

City of Falcon Heights Parks & Recreation Commission

Meeting Minutes

Monday, September 8 2014 6:30 p.m.

In attendance: Christina Erickson, Gordon Strom, Liz Asmus, Dave Thomas, Emily Metcalfe, Staff Michelle Tesser, Staff Tim Pittman, Michael Breen, Ron Eischen, Council Liaison Chuck Long

Unable to attend: Cari Lee, Mary Hannon Jacobson

Call to Order 6:31 pm

1. Approval of July 14th meeting minutes (no August 11th meeting)

Minutes approved from July

2. Master Park Planning Project Update-Candace Amberg WSB & Associates - The rest of the meeting consisted of a conversation facilitated by Candace in regards to the first draft of park planning.

Candace: This is time for conceptual ideas to improve the parks. To help make the parks function better, she will present several ideas and we will let her know what we think will work to begin to condense to a final plan.

Take each park one at a time.

FH Elementary School (Theme: Sports)

- 1) Improve basketball fields
- 2) Add soccer field (very close to actual soccer field size) - this can have smaller field imprinted on top
- 3) Add T- ball field
- 4) Actual little league field is a possibility
- 5) A few more trees could be added

Would have to make arrangements with the school to create an agreement for maintenance and usage, there could be usage by the school of course too.

What about stands or bleachers and benches? Not quite sure. Adding players benches would cost about \$1200 each.

Main maintenance issue, would be determining who is responsible for the maintenance – the school or the city. Maybe the school could continue to cut grass and the city could create the lines. Fertilizing would be important too.

The maintenance agreement would need to be very specific. This would require school districts agreement.

Overall, useful design, efficient.

Grove Park (Theme: Woodlands)

Two different plans

Plan 1

- 1) More formal approach. Focus on open lawn space. Formalized internal green space with an oval shape.
- 2) Trail connection on back trolley line.
- 3) Includes proposed picnic shelter for 3-4 tables
- 4) Basketball court improved and extended and pickle ball on top of it.
- 5) Play structure tucked around the trees

Plan 2

- 1) More free flowing, rectangular green space with a looped trail around.
- 2) Proposed picnic shelter off to the side
- 3) Play ground with a trillium flower design
- 4) Addition of a back stop – but make it more artistic, with leaf patterns. It could function as a back stop, but includes the woodland feel.
- 5) This version could be flooded for ice rink
- 6) Basketball court also improved and extended a bit north and south
- 7) Trail connection to trolley line.

Open space is less changed in the second plan. All include 8' asphalt trail and concrete around play ground. Poured in place rubber with wood chips over it. Exercise stations could stay.

Second design appears to have more flexibility. The back stop placement and tree placement allows for better play space and connection to the golf course.

Curtiss Field (Theme: Water)

Two plans – fencing around both ponds – could include “flowy” looking fencing to mimic water

First plan

- 1) Building is in the way of expanding playground. Building is moved closer to residents – acts as a buffer for noise to neighbors
- 2) Play space expanded
- 3) Big ball added that can be an ice rink, or just keep ½ basketball court, moved closer to the pond
- 4) Route system the same
- 5) Expand vegetation and privacy fence
- 6) Educational storm water signage added
- 7) Expanded parking to 10 slots – may have to check on turn around space for emergency vehicles

Second plan

- 1) Big trail that can act as an emergency road
- 2) No courts
- 3) No rink
- 4) Building still moved
- 5) Winter skating with no formal rink
- 6) Interpretive signage still included
- 7) Plank decking over looking the pond

Candace will work on another plan combining some of the elements of both plans Keeping the sports area, the pond overlook, reducing parking, and maintaining the emergency drive through.

Community Park (Theme: Fields, farming, pollination)

Two plans:

- 1) Bring the parking in deeper
- 2) Gateways for pedestrians on every corner
- 3) Rural type of fencing design
- 4) Move community gardens and make them visible from the road
- 5) Hockey rink, sport court
- 6) Playground area moved, separation of different play groups
- 7) Natural trails maintained
- 8) Internal loops within the park system for walking
- 9) Keeps activities internal to the park
- 10) Soccer field, full size

Plan 2

- 1) Two vehicle entrances – Roselawn and Cleveland
- 2) Big new building
- 3) More park like view on the north side
- 4) New playground and a new natural play area where current playground is.
- 5) Offers different play amenities
- 6) Rink
- 7) Soccer field reoriented
- 8) Natural trail connections
- 9) This includes a new park building

Candace will again combine plans from both plans with best amenities.

Regional trails plan - for the bikeway is still not yet completed. Original plans are to work with some of the back roads to avoid the busiest streets, onto trails and have a continuous bike movement to Como. Connections would be made among existing trails for complete pedestrian routes. Some further investigations are needed on connecting routes.

Michelle attended a meeting with Active Living Ramsey County - they have benches they can donate to our trail system .

Roselawn - there are complaints that Roselawn is a bike trail and this route needs to become more pedestrian friendly and connect with the larger bike paths such as Reservoir Woods and Lexington Ave N Trail. Active Living Ramsey County Committee suggested contacting Commissioner Janice Rettman to help get funding from the wheelage tax. Adding ped and bicycle trails on Roselawn Ave could be done when Roseville improves Roselawn Ave. Tesser was told that the projected date for Roselawn Ave improvement is 2015 but could be 2016 depending on budget.

What are the next steps Candace?

She will take the comments and condense to 1 plan for each park. These will have rough estimates of costs. This will help us prioritize. Candace is still waiting on assessments from playgrounds and an architect.

The commission will meet on Oct 13th for final approval. The open house to the public will be set on Thursday, October 23rd at City Hall. Council will tentatively discuss the park designs at the November workshop.

We have a *potential* \$75,000 in kind grant to be used towards Curtiss Field playground. The installation of the playground would be scheduled early June. We don't want to lose out on that opportunity.

No more time to address the rest of the items on the agenda.

Meeting adjourned, 8:33 pm.

Submitted by Christina Erickson