



## Public Services – Parks & Recreation

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
OF THE  
ANOKA PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2016 – 7:15 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, Jennifer Shoemaker, and Ellen Ward

MEMBERS ABSENT: Erik Skogquist, Dave Steinbring, and Dave Throne

STAFF PRESENT: Lisa LaCasse, Public Services Administrator

GUESTS: None.

### APPROVE MINUTES

There being no changes or correction to the September regular meeting minutes, a **motion was made by Anderla, seconded by Kallstrom, to APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 20, 2016, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES AS PRINTED.**

**6 ayes – 0 nays. Motion carried.**

### OPEN FORUM

Kallstrom informed staff there is significant graffiti all over the Brisbin Park area (the sign, the playground, the garage wall, etc.). LaCasse will have Public Services crews look into this.

### NEW BUSINESS

**Rum River West Trail – Next Steps** – LaCasse referenced the 5:30 p.m. joint meeting this evening of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, the Economic Development Commission, and the Heritage Preservation Commission who discussed the concept plan of the Rum River West Trail, as presented by Geoff Martin, Kimley Horn Associates. She noted we have \$75,000 budgeted in 2017 to continue the planning design and consider our next steps in moving forward with this project. She indicated the Park Board may also want to consider if it wants to go out for a Request for Proposal (RFP) for this project or stay with Kimley Horn. LaCasse indicated the next steps in this planning process would be to get more comprehensive surveying done of the west Rum River property slopes to determine the trail alignment before we start planning and designing the finishing touches with that. We have some concepts used on the Riverfront project, so we can continue with that look and not have to recreate it for the west side of the river in this project.

LaCasse felt tonight's earlier joint meeting discussions went very well, with emphasis placed on pedestrian access in relation to Highway 169, as well as historic pieces of property along the trail corridor that will need to be assessed.

Blankenship stated she is in favor of doing a comprehensive review of any potential expansion of the Walker Plaza venue. She did not like the idea of such a huge block of construction developed as an addition to the existing Walker Plaza. She preferred that we proceed very cautiously in this regard. LaCasse indicated she has not heard much discussion about any Walker expansion but would relay concerns to City planning staff.



Nelson asked about whose capital improvement funds are paying for the demolition of the buildings. LaCasse stated demolition is not coming out of Parks Capital Funds.

**Young Artists of Anoka Halloween Projects** – LaCasse showed pictures of the projects, mostly a Halloween theme, worked on by Young Artists of Anoka. Projects included merchant windows, snow plow blades which will be on display during the Grand Day parade, and the pedestrian tunnel ramp wall. Shoemaker, spearheading these K-12 young artists, indicated she is working with youth age k – 12 with a variety of different skill levels.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

**Anoka Station Park** – LaCasse requested the Park Board's opinion relative to how to proceed with the Anoka Station Park. The concept plan was shown on the Smart Board. She ask, if we were to start a portion of this project in 2017, what would be the board's priority preference: 1) dredging for a canoe launch; 2) creating a trail out to Grant Street with a playground in preparation for future development; or 3) creating a trailhead with parking lot.

Shoemaker felt her priority would be establishing the trailhead and parking lot. Adding if we dredge and build a canoe launch without having a parking lot, it defeats the purpose. LaCasse indicated that the playground is outside the conservation easement boundary, so we do not need Department of Natural Resource (DNR) approval. Applications are still in the review process.

Anderla queried that the playground would be for the Homestead of Anoka and future residential development. LaCasse confirmed it would serve the Sixth Avenue neighborhood as the plan is to eventually remove the Grant Tot Lot. As for the boat launch, this is a better location than the existing Brom Canoe Launch as that is located on a cut bank within a high current area of the Rum.

Upon discussion of the parking lot, LaCasse confirmed the city would continue to use it as its snow dump, but creating this trailhead/parking lot would allow us to better control the drainage and clean up in the spring.

Shoemaker indicated you could not even see the playground from Fourth Avenue if it were installed now because the pond is so overgrown. People would have to park and get out to find it. She loved the idea of dredging, but felt the parking lot is a greater priority, even if the parking lot were gravel.

Nelson asked if the city has received park dedication fees for this. LaCasse confirmed we have received fees from the Homestead development. He agreed with Shoemaker; his priority would be the parking lot and trailhead. However, he can see that something closer to the Volunteers of America (VOA) facility might be needed. Either option would be alright with him.

LaCasse reported the developer interested in the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue site was asked to rework their concept plan and is currently focusing more effort on other properties they are interested in within the City. Unless approval is granted by the DNR soon, LaCasse noted it is difficult to pull together a dredging project for this winter anyway. There would be too much planning and work to be done. Anderla felt it possible the DNR might not give us a permit to dredge anyway. LaCasse stated anything is possible.

By verbal consensus, those present (Ward, Anderla, Nelson, Shoemaker, Kallstrom, and Blankenship) agreed the parking lot/trailhead should be considered the Park Board's priority.

