



Public Services – Parks & Recreation

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
OF THE
ANOKA PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2015 – 7:00 P.M.
COUNCIL WORK SESSION ROOM OF ANOKA CITY HALL
2015 FIRST AVENUE, ANOKA MN

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairperson Steve Nelson, Joseph Anderla, Mary Blankenship, Margret Kallstrom, Dave Throne, and Dave Steinbring

MEMBERS ABSENT: Erik Skogquist, Pat Walker, and Ellen Ward

STAFF PRESENT: Greg Lee, Public Services Director; Lisa LaCasse, Recreation Supervisor; and Jon Holmes, Public Services Supervisor

GUESTS: Geoff Martin and Jennifer Shoemaker

APPROVE MINUTES

There being no changes or corrections to the November 2015 meeting minutes, a **motion was made by Steinbring, seconded by Anderla, to APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 17, 2015, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD AS PRINTED.**

6 ayes – 0 nays. Motion carried.

OPEN FORUM

None

NEW BUSINESS

Castle Field Plan, Final Phase – Geoff Martin - LaCasse brought the Park Board up to speed on the current status of Castle Field. Staff has asked Geoff Martin, Kimley Horn architect, to provide the Park Board and staff with an updated plan for Castle Field. Concept drawings were provided in the agenda packet and on overhead projections, including several options in areas within the plan itself. It was noted there will be a significant financial difference in the comparisons presented. The plan included comparison options for Concept A and B plaza, the proposed entry, the donor wall, three options for the tower of fame, the paving, and the site furnishings, which includes the benches and picnic tables, as well as landscaping.

Mr. Martin recommended one of the first improvements should address the entrance. The name sign needs to be improved by providing some sort of backdrop for the lettering so the name CASTLE FIELD stands out. It was also recommended the board consider whether it wants the next focal point upon entering the site to be the ladies restroom, which is what occurs now, or a possible donor monument between the entrance and the women's restroom or a tree/planter area.

Mr. Martin went on to show overhead photos of each concept improvement. Of note was a proposal to locate a decorative fence along the parking lot side of the site and on the west side up to the batting cages. The decorative fencing materials would then change to a cyclone fence and continue on to the outfield edges.

Paving options were discussed, noting the different qualities of materials, from crushed limestone to pavers.



Upon discussion, it was explained that the purpose of the fencing was to address the need for crowd control or for games/events where admission would be charged. Currently, staff has set up temporary fencing on four different occasions. It would be more convenience, cost effective, and visually attractive to install more permanent fencing. Nelson added if alcohol is sold, it would be best to keep patrons in a more controlled area. LaCasse added that the high school is planning to host sections at Castle Field in 2016. Other teams are planning tournaments at this field as well. It is very difficult to do without controlled access. Lisa stated staff would like to have fencing installed before the high school's section games.

Throne stated he has seen colored concrete in other locations, and it looks great. However, he asked once it needs replacing, how difficult is it to match colors and what is its longevity. Mr. Martin stated it would be a tradeoff. That is the biggest cost item in the project. A dark concrete is difficult to match. Lighter is easier but will never be perfect to replace and match. In this quantity, the pavers would be more expensive but visually pleasing. Throne stated he would not recommend the ag lime (limestone). He felt it would merely track all over. Blankenship concurred.

Jennifer Shoemaker, newly appointed Park Board member to begin her term in January 2016, asked about using concrete with texture. Mr. Martin stated that sandblasting would be a nice option but is the same cost of colored concrete. However, it might be easier to match later on. It does reflect light differently. Nelson asked about squares and rectangles of materials and putting grass in between. Holmes stated both ag lime or grass still creates a maintenance issue. LaCasse stated staff was concerned with tracking initially, so that is why the blacktop was placed around the building in the first place. Mr. Martin stated other aggregates could be used, such as crushed granite; but it does not hold up as well. It would not track as much.

