

## RIRA- Island Services Committee

### Sportspark Report

#### Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| BUILDING AREAS .....                                  | 2  |
| 1. Gym entrance (west side): .....                    | 2  |
| 2. women’s restroom:.....                             | 2  |
| 3. women’s locker room/showers: .....                 | 3  |
| 4. Basketball court: .....                            | 3  |
| 5. Gym C (weight lifting room):.....                  | 3  |
| 6. Ping Pong / Yoga room (blue gym): .....            | 4  |
| 7. Computer area/ lounge:.....                        | 4  |
| 8. Corridor from West to East (lounge to pool): ..... | 4  |
| 9. Pool lobby area: .....                             | 5  |
| 10. Women locker room/changing area:.....             | 5  |
| 11. Men locker room/changing area: .....              | 6  |
| 12. Pool: .....                                       | 6  |
| <br>  |    |
| CLASSES / PROGRAMS .....                              | 7  |
| 1. Zumba. ....  | 7  |
| 2. Yoga class weekdays. ....                          | 7  |
| 3. Yoga class Saturdays. ....                         | 7  |
| 4. Martial Arts class.....                            | 8  |
| <br>  |    |
| MANAGEMENT OF THE FACILITY .....                      | 10 |

## **RIRA- Island Services Committee**

### **Sportspark Report**

The following report, is about the shape of Sportspark's facility and some of the exercise options offered. A RIOC official denied the entrance and any information about Sportspark to an ISC RIRA member for the following reasons: a RIOC official has to approve any visit or tour in the facilities and the front desk personnel has been told by a RIOC official that if they give any information to an ISC member about the pool area will be fired.

The following is about the facility, which all restrooms, locker rooms in the Gym and Pool area need desperately a professional machine deep cleaning to remove the glaze that is covering the mold and mildew accumulated through the years. This is priority number one, also due to health and hygienic reasons.

Sportspark does not have at the moment any air conditioner to cool the place and it is still running with the Temporary heating system (to some areas only).

### **BUILDING AREAS**

#### **1. Gym entrance (west side):**

- a. it has a nice seating area with a couch and several tables, with vending machines of water
- b. bike rack needed outside the entrance (bikes are being park inside due to the lack of)
- c. removal of the public pay phone if it is not working

#### **2. women's restroom:**

- a. coat hanger needed by sink area
- b. all wall tiles have been "glazed" (painted) on top of the mold and mildew that shows in the tiles and grout. The "glaze" has to be remove and/or fix cause it is coming off by the sink area and in every toilet
- c. remove or fix the napkin/tampon machine. It's not in use anymore

**3. women's locker room/showers:**

- a. These showers DO HAVE hot and cold water
- b. The drain is not clogged
- c. The lockers need to be clean and fix, not just a coat of paint. Some are rusty inside, missing hanging hooks, doors broken. Things left inside.
- d. Remove old, unused, not working equipment like: soap dispensers, hand dryers, napkin machines, or better: make them functional
- e. Several wood benches are all sticky because the varnish is coming off. Leaving everything that is put on top (bags, towels, clothes, etc...) sticky and with a yellowish tone
- f. The emergency exit on the back has a terrible draft of air, and it was cover with ice it's floor (during the cold weather months)

**4. Basketball court:**

- a. RIOC is working on emergency exits, lateral walls and windows (according to RIOC employee)
- b. The floor is kept in pristine condition!!!
- c. Is used for tennis classes during early afternoons
- d. Is used for basketball and soccer for MEN ONLY
- e. Is used for Zumba classes
- f. There are no sports in this gym that include Women or for Women and Children

**5. Gym C (weight lifting room):**

- a. It is being used by RIOC Employees EXCLUSIVELY, no residents allow (we were told that it is to avoid a lawsuit)
- b. Kept in pristine condition
- c. often has some men lifting weights or doing some other exercises.
- d. RIOC has their Own gym for all their employees paid by the State of New York
- e. Kept locked by key and with a Lock

**6. Ping Pong / Yoga room (blue gym):**

- a. The sound, of an extractor or generator, is so loud that makes it impossible to hear the teachers/coaches (**listen to audio recorded during weekday yoga class**)
- b. The floor is incrustated with dirt and reap on 3 different parts (see pics)
- c. The bench is loose and moves a lot (safety hazard)
- d. The mats, blankets and blocks are kept neatly inside the closet
- e. The mats and blankets need to be clean and/or sanitize. Those are used barefooted and people sweat on those things
- f. Emergency door is kept open during the class to ventilate the room
- g. Elevator is needed to access this area (if accessing through the west Sportspark door) and with the help of the staff (do not know if any resident can use by themselves the elevator)

