

**Meeting Minutes
New Prague Park Board
Tuesday, January 12, 2010
6:30 PM**

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Vice Chair Allen Mahowald. Members present were J.C. Ingebrand, Kay Wilcox, Katie Leaver, Allen Mahowald and Mike Slavik. No members were absent. Staff present was Ken Ondich – Planning Director and Jim Calliguri – Parks Maintenance Supervisor.

2. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Ingebrand, seconded by Slavik to approve the November 10, 2009 meeting minutes, which passed unanimously (5-0).

3. Review Financial Reports and 2009 Park Fees Summary

Planning Director Ondich presented the financial reports to the Park Board, noting that during the month of December an additional \$314.07 was added to the Park Equipment Fund from residential and commercial permits. Planning Director Ondich also noted that the 2009 Park Fees exceeded the 2008 Park Fees by just over \$3,300.

A motion was made by Leaver, seconded by Slavik to accept the financial reports as presented, which passed unanimously (5-0).

4. Native Restoration / DNR Grant – Potential Neighborhood Meeting

Planning Director Ondich stated that at the November Park Board meeting, Mattie Lasch was present to provide an overview of native restorations that could be done in a City Park and added that Settlers Park would be a good candidate for some kind of pilot project which could also be used to apply for funding from the Lessard Sam's Legacy Grant Funds through the DNR. He noted that the Park Board indicated that a pilot project for native restoration would be a good idea to look into further. He stated that since last month's meeting he had spoken with Mattie Lasch about his interest in helping with an informational meeting or open house for residents that live adjacent to Settlers Park to gather their input on a potential native restoration project and that Mattie Lasch would be willing to help if it works for his schedule. He stated that he would propose holding an open house sometime in late January or February to gather input and provide general information to residents near Settlers Park about what a native restoration project would be.

Katie Leaver suggested that a spring time meeting at the Settler's Park Shelter might be a good time to provide information in an informal setting.

Planning Director Ondich stated that he liked the idea and that a date in May would be a good time to hold such an open house out at the park. He stated that he thought handouts and some poster boards with pictures and information for residents to review would be the best way to provide the information. He also stated that he would send an invite by mail to residents that live adjacent to the Park. He finally noted that waiting a few months to hold the open house would not jeopardize funding as the next round of grant funding from the DNR had not been made available yet.

The Park Board agreed that an open house in the spring would be a good idea.

Planning Director Ondich stated that he would add the topic to a future Park Board agenda to set an exact date and time.

5. Park Ave. S. and 3rd Street SE – Plan Revisions

Planning Director Ondich stated that at the December 21, 2009 City Council meeting the Council accepted the Feasibility Report and called for a public hearing on Tuesday, January 5, 2010 for the 2010 Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) which includes Park Avenue S. in Memorial Park as well as 3rd Street SE near the swimming pool and baseball field. He stated that since the Park Board last reviewed the concept plans for the roadway designs at the November meeting, there have been some minor changes. He stated that staff would like the Park Board to review the current plans for the two roadway reconstructions and offer comments which can be taken into consideration as the final design is completed. He added that to assist with final designs for Park Ave. S. and 3rd Street SE, staff would like two members of the Park Board to meet outside of a regular Park Board meeting to sit down with City Staff and staff from SEH to help determine a final design. He stated that the funding for the two "park" roadway reconstruction projects would be through the City's "Capital Project Fund 499" and not assessed to any property owners and that the estimated cost of Park Ave. S. and 3rd Street SE is just over \$627,000 at this time, but will change based on final designs for construction. He asked that the Park Board review the plans and offer comments for consideration in the final design completion and also recommend that two Park Board members volunteer to work with staff to develop final designs in a work session prior to the February 9th Park Board meeting.

Allen Mahowald and Mike Slavik agreed to volunteer to work with City Staff and the Engineers during a design session sometime before the next Park Board meeting.

J.C. Ingebrand stated that he would rather see the sidewalk along Park Ave. S. closer to the road than to have a space of boulevard and then the sidewalk. He stated that based on his experience walking around town he thinks it would be easier to clear the sidewalks if they were directly abutting the roadway.

Parks Maintenance Supervisor Jim Calliguri stated that from a maintenance standpoint that the further away the sidewalk is from Park Ave. S. the better it will be for snow removal purposes.

Planning Director Ondich stated that unlike typical street right of way, Park Ave. S. does not have an issue with only a certain width of right of way in which the road and sidewalk must be installed. He stated that the sidewalk can be placed any distance from the edge of the roadway and that avoiding trees would be the biggest obstacle to face when moving the location of the sidewalk particularly adjacent to the playground.

J.C. Ingebrand asked if a turn lane could be added on TH 19 for traffic turning right onto Park Ave. S.