Upon discussion of costs and how to proceed, Mr. Martin indicated he was asking for guidance from the Park Board. The city has indicated it needs to shave approximately \$50,000 off the current budget.

Steinbring, speaking from a Castle Field Association (CFA) standpoint, stated we need to find a way to finish this Castle Field construction project. He felt the fencing is the much needed first step, then try to move on to the next level.

Nelson agreed we need to be modular in this whole process due to cost restraints. He felt the ground cover is very important. If we use concrete, we need to have it installed in sections to allow it to be pulled off in such a way that it will not look awkward. He felt we need to establish a section for engraved pavers from contributors. While basic benches and the fence are important, ornamental things can be planned for in stages. We need to address the recognition bricks. Perhaps we could put off the expensive structural things that require an artist to design. With everything taken into consideration, Nelson truly felt we need to look at this in stages. We simply do not have enough money to do it all now. He felt our priority should be the fencing and recognition brick installation first.

Steinbring stated the CFA has initiated something to get people to donate to the program to complete that portion of the project.

Nelson stated that trees and tall grass are easy. Benches are extra. People are always bringing their own lawn chairs with them to games. Provide a bench or two to start with and build from that. He reiterated we should make this a modular project.

LaCasse indicated that during discussions with the CFA group, they wanted a donor wall between the restrooms or perhaps moved up toward the entrance/planter area as a focal point in front of the bathrooms. The CFA also discussed the location of donation pavers, suggesting in front of the building or perhaps scattered about. The American Legion would like to see the memorials from the old Castle Field in prominent display. Perhaps three flag poles would be sufficient. The primary flag for the field is out in center field.

Staff defined the gate area, which will hold the Willard Castle plaque as well as text about the old and the new Castle Fields and the community process. Nelson urged staff to give some thought as to where these plaques were located in order to avoid vandalism.

Throne considered the best location for the Wall of Fame, suggesting that right in front near the entrance where people can easily see it might be best, rather than between the restrooms. He felt the donation plaques might be easier to search out and read if they were located all in one spot rather than having them spread out. Kallstrom concurred, stating then you can see how many were donated. Nelson felt the paver section should provide numerous non-etched pavers someplace so there is room to grow as donations increase.

Steinbring felt perhaps the back center wall of the building might be a better place for the donation pavers and the memorial wall. That way people reading these pavers are not blocking the view of others trying to watch the game or get to the concession stand.

Nelson noted there should be an area where tournament scores can be displayed; usually to the left of the ladies' bathroom. Mr. Martin made note of this in that this need was not brought up before. Steinbring agreed that area for posting scores should be kept to the left of the women's bathroom. It has usually been done with paper or poster board.

Throne commented that the proposed Tower of Fame seems too close to the trash cans.

Nelson cautioned that if you plant a tree, eventually the root system will uproot something. We will need to keep this in mind and plan accordingly.

As for the benches, LaCasse stated staff narrowed down choices from those photos provided to bench #D, the slatted wood, similar to those in the dugout, made of recycled timbers. They are less formal.

Nelson stated that any picnic tables we can put out there would be satisfactory.

LaCasse asked the board if anything jumps out at them that they do not especially like. Nelson urged that any surface materials have a concrete base so it can be repaired one at a time if necessary.

Anderla asked if the electronic reader board location has been determined. LaCasse stated it has not. Getting permissions from Great River Energy will be difficult. While there has been some consideration about putting it by Seventh Avenue and the entrance to Castle Field, closer to the left field area, it will be a challenge.

Blankenship noted other areas in the city where black decorative fencing was installed and is so attractive. She predicted it will be a significant asset to this Castle Field project.

Mr. Martin felt this was great discussion and was of significant help in directing his vision for this portion of the project. LaCasse agreed, stating we can further discuss ground materials at a future meeting.