**7. Computer area/ lounge:**

- a. Computers do not work, are not for use for the residents, they are not connected to the Internet either. They are ON all the time. Their removal is suggested or the repair, so people can use them
- b. Poor light area, reading can not be done here, or any other activity while waiting
- c. Elevator is needed to access this area (if accessing through the west Sportspark door), and with the help of the staff (do not know if any resident can use by themselves the elevator)
- d. All the corridors adjacent to this area are fill with ping pong tables

**8. Corridor from West to East (lounge to pool):**

- a. Has a lot of water damage and feels damp, windows need replacement
- b. The 2 bathrooms for handicaps are broken, and can only be used to change clothes only if RIOC Official authorizes it cause since April 2015 it is closed with a sign reading "RIOC Staff only. Do not enter".
  - a. Toilet not working
  - b. Shower not working
  - c. Some cleaning items are store here
- c. During the month of April 2015 a new development happened: this corridor that communicates the Pool with the Gyms has been closed and a sign reads: "RIOC Staff only. Do not enter". So if someone wants to swim after taking a class on the Gyms, has to go to the street level to go around or take the stairs outside. And if it is a handicap person and/or a parent with a stroller, they

can not go through here to avoid walking around the facility through the construction site of Cornell or the steam plant with no light in the streets.

**9. Pool lobby area:**

- a. It is a very cold area, no heaters here
- b. Pool regulations/rules should be posted in this area as well
- c. Clear schedule of the pool hrs and costs, including private classes should be posted in this area for everyone to see
- d. Nice seating area with vending machines

**10. Women locker room/changing area:**

- a. Exterminator is needed on a weekly basis. Too many bugs and insects during all seasons, due to the amount of them present (see pics).
- b. Shower drains all clogged
- c. Big puddles form from outside each shower towards sauna door, causing a slippery hall that could cause a serious accident
- d. Showers do not have hot water all the time
- e. Handicap shower do not have cold water, only extremely hot water that makes impossible for someone to use it
- f. There's no drain outside the showers (shower area)
- g. Sauna door is locked cause the sauna is not working. If it is not going to be used, then the sign should be removed and the room converted for some other use.
- h. New heater is very much appreciated
- i. New windows needed to avoid air drafts
- j. Stop putting plastic curtains in the changing cubicles, they get torn easily and mold builds on them very fast. Waste of money and time.
- k. The lockers need to be clean and fix, not just a coat of paint. Some are rusty inside, missing hanging hooks, doors broken. Things left inside.
- l. Bathing suit dryer works well.
- m. Remove old, unused, not working equipment like: soap dispensers, hand dryers, napkin machines, or better: make them functional
- n. Between April and May 2015, the bench inside the Handicap shower has been removed, even though it was in working condition, so it makes it extremely hard for a less able/handicap/disable person to take a shower
- o. The Handicap shower ONLY has hot water, and it is impossible to regulate the temperature of the water.

**11. Men locker room/changing area:**

- a. Many lockers are broken. No paint inside most of them. They need replacement. They are 35 years old.
- b. Floor is often very wet. Needs to be mopped frequently. Seems to be a drainage problem in the shower/locker/entrance area.
- c. Shower soap dispensers often empty. If you bring your own soap or shampoo, there is no place to put them conveniently since tops of soap dispensers are not level.
- d. Showers -- there is often water on the tile floor -- very slippery.
- e. Area with toilets etc in the back is fine although not well lit.
- f. Bathing suit dryer works well.
- g. There is a sauna although it apparently is non functional -- I've never seen anyone use it. If it is not going to be used, then the sign should be removed and the room converted for some other use.
- h. Remove old, unused, not working equipment like: soap dispensers, hand dryers, napkin machines, or better: make them functional
- i. The bench inside the Handicap shower is broken and it has a metal bar to avoid it's used, so it makes it extremely hard for a less able/handicap/disable person to take a shower

**12. Pool:**

- a. In need a visible air thermometer for the pool area (and keep the doors shot) and not hidden away and small enough to be a wristband watch, and a water thermometer. It's impossible to believe RIOC about air and water temp when RIOC's own instructors and lifeguards are wearing jacket, socks and pants due to the cold inside the pool area
- b. The floor of the pool (that was supposedly "resurfaced" a few years ago) is coming apart in pieces. Pieces of rocks that can obviously clogged the drain and filters of the pool. The pieces are as big as half a dollar bill
- c. **Permanent heating system.** Where is RIOC on this? Is Sportspark still operating with the temporary one?
- d. There is a big hole in the ceiling right above the pool shallow area. It does not seem to rain inside but there is a strong draft on cold and windy days, which worsens the experience for example during the baby swim classes.
- e. Be consistent in the well-proven practice of warming up the water a few degrees (even one degree higher makes a huge difference for the babies) prior to the baby classes to ensure the babies stay warm and safe.