**11<sup>th</sup> Avenue Development** – LaCasse reported that City Council has approved the first reading of an ordinance approving a purchase agreement for the twenty-nine (29) unit 55 and over development. She indicated staff's thought is we would have the developer construct the eight-foot bituminous trail through this area and it will run into Sunny Acres. We could ask the developer to provide this trail through the project all the way through and connect to Cleveland as their portion of park dedication. This could, however, impact our unofficial dog park in that area. She asked how badly does the Park Board want to fight for this dog park.

Anderla and Nelson asked if this the trail in lieu of park dedication is an equitable exchange. LaCasse stated park dedication is \$2,450 per unit, so it should come to approximately \$71,000. There is about

4,000 feet of trail. If trail costs are not close to the \$71,000, she would not recommend it. Otherwise, it could be a good use of those funds.

Inquiries about how often the unofficial dog park in this area is used was raised. LaCasse stated she could not confirm usage. It would be possible to use park dedication money to improve this dog park. However, to date we have not had good luck convincing nearby residential areas to accept a dog park. Nelson added a dog park is not part of our priority goals at this point. Shoemaker felt it only fair that the developer going in this area should know about the dog park. If we put it in first, it would be a known entity.

Upon further discussion about a dog park in this area, LaCasse stated the developer is going to start marketing soon. Anderla asked about whether there was any other location within Sunny Acres that could be used for a dog park indicating that he thought about the space along the wetland west of the ball fields. She noted an open space south of the existing Sunny Acres playground that could be a location for a dog park. She has witnessed people using it now to run their dogs. Ward liked that idea. LaCasse noted this 1.5 acre property would be approximately 500 x 275 in size; whereas, the existing unofficial dog park is approximately 4.5 acres. She felt it could be worth looking at. The board concurred.

### **George Enloe Park**

- **Tennis/Pickleball Courts** – LaCasse presented photos of the newly renovated tennis courts, with half the space transformed to pickleball courts. She explained that staff is concerned about the sublevel ground in the area of the posts and want to delay use of these courts until the spring of 2017. We will install a black vinyl fence between the pickleball and tennis courts.
- **Playground Replacement 2017** – LaCasse reported that we have plans to replace the playground in 2017 and would like to propose that rather than replace the 2 smaller structures in their current locations, that the park board consider consolidating the playgrounds into one location near the building and eliminating the one by the tennis court. Incidentally, the homeowner at 3401 installed a six-foot fence all the way to his back property line adjacent to George Enloe Park because he doesn't like that the balls from the basketball hoop roll into his yard. LaCasse also asked the board's opinion on whether we should retain the small basketball court nearby when we have a large one in the northwest area of this park.

Nelson and Anderla concurred it would be best to keep the older basketball players on the larger court to the northwest and separate them from the younger children utilizing the playground.

LaCasse indicated she is working on application for additional funds to supplement the amount we have budgeted so that we could upgrade the fall surfacing from woodchips to "poured in place". She expected to have more information in about the availability of the funds a month.

**A motion was made by Ward, seconded by Blankenship, to ELIMINATE THE SMALL GEORGE ENLOE PLAYGROUND AND RELOCATE A NEW UPGRADED PLAYGROUND TO THE SOUTH CENTRAL AREA OF GEORGE ENLOE PARK, AS DISCUSSED. ALSO, TO DIRECT STAFF TO ELIMINATE THE SOUTHEAST BASKETBALL COURT IN GEORGE ENLOE PARK.**

**6 ayes – 0 nays. Motion carried.**

- **Castle Field Phase 3** – LaCasse provided an update of the Castle Field Project, phase three. She reported we finished pouring the plaza on Friday, October 14, 2016. The City removed the temporary bituminous and replaced it with 6000 sq ft of concrete to create the formal plaza area. There is a cut out for the donor paver bricks as well as paver accents along the building. A significant improvement was the realignment of the pedestrian entrance ramp, which required tearing out the curbing. Other improvements noted included a donor wall and the locations where trees and/or shrubs will be planted in the spring of 2017 to start the shade process. LaCasse stated with the money spent on phase three, we might have about \$20,000 to set aside for Castle Field's future needs.

LaCasse noted the Castle Field Association (CFA) did some winterizing at the field last weekend. Shoemaker asked if staff thought a second grand opening/fundraiser would be appropriate when this is totally complete. LaCasse stated she could look into such a possibility. Nelson stated, as a CFA member, we need to advertise more and get more people involved.

- **Mississippi River Community Park** – LaCasse reported the underside of the park shelters were stained; did some repairs to the fascia. We plan to address the graffiti on the concrete pads that was just poured and then install the benches. This week the section of trail running closest to the river will get resurfaced.
- **Bonnell Park** – LaCasse showed photos of the 2016 Bonnell Fields project. We hope to get fences up yet this year. She noted the sidewalk does dead end, but it is in the planning for future Street Renewal Project work to be extended to the curb – we didn't want to have to remove sidewalk we just installed. Some areas of the park were reseeded after heavy rains washed the seed away. The interior is not unobstructed and can be utilized as a football, lacrosse, or soccer field and have total grassy areas. The school district plans to put a storage shed back on the property.

#### ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

- Pool report
- Park fees for 2017

#### ADJOURNMENT

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

**6 ayes – 0 nays. Motion carried.**

Time of adjournment: 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa LaCasse  
Public Services Administrator

Mava Mikkonen  
Public Services/Recording Secretary

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