Review Annual Report to City Council – With Chairperson Nelson scheduled to make his bi-annual report to City Council soon, LaCasse presented a visual aid slideshow of park projects accomplished from July 2015 to the present. Some of the areas receiving improvements included: Peninsula Point Park, the Main Street pedestrian tunnel/art project, city cemeteries including the upgrade to the baby section fencing, Kings Island channel dredging, Riverfront concerts-in-the-park, Anoka Nature Preserve trailhead, blinds for waterfowl hunting, cedar tree revetment project by the Anoka Conservation District, John Ward Park field #3, and Kings Island Waterfowl Association blinds and gravel access trail.

Projects proposed for 2016 were briefly discussed. Lee stated we will be installing electronic locking systems on several park doors, such as what we have already done at Akin Riverside Park and Peninsula Point Park in 2015. Sunny Acres restrooms will get the next upgrade, with the John Ward Park restroom renovation being several years out.

Staff present were unanimously commended for the numerous park improvements taken place over the last few years.

Nelson will make his bi-annual report to Council on January 4, 2016.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Pedestrian Bridge Sign – Throne stated he does indeed ride across that foot bridge when no pedestrians are there. He asked if there is anything we can do to change the wording on the sign, such as BICYCLES MUST YIELD TO PEDESTRIANS.

Lee agreed that if no one else is on the pedestrian bridge, he can not see a cyclist getting off his/her bike and walking it across.

Blankenship felt a sign requesting people to do the right thing via polite language should be sufficient.

Throne added if we are not going to enforce any type of signage, we should not post it. Anderla stated they do not obey the sign now. Why would a new sign be obeyed?

Blankenship suggested a simple YIELD TO PEDESTRIANS sign might be more effective.

Lee suggested perhaps the direct BICYCLISTS YIELD TO PEDESTRIANS signage might be more successful. Staff will look at that possibility. LaCasse suggested a sign might read: NARROW BRIDGE. YIELD TO PEDESTRIANS. Lee noted such a sign would need to be placed at both the footbridge and pedestrian tunnel at Main Street.

MISCELLANEOUS

2015 Archery Deer Harvest Report – LaCasse reported three deer were taken in the Anoka Nature Preserve; none at Kings Island.

Transit Report – LaCasse reported the Senior Center staff gathered area transportation information, and she compiled this *Transportation Services* document found in the agenda packet. This provides a transportation guide for seniors and others in need living in the City of Anoka. The document can be found in the City Hall lobby, at the Chamber of Commerce, on the city's website, in the city's newsletter, at the senior high rise buildings, and at the Senior Center. It lists all transportation services available in Anoka County. Anoka County actually has a paid staff person who, when contacted, will walk you through how the system works and assist those who need it.

Change Park Board Meeting Dates for January and February 2016 – With the Martin Luther King and Presidents' Day holidays pushing back City Council meetings, they also push back Park Board meetings. It was noted that historically January and February meetings are held the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Board members agreed this would be acceptable.

Other – LaCasse asked what the Park Board felt we should do with the old Castle Field score board. A photo was shown of its current condition. She received a rehab estimate to upgrade it with LED lighting and got a price of \$7,200. It would cost \$4,800 for a new one. Obviously, to rehab it is cost prohibitive. This is a 1996 scoreboard. What would the Park Board recommend we do with it?

Suggestions included:

- Perhaps the new 10K Brewery might want to hang it in their shop
- Go out for bids and see if there is any interest
- Just get rid of it

Lee stated staff will dispose of it somehow and let the board know the outcome.

ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

- Oath of office for new and reappointed Park Board members
- Election of officers
- Review subcommittee appointments

- New photo taken of Park Board members for city website

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, a **motion was made by Kallstrom, seconded by Blankenship, to ADJOURN THE MEETING.**

6 ayes – 0 nays. Motion carried.

Time of adjournment: 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Lee". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Greg Lee
City Manager/Public Services Director

Mava Mikkonen
Public Services/Recording Secretary