

Meeting Minutes
New Prague Park Board
Tuesday, November 13, 2007
6:30 PM

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 PM by Chair Guerrette. Members present were Kay Wilcox, Amy Jirik, Kristin Guerrette, Teri Hodapp, Ryan Hauser and J.C. Ingebrand. Dominic McConnell arrived after the second agenda item. Staff present was Ken Ondich – City Planner and Jim Calliguri – Parks Maintenance Supervisor.

2. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Wilcox, seconded by Hauser to approve the September 11, 2007 meeting minutes, which passed unanimously (6-0, McConnell had not yet arrived).

3. Sidewalk/Trail Snow Removal Areas – City Responsibility -

Nate Girard, 601 Bavaria Lane, was in attendance at the meeting to comment on the City's current policy on sidewalk and trail snow removal. He stated that he is a resident of the area near the Greenway Trail that runs between Columbus Ave. N. and Heritage Park both along Heritage Trail and backyard of homes on Heritage Trail. He stated that this section of the greenway trail is the only east/west pedestrian way off the streets for residents and children in the area. He stated that it is heavily used. He stated that he requests the City to be responsible for snow removal for this section of the greenway trail between Columbus Ave. N. and Heritage Park or simply to Philipps Park if costs and staffing are an issue. He stated that a lot of seniors also live in the area in the townhomes and use this for their walks. He stated that it is an important route for walkers and their safety and that it would get used in the winter and keep people from walking on the streets.

Planner Ondich added that with the opening of the TH 19 project on the east side of town there is now a bituminous trail along the south side of 19 and a concrete walk along the north side of 19. He stated that are certain areas of the City where the City takes care of sidewalk and path snow removal instead of the property owners and that attached to the packet is a map of the current snow removal routes that the city is responsible for. He stated that staff is suggesting that the bituminous path and the concrete walk along TH 19 be cleared by the city and added to the route map to reflect the change. He added that now would be the time for the Park Board to provide input on other sections in the City as well which would be forwarded to the City Council for final review.

The Park Board asked how many parks staff work during the winter and who takes care of sidewalk snow removal as shown on the map.

Jim Calliguri stated that he is the only parks staff person on during the winter and that he also is the person who does the sidewalk snow removal and sometimes can get called to do snow removal on streets if the need arises.

Kay Wilcox stated that the City very recently approved the purchase of a machine that will help with snow removal on sidewalks. She stated that she would also like to see the trail on the west side of 10th Ave. SE plowed by the City.

The Park Board also noted that the City maintains the trails in the summer by mowing adjacent to the trails and thought that they should also be maintained during the winter.

A motion was made by Hauser, seconded by Ingebrand, to recommend that the City Council amend the policy on specific sidewalks and trails that are maintained for snow removal by the City to add the bituminous trail along the south side of TH 19 from County Road 37/10th Ave. SE east to Alton Ave. SE, to add the concrete sidewalk along the north side of TH 19 from County Road 37/10th Ave. SE to Alton Ave. SE, to add the bituminous trail along the west side of 10th Ave. SE from TH 19 south to County Road 29, to add the section of the greenway trail from Columbus Avenue N. east to Lexington Ave. N. and any other sidewalk or trail segment in the City where such side walk or trail is the only safe pedestrian route, which passed unanimously (7-0).

4. Review Financial Reports

Planner Ondich presented the financial reports to the Park Board, noting that \$4,252.69 was added to the Park Equipment Fund from residential and commercial permits during the month of October.

Kay Wilcox asked if the total included the fee from Coborn's.

Planner Ondich stated that the total did not yet include their park fee.

A motion was made by Ingebrand, seconded by Hauser to accept the financial reports as presented, which passed unanimously (7-0).