## CLASSES / PROGRAMS

The following information is about the classes held in Sportspark. Several ISC members reviewed Yoga and Zumba, and got reviews about Martial Arts for kids by parents whom enroll their children in this class. The schedule for these classes is either very early in the afternoon for weekdays (6pm) or almost at noon on Saturdays. No classes on Sundays, neither other time alternatives.

1. **Zumba.** The instructor is Carmen. The class is extremely popular among the female residents of the Island. The music she uses, part of it, is extremely old. Some of the songs date from 1980's and 2004. Very little to no instruction is given, and it is very hard to see her (if you are not on the front rows).

2. **Yoga class weekdays.** The instructor name is Helida Ferreira. Just as the previous Yoga class, where RIOC announces it as an open level, it is not. It's simply a space to go to practice yoga with out any instruction whatsoever. Helida, uses music that with the loud sound of the generator/fan, her voice is extremely difficult to hear (listen audio).

She gives no corrections neither alternative poses (exercises) for the persons that can not do something (back, knees or any other problem, or just because it is too advance). Persons can be doing something wrong and they are not told otherwise. Several ISC members did several poses wrong on purpose, and they were not given any correction (even with 7 persons attending the class).

This is not an open level class, beginners are not explained how to do the exercises. It will/can lead to an easy injury. She also did not give much alignment instruction; there was not a lot of "how-to instruction".

During the relaxation part of the class, an ISC member saw the instructor texting on her cell phone.

When attendants, including ISC members, complained about the lack of teaching, instruction and correction, the following class Helida over did the teaching in the style that yoga would be a competitive sport.

3. **Yoga class Saturdays.** The instructor name is Cat and she is quite knowledgeable and helpful. Despite of the schedule (11:15am) right in the middle of the day, her class is very popular. She doesn't use music, cause she's aware that her voice won't be heard. She instructs, and corrects every single person. She walks around the room during the class. Even though she doesn't provide alternative poses while doing complicated exercises (headstand, arm stand) she is aware that if not done properly it can lead to an injury and advises the attendants to her class.

4. **Martial Arts class.** On Saturday afternoons for **kids ages 5-13** at 1.00pm; and a class for adults same day at 2:00 pm. The cost for 8 classes is only \$45. Our only concern is if it is developmentally and environmentally OK to mix Kindergarden kids with almost High School teenagers. During children classes they should always be separated by age, rank and skill level, so they are always able to learn at their own speed. The more people they can fit into that class, the more money they make for that hour. It's smart business but not a class intended for the school-age population of RI.

About the class the reports are: looked a little chaotic at times and maybe a little disorganized considering there were about 30 kids with most of them 6yrs and under. The suggestions from the parents are that they offer classes for 5-6yos, and 7-8yos separately, without including older kids and teenagers. The class can get a little echo-y due to the generator/fan, it's very hard for children to understand the instructors. There are too many kids per teacher, so they spend more time "Waiting" for the instructor to go around and do an activity. It is in the ping pong room which has no window or air, the class should move to the gym where the basketball court is, for the sake of the kids. Overall the instructors seem good but the class size needs to go down if kids will learn, sitting and waiting 40 minutes for a 1 hour class is silly.

According to a parent that's also a psychologist: Young kids are still learning how to behave in a class setting, whereas older kids are already attuned to it and could learn at a very different rate.

#### Suggestions:

- To choose and hire a yoga teacher for the Sportspark needs a little bit of thinking, not only about the lowest price. There are often people of different age and skill levels present in the class and the **teacher has to be able** to accomodate her teaching to all of them. The person hiring the teachers should have knowledge in teaching any kind of exercise or if possible be a yogi her/him self to be able to hire someone.
- More yoga classes **by Cat** (not Helida Ferreira) are needed during weekdays in the morning (after 8:30am) and Saturday (earlier than 11:15 am) to accommodate all the residents that do stay in the Island (seniors, stay at home moms, persons that work in the afternoons)
- To move or add yoga classes during weekdays, later than 7:30 pm to accommodate the schedules of the residents that work, are parenting kids before this time, or have to eat at or about 6:30 pm
- More zumba, pilates, boot camp classes during weekdays between 9am-1pm.

