

Meeting Minutes
New Prague Park Board
Tuesday, September 16, 2008
6:30 PM

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 PM by Teri Hodapp. Members present were, Allen Mahowald, Dominic McConnell, J.C. Ingebrand, Teri Hodapp, Kay Wilcox and Amy Jirik (arrived @ 6:56). Members absent were Mark Remfert. Staff present was Ken Ondich – Planning Director, Ryan Streff – Planning Intern, and Jim Calliguri – Parks Maintenance Supervisor.

2. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Wilcox, seconded by Ingebrand to approve the August 12, 2008 meeting minutes, which passed unanimously (5-0).

3. 301 Lexington Ave. S. (Armory) - Hymnus Use Proposal
- Teen Center User Proposal

“Hymnus” Proposal

Mary Zard (27760 Lavonne Street) presented the Hymnus Proposal. She stated that Hymnus is currently located in the back of the coffee shop. She stated that the Armory building would be a great location for the group with room for storage and growth. She stated they would use the “drill room” for the choir, community band, youth orchestra and the senior women choir rehearsals and the offices as sectional rooms for individual practices. She stated that many cities throughout the United States have converted their Armory buildings to facilities that are used for music and the arts. She stated that Hymnus is a non-profit organization with half of the choir being New Prague youth. She stated that all ages are encouraged to participate. She stated that they are a proven organization that has been around for 7 years and have no problem paying their bills. She stated that Community Education would oversee the scheduling of the building. She stated that there are no fees to enter Hymnus. She stated the group has auditions for “behavior” and not for musical ability. She stated that the floor plan “as is” works great for the group. She stated that the group has explored the use of other facilities but scheduling and access to the building would cause problems. She stated that Hymnus would use the building 2 times a week on Monday and Thursday from 6:30-8:30. She stated that there is enough room in the building to hold small “chamber” concerts.

“Teen Center” Proposal

Wade Brod (201 11th St Cir SE) and Kristin Guerrette (603 Doherty Ave. SE) presented the Teen Center Proposal. Brod stated that he proposed to the City Council the use of the Armory as a Teen Center. He stated that on August 12, 2008 he presented the Teen Center business plan to the Bark Board. He stated that he toured the building and came up with an estimate of \$40,000-50,000 to rehab the facility into the proposed Teen Center. He stated that this type of use would be a safe environment for teens to go after school or sporting events.

Guerrette stated that the youth that were in attendance consist of students from the High School Student Council. She stated that converting the building would consist of minimal changes to open up the space. She stated that there is some water damage that would need to be addressed. She stated that New Prague youth need a facility like this. She stated that Burnsville has a teen center like this called "The Garage" which New Prague teens drive to for certain events. She stated that having a facility like "The Garage" in New Prague would be great for teens. She stated that a Teen Center not only benefits the youth but will also benefit the adults in the community.

Susan Eckstein (New Prague Student Council) stated that New Prague has a lot to offer kids but not a place to just go and hang out. She stated that it would be a great place for a youth band to practice. She stated that students would like a place to go and do homework or to get help with their homework after school.

Student stated that he leaves New Prague and goes to meet friends out of town because it is boring in New Prague. He stated everything is thirty minutes away.

Guerrette stated that the Teen Center would primarily be targeting high school students. She stated that the center would operate M-F after school, Friday evening and some Saturday hours. She stated that they would need to hire one staff person. She stated they are looking at different grants and private donations to fund the project.

Travis Oestreich (New Prague Student Council) stated that students have to leave school by 2:45 unless they are in an activity. He stated that this gives students no time to work on group projects or other school related projects. He stated that the Teen Center would be a great place for students to get together and work on their group projects. He stated that he knows a lot of youth in New Prague that would help make a facility like this succeed.

Guerrette stated that "The Garage" has about \$100,000 operating budget. She stated that the Teen Center is not looking for money from the city. She stated that they are only asking for the use the building

Wilcox asked what the time frame for the Teen Center is.

Guerrette stated that they would hope to have the place up and running 6-8 months after they get the building.

Mahowald asked if there were any other buildings in town that would work for this use. Guerrette stated that there are no other buildings that fall under the same operating conditions as the Armory. She stated that there are probably other places they could lease but would not provide them with the room they need.

Hodapp asked if this use would fit in with the neighborhood.

Guerrette stated youth already hang out in this area because of the pool, ball field, park and golf course. She stated that there is already noise in this area. She stated this will draw other people into the community.

Park Board Discussion

Mahowald stated that this area is not good for a youth Teen Center. He stated the facility is adjacent to the Park Pavilion and every night there are drunks leaving the area. He stated that the city needs a band and the Armory facility would work better for the Hymnus group.

McConnell stated that it does not seem like the Teen Center Proposal is complete. He stated he would like to see a Teen Center go into the facility but only if the group had their funds and other plans ready to go. He stated that the Hymnus group has their funding together and can walk into the facility and use it as is without rehabbing the structure.

Wilcox stated that there are only two adult representatives ready for the commitment with the Teen Center Proposal.

Jirik asked if the area is zoned correctly for this type of use.

Wilcox stated that after hearing the two proposals the Teen Center group lacks structure at this time.

Ingebrand stated that he agrees with Commissioner Wilcox's statement.

McConnell stated that if the Hymnus group is recommended to the City Council he would like to allow local "Rock Bands" or other youth music/art groups to be able to use the building for practice space.

Wilcox stated that the signage for the building should not only be for Hymnus and should read "New Prague Culture Center" or something to this effect.