5. Signage for Off-Leash Dog Issues –

Planner Ondich stated that he has received a few phone calls since September's meeting regarding dogs in the parks. He specifically noted that the calls have asked about how people are allowed to let their dogs run off-leash in the parks and also let them leave feces in the parks without picking it up. He included two sections of the City Code that pertain to the issues. He stated that pets must always be kept leashed or "under control" in park and recreation areas (including the Greenway System and noted that "under control" can obviously be open to interpretation, but some people using the parks are not

comfortable with dogs being unleashed and being under voice command only. He stated that regarding the feces issue, another section of the city code states that it is unlawful for the owner or custodian of a dog to allow the dog to drop and leave feces on any public or private property within the city. He stated that there is signage at Memorial Park and Foundry Hill Park stating that dogs need to be kept on leash, but there is no signage that dogs must be picked up after. He stated that the callers have asked that signage be placed at all City Parks stating that dogs must be kept on leash and that they must be cleaned up after. He stated that it might also be a good idea to consider changing the code to require dogs to be “leashed” and not just “under control”. He stated that the Police Department would also support such a change as it is difficult to enforce the ordinance when residents can argue that “under control” does not mean they have to be on a leash.

Kay Wilcox stated that she felt there was a location at the Sliding Hill Skate Park where dogs could be allowed to be kept off leash north of row of evergreens.

Planner Ondich stated that this is the area where the archery range is now located and further to the east is close to the area where the new waste water treatment plan would be located.

J.C. Ingebrand stated that he was fine with the provision that dogs be allowed to be kept under control and not specifically on leash.

Amy Jirik stated that she would support a change to the ordinance that would allow dogs to be kept on leash. She stated that it would reduce incidents of dogs chasing kids.

Kay Wilcox suggested waiting on discussing the leashed or under control issue again until an off-leash facility was established for dogs.

The Park Board discussed the problem of feces from dogs being left in parks and on or near trails in the city.

Kristin Guerrette stated that she has noticed problems with dog feces specifically along the trail on 10th Ave. SE between 9th Street and 12th Street SE and also on a segment along Chalupsky Ave. SE which has not been so bad in the recent past.

Ryan Hauser stated that he did not think that signs at the parks reminding people to pick up dog feces would help and also added that putting bags at parks for people to use probably wouldn't help either.

The Park Board decided not to take any formal action at this time regarding signage to remind people to pick up after their dogs or to amend the City Code to require dogs to be leashed instead of simply being under control.

Planner Ondich stated that he would put a reminder about picking up after dogs in the parks on the City's website.

6. Preliminary Review of 2008 Park Board Goals -

Planner Ondich stated that in the packet he included a draft of 2008 goals for the Park Board. He stated that new this year, staff is attaching costs to the goals to provide a general overview of the potential yearly costs for the projects identified and that for discussion purposes he attached the 2007 goals listing and identified projects that were completed and those not completed or those the Park Board decided not to do.

The Park Board asked about funding from the City for the completion of the segment of the greenway trail in Foundry Hill Park out to Raven Stream.

Kay Wilcox stated that a memo from the Park Board was forwarded to the City Council regarding the matter but she did not know if this was in the 2008 Budget or not.

The Park Board noted that for the replacement of park signs, a replacement sign for Philipps Park would be a priority and that no sign would be needed for Yackly and the site of the former cabin.

The Park Board noted that they would like to do the field fences for Northside Park in 2008 but would like the fence to be black coated chain link so that it would not be so visible and to be 4' in height.

Teri Hodapp offered to work with City Staff to develop a location and costs for a possible dog park.

The Park Board stated that they were OK with the 2008 Goals with the changes noted.

Planner Ondich stated that he would make the revisions to the drafted 2008 goals and bring back for a formal motion to approve after the 1st of the year which would then be forwarded to the City Council for final review.

Kay Wilcox asked if more benches were needed along the Greenway Trail and asked the Park Board members to think about this.

