

City of Cambridge

The Public Service Committee held a public meeting on Thursday, April 14, 1994, beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the Sullivan Chamber for the purpose of planning the dedication of the former Morse Park in memory of David Nunes. Present at the meeting were Councillor Jonathan S. Myers, Chair of the Committee, Margaret Drury, City Clerk, Richard Rossi, Deputy City Manager, Ralph Dunphy, Commissioner of Public Works, Paul Ryder, Director of Recreation. Also present were Gail and Tony Nunes.

Councillor Myers convened the meeting and explained the purpose. He noted that this is a very special event, in memory of Gail and Tony Nunes' young son David who passed away a year ago. Councillor Myers said that Mayor Reeves submitted an order, which Councillor Myers then co-sponsored, to dedicate the park in David's honor. He said that Mayor Reeves order was very significant to the event and that any planning of the ceremony should ensure that Mayor Reeves plays an integral role. He has received a petition from many neighbors in support of this dedication. He explained that Gail and Tony Nunes have a strong interest in trying to use this event as a chance to try to keep with ongoing upkeep of the park. This could be a good situation for adopt-a-park.

Tony Nunes said that he was honored that neighbors and the City Council were moved to take this action. It is fitting because it was David's park. Before the renovations, he used to spend time with the teenagers hanging out and then try to remind them that this park is where his kids played. He added that even with a plaque there, neighbors don't know the name of the park. The themes of being builders of bridges and appreciating Cambridge's multicultural essence were very big in David's life. He was involved in public and private school activities, his church, little league and the DeBois School. The Friday before David passed away, he was complaining about a toothache. Mr. Nunes took him to the dentist on his lunch hour and was blocked by a City truck, and the City workers moved the truck for him. He stressed the appreciation of community in Cambridge.

Gail Nunes said that she has worked with abused and neglected kids ages three to eighteen, the "throw away" kids, and David could hang out with them, as well as with his private school classmates. That came from his forgiving nature. His dream was for homeless kids to have a home. In his memory, they would like kids to have a park, a place to play. The Old Morse Park is on the edge, and they would like to be

1. The first part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who were present at the meeting.

able to help it be a safe and fun place for the community.

Councillor Myers said he stopped at the park on his way to this meeting, and there were two men drinking at the park.

Mrs. Nunes said that there have also been some problems with dogs.

Tony Nunes said that there used to be teenagers who staffed the parks. Paul Ryder said that now that the park has been renovated it can be staffed again.

Tony Nunes also suggested signs asking older kids to watch their language, also a gate would help with the dogs. He also noted the problem with kids pouring sand on the sidewalk.

Gail Nunes said neighbors have volunteered to help clean up for the dedication and as an ongoing effort.

Richard Rossi said that the City can provide support and assistance for these efforts.

Gail Nunes said that the dome is missing on the climbing structure, and it is dangerous.

Tony Nunes said that there are rules of the park that could be improved. For example, the sign could clearly say that sand should remain in the sand area for safety reasons. Also the sign should be close to where the parents sit.

Richard Rossi and Paul Ryder agreed that Paul Ryder would speak with Mark McCabe for assistance in dog enforcement efforts at the park.

Tony Nunes also suggested a hopscotch or foursquare. Richard Rossi agreed that the City will provide that.

Tony Nunes also mentioned the lack of swings. Paul Ryder explained that under the national safety standards there is not sufficient room for swings. They would be a safety hazard.

Councillor Myers said that the dedication would take place on Sunday, May 22, 1994.

Paul Ryder asked about the sign. Gail Nunes said that David had a sign on his door that said Whites are welcome, Blacks are welcome, I am not a racist. She would like to see something that used the theme of everyone being welcome, which was so important to David.

Paul Ryder suggested the hand carved wooden signs done by the City's signmaker at D.P.W. They can be seen at: Ahern Field, Rindge Basketball Court, Rindge Baseball Field - Samp Field.

Mr. Nunes said that he would like to have David's full name used: David Brian Nunes.

Richard Rossi said that there could be a bronze with David's face on it, there is one at Gately Shelter. He is not sure that the bronze could be done in time. They should think about what they would want. There is a bronze sign in the lobby of the YMCA.

Ralph Dunphy suggested that they have the monument person look at carving the stone that is already in the park. Councillor Myers noted that the stone is not close to the tot lot. Mr. Nunes said that it could work well for the dedication. Richard Rossi noted that vandalism is always a problem, and that there might be less vandalism of the stone. He would like to see the memorial placed where it is prominent and will not be vandalized.

Councillor Myers encouraged Commissioner Dunphy to look into an adopt-a-park program for this park. Richard Rossi said that if the Nunes' put together a small committee of people, the City will meet with them and provide support for their efforts. Gail Nunes suggested announcing this the dedication.

Tony Nunes noted that where graffiti had been removed, a further repair in the nature of asphalt sealer was needed.

Councillor Myers said that the dedication ceremony will take place at 1 p.m. Rich Rossi observed that a podium and address system will be needed and that the DPW will supply them.

Richard Rossi suggested that Little League have a special game. Tony Nunes said this was a good idea. Gail Nunes said that there will probably be artists and musicians and a magician.

Gail Nunes asked whether Putnam Avenue could be closed for the short block at Acorn. Councillor Myers suggested closing Allston Street instead. Mr. Rossi suggested closing Allston Street for the block where the park is located. Rich Rossi said that he would first ask George Teso about closing Putnam Avenue if they wanted.

Councillor Myers said that it depended somewhat on what part of the park the dedication occurs.

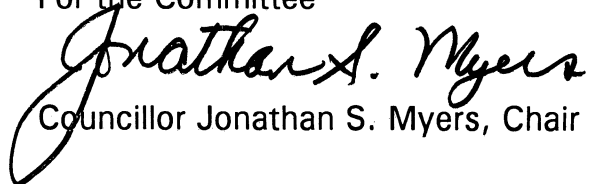
Gail Nunes said that there are other people who are interested in helping.

Rich Rossi said that the proceeds of the Cambridge Employees Golf Tournament could be donated to David Nunes' favorite charity. Gail and Tony Nunes both expressed appreciation of this idea.

It was agreed that the Nunes' would meet with Paul Ryder and Ralph Dunphy to finalize the type of sign or memorial that will be used. Gail and Tony Nunes noted that they will work with friends for the food and entertainment for the event.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

For the Committee


Councillor Jonathan S. Myers, Chair

Committee Report #3 S-187

A comm. was received from D. Margaret Drury
Chair of the Public Service Committee for a
hearing held on 4/14/94 re: the Old Morse
Park in memory of David Nunes.

In City Council April 25. 2994

*Report accepted
Placed on file*