

**Meeting Minutes
New Prague Park Board
Tuesday, July 13, 2010
6:30 PM**

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Chair Allen Mahowald. Members present were Kay Wilcox, Sharon Brown, Allen Mahowald, Matthew Lasch, Mike Slavik and J.C. Ingebrand. Absent was Amy Jirik. Youth Representative Darren Brown was also absent. Staff present was Ken Ondich – Planning Director and Jim Calliguri – Parks Maintenance Supervisor.

2. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Wilcox, seconded by Slavik to approve the June 8, 2010 meeting minutes. Motion carried (6-0, Jirik Absent).

3. Review Financial Reports

Planning Director Ondich presented the financial reports to the Park Board, noting that during the month of June an additional \$668.14 was added to the Park Equipment Fund from residential and commercial permits.

A motion was made by Ingebrand, seconded by Lasch to accept the financial reports as presented. Motion carried (6-0).

4. Foundry Hill Park: Woods Path and Signage

Planning Director Ondich stated that at the June 8th Park Board meeting during the annual tour, it was suggested that the topic of the Foundry Hill Park woods be discussed in more detail because it was suggested by the Park Board that people walking by the woods area might not know that it is part of the park and that it is public property. He stated that it was suggested that a path be cut through the woods and a sign installed signifying that it is a part of the park. He stated that included with the packet is a general photo of the view of the woods from the walking path near the water tower, some air photo views and finally some information that Three Rivers Park District has about their “nature exploration areas”. He stated that staff also met recently with an Eagle Scout named Alex, and who was present at the meeting, about a possible project to clear the path through Foundry Hill Park for the City and possibly obtain woodchips as well.

The Eagle Scout Alex stated that his idea was to cut a 5’ wide trail through the Foundry Hill Park woods but avoiding any large trees. He also stated that he would seek to obtain woodchips for the trail through donations from local tree trimming companies.

Allen Mahowald stated that he does not feel woodchips are necessary for the trail because it would not feel as natural.

Kay Wilcox stated that she thought it might be a good idea to place some large boulders in the woods as a sort of destination point.

Matthew Lasch stated that he believes woodchips on the trail would cut down on maintenance issues in the short and long term.

Sharon Brown stated that she felt being a nature area that woodchips were not desirable and that nature is what it is.

Allen Mahowald stated that he thought kids would probably go exploring off the trail anyways.

J.C. Ingebrand stated that he thought creating an inviting entrance to the woods is important but that it would not have to be groomed so well into the park for much distance.

Mike Slavik stated that he felt keeping a natural feel was important.

Eagle Scout Alex stated that he felt “geo-caching” might be a possible activity in the park. A box is placed in the park at a specific location and many people would explore the woods to find the box and place items and notes of interest to the next person that comes looking for the box.

Kay Wilcox stated that some sort of entrance point to the woods would be necessary.

Allen Mahowald stated that picnic tables or benches outside of the woods entrance would be a good idea.

The Park Board reached a consensus that benches would be a nice addition to the Foundry Hill Park Woods trail project.

Eagle Scout Alex presented a large air photo of the park and explained his idea for a path to be cut through the woods with entrance/exit points at the NW and NE corner of the woods and a loop through the woods. He also stated that he would like to complete the project before school starts again in the fall.

The Park Board asked that Eagle Scout Alex come back to the Park Board meeting in August with more specifics on the project including detailed location of entrance/exit points, length of the cut trail and possible benches being included.

5. Warming House – Volunteer Groups

Planning Director Ondich stated that at the June 8th Park Board meeting, rough drafts of the warming house “volunteer program”, volunteer warming house attendant job description and finally a volunteer job application were reviewed. He stated that since that time staff has continued to revise the documents and feel they are ready for a final review by the Park Board before being forwarded to the City Council before this fall. He recommended that the Park Board review the drafted documents and make a

recommendation for the City Council to review and approve them as a back-up plan if paid staff is not an option for the 2010/2011 operation of the warming house.

Mike Slavik stated that he is concerned about having many individuals signing up to work at the warming house as volunteers. He stated that he thought it might be better to have groups sign up to staff the warming house.

Planning Director Ondich stated that it would be up to the City Council to determine if there would be additional money budgeted for the warming house in 2011 or if a portion of the typical summer part time budget funds would need to be allotted to the warming house which would result in reduced summer staffing. He stated that the volunteer program is really an unknown in terms of people or groups that might be interested in helping out.

Kay Wilcox stated that when the program is ready to go and if needed, it should be advertised in the City Newsletter and also direct mailed to some local community groups.

The Park Board suggested that groups such as the hockey association, Rotary, National Honor Society and even the Chamber of Commerce could be included.

Kay Wilcox asked how the key to the warming house would be managed.

Mike Slavik asked if a staff person would oversee the volunteer labor to make sure they are showing up.

The Park Board determined that they would not forward the drafted documents to the Council at this time.