7. Hockey Boards and Warming House – Sliding Hill Skate Park -

Planner Ondich state that staff would like to once again look at the idea of installing hockey boards, lights, goals and a warming house for the Sliding Hill Skate Park. He stated that some members were not on the board for the previous discussion in the summer of 2006 which was started when Witt Development asked about using their Parkland Dedication money for the Eastland development towards a hockey rink and associated amenities. He stated that the Park Board had looked into Athletica (a Minnesota Company) providing “Gameplex” plastic hockey boards (commonly used throughout the state) for a 78’ x 178’ rink with a chain link puck guard on each end. He stated that it would be a system that could be installed each year or left up year round for a cost of about \$40,000 including tax and shipping and initial installation (we will hopefully have an updated quote by the time of the meeting). He stated that it was also

researched to possibly blacktop the rink area (\$43,000), but such paving would trigger the need for an additional storm water pond at the park and also concerns were noted about the blacktop prematurely melting the ice and added that concrete would be an option, but much more expensive. He also noted that goals for the hockey rink would cost about \$1,000 for a set, up to \$11,000 for lighting if a new pole with lights were to be added (the far east rink area does not have lighting currently), and about \$150 for required hockey rink signage. He stated that the item he had not obtained a price on was a warming house or other such shelter. He stated that there would not be running water or sewer to the warming house so it would have to be pretty basic (maybe gas or electric heat at best) and that a warming house would also need an attendant to keep an eye on things, but a more simple wind shelter would not require an attendant. He stated that he attached some information about the Gameplex rink product for those who were not on the park board when this was first discussed. He stated that the Park Board currently has about \$90,000 available in the Park Equipment Fund at this time.

Jim Calliguri stated that last year there were 2 to 3 weeks of good ice time for use.

Kay Wilcox stated that the City should look into having a refrigeration unit for the ice rink and maybe start a fund for such a system. She stated that there may be grant money available such as the Mighty Ducks Grant for such a system. She also suggested having staff contact Amy Eich with Community Education about winter community recreation and also if the Community Center would want to schedule for ice time if we install a rink.

Kristin Guerrette noted that Centennial Lakes in Edina always had good ice and wondered if it was refrigerated.

Planner Ondich noted that a refrigerated ice sheet would possibly require the need for an additional water retention pond due to increased impervious surface on the site.

The Park Board did not take any formal action.

8. Miscellaneous

- A. “Going to the Dogs” – Parks & Rec Business Magazine (October 2007) –**
Planner Ondich stated that as information, an article about creating a community dog park has been included in the packet. He stated that in last months packet two letters from residents supporting a dog park were included and that no discussion is needed, the article is provided for information purposes only.
- B. Settlers Park Path Connection –** Planner Ondich stated that at Settlers Park there is a lack of a path connecting the parking lot to the playground area. He stated that approximately 70’ lineal feet would need to be installed to make the connection which would also connect to the bathroom area and be ADA accessible. He asked that the Park Board approve the installation of the path and the \$1,200 cost from the 2007 Park Board Budget.

The Park Board noted that the path should be 8' wide bituminous as it would possibly extend into the Green Meadow area in the future.

A motion was made by Ingebrand, seconded by Wilcox to approve the extension of an 8' wide bituminous path from the Settlers Park Parking Lot to connect to the bathroom and playground area and to be paid from the 2007 Park Board Budget, which passed unanimously (7-0).

C. Wooden Archery Target Stands – Planner Ondich stated that the archery range was nearing completion and that he would be placing the order for the targets shortly. He stated that the DNR grant for the range did not include any money for stands that get the targets off the ground and partially protect them from the elements. He stated that the New Prague Sportsmen's club was a possible group to build the target stands, but that Dennis Tietz had spoken with Dave Edberg at the high school who said they could build the stands for free if provided with the wood. He stated that for green treated wood to build the targets it would cost around \$600. He asked that the Park Board consider paying for the wood from the 2007 Park Board Budget.

J.C. Ingebrand asked that staff look into having a pitched roof put on the stands.

The Park Board felt that having the high school build the stands would be a good project.

A motion was made by Hauser, seconded by Jirik to approve the purchase of green treated wood to use for the construction of 10 archery target stands to be constructed by high school students under the direction of Dave Edberg and to look into adding a pitched roof, which passed unanimously (7-0).

9. Adjournment

A motion was made by Hodapp, seconded by Hauser, to adjourn the meeting at 7:57 P.M., which passed unanimously (7-0).

Respectfully Submitted,



Ken Ondich
City Planner