Planning Director Ondich stated that there is actually a parking lane available along the north side of TH 19 and that was a question that could be asked of the City Engineer.

Planning Director Ondich stated that he wanted to note a couple of specific changes that were made or should be made to the plans. He first noted that at the south end of Park Ave. S. there is a “through lane” that is not necessary that staff recommends for removal because traffic is light enough and slow enough to drive through lanes of parking. He also noted that previously the sidewalk along 3rd Street SE was planned to cross mid-block, but that the plans have changed so that only crossings would be taking place at intersections. He finally noted that the parking lot design by the baseball field was still a work in progress.

Kay Wilcox noted that the plan currently shows access to the park from 2nd Street SE so that Park Ave. S. isn't solely a one-way road. She stated that she is opposed to two way traffic on only a portion of Park Ave. S. and thinks that the two way traffic could lead to confusion for drivers.

Katie Leaver stated that she can see Kay's point but that she sees the need to allow access from 2nd Street SE and from the Golf Course parking lot area as a lot of neighborhood traffic from the south would benefit by having access to the park by local roads and not having to drive back out onto Main Street to access the parking.

Planning Director Ondich stated that staff strongly supports allowing the two way traffic through the south end of Park Ave. S. for convenience and to keep additional traffic off of Main Street. He stated that traffic is light enough and that appropriate measures to strongly discourage wrong way traffic will be made. He stated that currently wrong way traffic happens all the time and that vastly improved measures will be made to cut down on that problem.

Kay Wilcox stated that she would be okay with the two way traffic at the south end of Park Ave. S. for parking access as long as signage and curbing is planned to strongly discourage wrong way traffic.

Katie Leaver stated that regarding 3rd Street SE she would support painting crosswalks both across 3rd Street SE to the sidewalk north along Lexington Ave. N. and also across Lexington Ave. N. leading over to the sidewalk along the Golf Course parking lot. She stated that she sees a lot of kids walking and biking to the pool in the summer and thinks it would be a good safety measure.

Planning Director Ondich stated that he would be setting up the design meeting time and would pass the time and date along to Allen Mahowald and Mike Slavik as soon as possible.

6. Warming House Update

Planning Director Ondich stated that the construction of the warming house is on schedule to be completed within the next 3 to 5 weeks depending on City Staff workloads and winter storm events that could delay staff time to work on the warming house. He stated that the in-floor heat will be functional soon and that some of the final items to be completed include creation of the benches by City Staff and installation of the rubber floor. He added that there is a distant possibility that the warming house could be available for use before the ice season is over, but this is not likely to happen. He stated that should the warming house be available for use earlier than expected, staff will discuss possible options for staffing the warming house at that time and that there was not any staff time budgeted for operation of the warming house this current winter season.

Kay Wilcox suggested that the February Park Board meeting start up at the warming house to review what has been done so far.

Planning Director Ondich stated that he would start the February 9th meeting at 6:00 PM for a review of the warming house.

7. Miscellaneous

- a. StarTribune Article – Outdoor Rinks Slipping Away** – Planning Director Ondich stated that included in the packet is an article from the December 6, 2009 StarTribune about how many cities are struggling to keep it's ice skating/hockey rinks open due to budget cuts.
- b. 2010 Meeting Schedule** – Planning Director Ondich stated that included in the packet is the 2010 Meeting Schedule as information.
- c. Katie Leaver Resignation** – Katie Leaver informed the Park Board that she had submitted her resignation from the Park Board effective March 1st, 2010.
- d. Southside Park Signage** – Kay Wilcox asked if staff could look into the highway signage for a sign off of TH 21 that would lead to Southside Park as was discussed in the past for signage along TH 19. She stated that the park seems underutilized and that some additional signage to point out the park might help. Planning Director Ondich stated that he would contact MnDOT regarding signage along TH 21.

- e. **Dog Park** – Kay Wilcox stated that the idea of a dog park should be revisited. She stated that former member Teri Hodapp was instrumental in earlier talks but that since she had been off the Park Board little had been done. Planning Director Ondich noted that a dog park was still on the long term goals and that staff had obtained a quote for fencing a portion of the Sliding Hill Skate Park adjacent to the pond and parking lot area. He stated that the fencing was about \$20,000 including installation.
- f. **Park Board Interviews** – Kay Wilcox stated that the Council conducted 4 hours of interviews for various boards and commissions for the City. She stated that appointments will be made at the Tuesday, January 19, 2010 Council Meeting.

7. Adjournment

A motion was made by Leaver, seconded by Slavik to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 PM, which passed unanimously (5-0).

Respectfully Submitted,



Ken Ondich
Planning Director