6. Warming House: Rules Signage

Planning Director Ondich stated that before the warming house can be opened to the public, the League of Minnesota Cities highly recommends that rules signage be placed both inside the warming house and outside the warming house. He stated that he has drafted a warming house rules sign for review. He stated that once the rules are approved, he would obtain a quote from Signature Graphics in Jordan who completed all the other rules signs in Sliding Hill Skate Park.

Kay Wilcox stated that she likes the idea of a large “open/closed” sign that would be visible from the parking lot so that parents would know when dropping kids off if the warming house is open for use.

Planning Director Ondich stated that he would obtain a quote for two rules signs and also ask if an “open/closed” sign could be incorporated into the rules sign or independently of the rules sign. He stated that he should have the quotes for next month’s meeting for review and approval.

7. Carver/Scott SHIP – Walkable Communities Workshop

Planning Director Ondich stated that at the April Park Board meeting the Park Board was informed about the Carver/Scott SHIP program which would provide funding to the City to perform an assessment of our walkability, promote existing parks and trails, and improve maintenance plans for existing parks and trails. He stated that the first activity that staff completed was an online survey of the above items and that the City will be reimbursed \$4,000 for staff time related to the completion of the online survey. He stated that the remaining activities for the program will bring an additional \$6,000 in funds to off-set City Staff time for the completion of a “Walkable Communities Workshop” and finally any implementing plans that may come from the workshop. He stated that the workshop must take place sometime this late summer or early fall and that the workshop itself is a 3 to 4 hour event that can take place at any time of the day. He suggested a 5PM start time for a workshop and also to pick Wednesday September 8th or Wednesday September 15th as the dates for the meetings. He stated that the actual walking tour is a 1 mile route which staff has identified the area north of City Hall and adjacent to the hospital, St. Wenceslaus Church, School District Offices and Mill Pond/Philipp’s Square. He added that this area of the City is identified for future street reconstructions starting in 2011 and beyond. He finally stated that the workshops need 15 to 30 participants and stated that he was interested in hearing if the Park Board has any specific people they would like involved in the workshop as participants.

The Park Board generally discussed the purpose of the workshop and need for sidewalks on both sides of roads.

Kay Wilcox stated that she has a list of people that she would forward to staff to invite to the workshop.

The Park Board suggested that Wednesday September 8, 2010 at 5:00 to 8:00 PM would be a good time for the workshop.

8. Miscellaneous

- a. **Settlers Park Basketball Hoop Update** – Planning Director Ondich stated that City staff has continued internal discussions about the possible installation of a basketball hoop at Southside Park which includes the possibility of re-stripping the lot and installing a hoop at the south end near the playground. He stated that staff feels this can be accommodated by reducing the lot from 30 spaces to 20 spaces (including required ADA parking areas) and that staff does not support installing a basketball hoop in the surface of the parking lot itself but rather look into purchasing a hoop and pole that has a large off-set so that it can hang far enough into the lot so that there is not a tripping hazard with the perimeter curb. He stated that if desired by the Park Board, staff will continue to obtain prices and quotes to add the project to the 2011 Park Board Projects and goals listing as a Park Equipment Fund project.

- b. **Settlers Park Storm Damage Report** – Planning Director Ondich stated that on Saturday, June 26th during the evening storm event, Settlers Park experienced some damage due to what was confirmed as an EF-0 Tornado by the National

- Weather Service. He stated that damage was caused to the bathroom surround and also the playground structure for kids age 2-5 with damage estimated to be just over \$8,600. He stated that the City will be submitting an insurance claim and replacing both the playground equipment and the bathroom surround.
- c. **Dog Park Update** – Planning Director Ondich stated that at last month’s meeting, it was suggested that an article be placed in a future City Newsletter to see if there is interest in establishing a dog park. He stated that he also placed an online poll on the City’s website regarding a dog park and to date there have been 27 votes – 52% would like a dog park in the short term, 22% would like a dog park but at a different location, 15% would not like a dog park and 11% would like a dog park but further in the future. He stated that if any Park Board member would like to be a guest columnist for an upcoming City News, that would be possible or he could draft an article asking for input on if a dog park would be of great interest and have them send me an e-mail with comments. He stated that Kay Wilcox had asked if there was the possibility of helping set up a 501C3 for fundraising for a dog park and that the City would want to stay out of any involvement in setting up a 501C3 for this purpose as it should be taken care of privately and funds donated to the City at the appropriate time.
 - d. **Article – Leisure’s Relationship to Health** – Planning Director Ondich stated that an article is included in the packet titled “Leisure’s Relationship to Health” from the Academy of Leisure Sciences.
 - e. **Next Meeting – August 17th, 2010** – Planning Director Ondich stated that as a reminder, next month’s Park Board meeting is a week later than normal because due to the State Primary Election on August 10th, 2010, we are unable to have the regularly scheduled Park Board meeting that night which instead was moved back one week to August 17th.

9. Adjournment

A motion was made by Slavik, seconded by Lasch to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 PM. Motion carried (6-0).

Respectfully Submitted,



Ken Ondich
Planning Director