- Make transparent the process of selecting which classes will be offered and of hiring instructors for classes. There might be qualified teachers or volunteers in the community to teach the classes.
- Work with the community to survey which classes are wanted and needed and try to offer these, at times suitable for the community. (This worked well for example in collaboration with the RI Parents Network to establish the Mommy&Me swim classes for babies and toddlers. At this moment, there are several volunteers offering classes on their own that could be put under the umbrella of Sportspark programming
- The website needs a thorough update.
- The provided phone numbers need people to be placed to answer - complaints are repeating that no one is answering the phone.
- Amending pool hours on weekends – specifically allowing kids to swim after 4pm on both Saturday and Sunday given that 12-3pm is generally naptime for young children
- Volleyball at Sportspark (or at any other outdoor basketball court). Our Island has 4 basketball courts, 6 tennis courts, 2 soccer fields but not a single volleyball court! A resident met with a Sportspark's manager and he said there used to be a crowded volleyball court in the Sportspark several years ago. He is willing to let us (the residents interested in playing the sport) use the indoor space for **50\$ /hour**. It was also found out that they (Sportspark) have portable volleyball poles in their storage room. The residents want to push RIOC on providing a permanent volleyball court on our Island for **FREE Play**: either use one of the basketball courts outdoors, have an indoor volleyball court in Sportspark year round.

About the Yoga class, several residents approach Sportspark and RIOC over a year ago, to find out if they can rent the gym to give classes or if RIOC will hire them as Yoga instructors. RIOC/Sportspark wanted \$45-\$50 per hour per studio rental, as well for the church room (where mass is held) at Good Sheppard for \$45 per hr.

To another Yoga instructor, they asked for a proposal for the Yoga classes, that she turned in. She heard back from RIOC/Sportspark that another person was asking for less money to teach the classes.

But at the same time, they already had someone to teach the class: a male instructor (Israeli, tall, bald, thin) that I just found out he WORKS FOR RIOC at the RIOC Office. Several persons concur on the following about his class: for beginners, it would be challenging if they can't hear the instructor, and it will/can lead to an easy injury. He also did not give much alignment instruction; there was not a lot of "how-to instruction". Conflict of interests???

## MANAGEMENT OF THE FACILITY

- 1) The most requested improvement is extending Open Swim hours, gym court (basketball) and blue room gym. Several residents (more than 50) have suggested extending weekday open swim later than 10am, adding weekend morning hours (or at least Saturday or Sunday) and later weekend afternoon hours open for **families**. Island demographics have great changed (many more families and young children) since this schedule was put into effect. It is understood that other groups would need to be shifted in order to share the most desirable time slots.
- 2) Clear, undated rules which are enforced. Especially during the summer, where teenagers are taking little kids to swim, they horse play and do not wear bathing suits (just underwear).
- 3) Continued improved professionalism by Sportspark staff. Though there have been fewer complaints, there are still reports of "hidden" cell phones, rude or inattentive staff members, and walking on the pool deck in street shoes.
- 4) Lifeguards. Except for summer, they all wear their regular clothes (including socks) except for shoes and the red trunks. They complain about the cold temperature of the pool, to be fully dress while on duty.
- 5) A schedule for ALL the classes and rented space currently taking place at the pool and Gyms should be available in an overview to the public, ideally at the pool and gym lobby in paper form or as a sign, and online on the RIOC/Sporstpark website. If residents do not know what programs are taking place there (like Basketball, Soccer, RI Marlins or Delta Force) just by looking at a schedule, they will not be able to join. Even if these programs are not part of RIOC, residents need to be informed.
- 6) Vending machine with sanitary pads, tampons and baby diapers and/or swim diapers would be a very nice-to-have to reuse the vending machines built in the locker rooms and restrooms (men and women)
- 7) Lifeguards duties. Swimmers mostly do not take showers before entering pool or wear a swimming cap. This rule should be enforced strictly by lifeguards, as well as proper attire needed, not entering the deck with shoes
- 8) Keep the door of the pool facing the Cornell construction closed at all times. No matter what is the pretext to have it open. There are two Emergency doors located on top of the sitting area, on the North wall.