A motion was made by Ingebrand, seconded by Hodapp to approve the Hymnus group based on the organizational structure, financial stability, ability to serve diverse ages, no structural changes, low impact to neighborhood, partnership with school through Community Ed, suggested 5 year lease and land retained by the City, which passed unanimously (6-0).

4. Review Financial Reports

Planner Ondich presented the financial reports to the Park Board, noting that during the month of July an additional \$542.25 was added to the Park Equipment Fund from residential and commercial permits.

Wilcox stated that if the field boxes are not finished by the end of the year the money should go back into the Park Equipment Fund for future projects.

A motion was made by Ingebrand, seconded by McConnell to accept the financial reports as presented, which passed unanimously (6-0).

5. Fall Flag Football League – Memorial Park

Planner Ondich provided the background on the Flag Football League. He stated that Eric Steinhoff contacted the City about setting up a Fall Flag Football League to be played in the outfield of the Memorial Park softball fields. He stated the only other option would be the Sliding Hill Skate Park recreational ice skating rink area which is lighted. He stated the games would be played on Wednesday nights from 6:30pm to 9:30pm starting in Mid-September with approximately 35-50 people. He stated that the League will make the lines on the field. He stated that staff discussed the request in terms of maintenance issues with the grass in the softball fields where this would be played. He stated staff is OK with the games being played in the outfield but is concerned about potential for damage to the grass and subsurface. He stated for this reason staff would like to have the ability to limit playing if the field conditions (mostly due to rain) would not allow games to be played. He stated it would have to be the sole discretion of city staff to determine if field conditions will allow play. He stated this is very important because damage to the field in the fall will lead to a poor field condition in the spring. He stated that field lines would be allowed but the league would have to paint their own lines and not use anything except for field paint (not lime). He stated that staff would expect the teams to clean up after themselves and lights would have to be off by 11PM. He stated that a contact phone number for contacting the league about unfavorable field conditions would be required. He stated that staff would recommend using the "Fall League Team" fees similar to those established for baseball and softball fall teams. He stated teams that playing 2 times a week the per team fee is \$120 and for teams playing 1 time per week is \$60 per team.

Wilcox stated that Eric Steinhoff should sign a document stating he will follow staffs' conditions.

A motion was made by Wilcox, seconded by McConnell to approve the Flag Football League at Memorial Park with established team fees, contact name and number, games completed by 11PM, all lights turned off and fields cleaned after games and allowing the City Staff to have sole discretion to cancel field use due to field conditions, which passed unanimously (6-0).

6. 2009 Park Board Budget/Goals Draft

Planner Ondich provided the background on the 2009 Park Board Budget/Goals. He stated staff has enclosed a listing of the 2009 Park Board Goals/Budget as refined at last month's meeting. He stated that the Park Board should provide any comments or suggestions to make to the listing. He stated the Park Board has been budgeted for an additional \$20,000 for the 2009 Park Board Budget which will leave about \$59,000 of Park Equipment Funds at the start 2009. He stated that the proposed projects and their costs fit within the budget constraints.

Jirik stated that the grand opening for Heritage Park should be changed to Settlers Park.

A motion was made by McConnell, seconded by Ingebrand to approve the 2009 Park Board Budget/Goals with changes as presented by Commissioners, which passed unanimously (6-0).

7. Park and Recreational Facility Policy – August 2008 Final Draft

Planner Ondich provided the background on the Park and Recreational Facility Policy. He stated that at the August 12th Park Board meeting the original draft of the "Recreational Facility Use Policy" was reviewed. He stated that various recommendations were made during the meeting. He stated that staff has revised the title and language in the policy and included a final draft for review. He stated the policy as written supports the past decisions the Park Board has made regarding amenities and maintenance for competitive sports teams and allows a case by case basis for review of requests.

McConnell stated he does not agree with the second paragraph of the Park and Recreational Facility Policy.

A motion was made by Wilcox, seconded by Mahowald to approve the Park and Recreation Facility Policy as written, which passed (5-1, McConnell).

8. Irrigation System Discussion - Library and Greenway Brana Area

Planner Ondich provided the background on the Irrigation System. He stated Commissioner Mahowald asked staff to look into installing an irrigation system at the Memorial Library site (none exists currently) and also expanding the irrigation system at Greenway Park from the existing system around the Brana to the area by the benches and into the "island" between the trails in Greenway Park. He stated Jim Calliguri obtained quotes and for the irrigation system. He stated the Library would cost \$7,475 and Greenway Park area would cost \$3,300.

Mahowald stated that this discussion should be brought to the City Council.

Ingebrand stated that this should be placed on next years Park Board Budget.

Jirik stated that this is not something the Park Board should be paying for.

Wilcox stated that the Library is the gateway to the city and the idea should be looked at in the future.

9. Miscellaneous

A. Park “Misters” Information

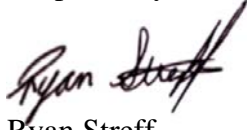
Planner Ondich stated since last months meeting Commissioner Wilcox asked staff to research “misters” which can be placed in parks. He stated that staff contacted the City of Northfield and they purchase their “misters” from Most Dependable Fountains. He stated that this was provided for informational purposes only.

Wilcox stated that an appropriate place for one if these “misters” would be between a playground and a shelter.

8. Adjournment

A motion was made by McConnell, seconded by Wilcox, to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 P.M., which passed unanimously (6-0).

Respectfully Submitted,



Ryan Streff
Planning Intern