there.

Carolyn said she would call the village attorney, and Marie said she would inquire about getting more details about and a copy of the grant application.

Issues in the marina. The Parks Commission also discussed some issues that were of concern in and around the marina. Jim noted that Commissioner Andrea DeVitto had reported on several occasions that cars were racing up and down Burd Street and into the marina at unsafe speeds, with engines revving loudly into all hours of the morning. She had asked if the Village or the Orangetown Police could do something about it

Jim also noted some marina slip renters had complained about the noise levels in the marina parking lot after dark, with parked cars blasting music and holding impromptu tailgate parties. This made staying on board with family members unpleasant to nearly impossible. Jim asked if the marina, like Memorial Park, actually closes at night, and if the Orangetown Police could make that a regular stop on their patrols. At that moment we noticed that several motorcycles had illegally entered Memorial Park, having either opened the gate or slipped through an opening. Jim said he would contact the new Village Administrator to find out if the gate is locked and what can be done about illegal entry. It was decided that the Parks Commission should reach out to the Village to have conversations with the Orangetown Police about both the racing and loud music in the marina after hours to see if they could be addressed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15.