

MINUTES

City of Lake Elmo Parks Commission February 21, 2018

Members Present: Chair Frick, Commissioners Mayek, Nelson, Olinger, Steele, Weeks, Zeno

Members Absent: Commissioners Ames, Nuenfeldt

Staff Present: Public Works Director Weldon, City Planner Prchal

The meeting was called to order by Chair Frick at 6:30 PM.

Approval of Agenda

Frick made a motion to move Reid Park to the 5th item on the agenda and the Comp Plan would move to item 6 and Weeks seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Frick to approve the January minutes as amended, seconded by Ames. Motion passed.

Select Chair and Vice Chair

Mayek nominated Nelson for Chair. Nelson nominated Frick. Commission selected Nelson for the Chair.

Weeks nominated Frick for Vice-Chair. Commission voted Frick as the Chair.

The Commission decided leave the Secretary position vacant.

Reid Park Mountain Biking Proposal from SASCA

Prchal stated that SASCA approached the City to develop mountain bike trails in Reid Park.

They are proposing a little over 2 miles of trail that they would design, install, and maintain. Prchal presented the proposal.

Matt Lehmann, SASCA representative explained the trail would stay out of the west side of the park and within the tree line. They would not cut down any trees larger than 4 inches. It would not cross the primary walking path and they would look to minimize crossing the secondary path. He explained that bikers would yield to walkers.

Discussion about existing parking, that there are issues during sports activities, added people driving to and using the bike trails. Mayek said it would be a great neighborhood amenity but not long enough for people to drive there to use it. Steele suggested monitoring the use of the parking lot for a year and adding improvements to the CIP if needed. Steele asked that the language of the contract would include that the City would be able to set the standard of the quality of the trail and needs to have the final approval.

Rolf Larson, 11720 Little Bluestem Ct. N asked if walking trails would disappear or be replaced.

A resident (that did not state their name or address for the record) had questions about SASCA, how the trail will be paid for, the growth of Lake Elmo, the displacement of wildlife at the park by constructing the trail and her enjoyment of the park.

Lehmann explained that SASCA is an organization and operates with fundraising and volunteers and will be a low-cost endeavor. The goal was to minimize the impact on the City. He explained that wildlife love the trails instead of having to walk through bushes. He also explained that the trails require concentration and they are fairly quiet due to this focus, not usually yelling.

Janel Surgenor, 11725 32nd St. N asked about the existing walking trails if there would be any updates or maintenance done to the existing trails including addressing the flooding that occurs between Easton Village and Reid Park in the Spring.

Lehmann explained he would not be making any changes to the walking trails. Prchal said the funding for those would be from the City and is a separate issue.

A resident asked about low areas, wet muddy areas, are they designed around or would you be bringing in class 5 or otherwise mitigating the trails?

Lehmann explained that going around low areas is preferred and when it is not possible they would rather build a low bridge than bring in gravel since it is not sustainable nor aesthetic.

Sarah Berkowitz, 11063 11th St. N said she has gotten into the sport of mountain biking with her son. She spoke about riding on other trails. She feels this is an asset to Lake Elmo and will allow more people to get active and utilize the parks.

Gerald Olson, 2932 Legion Ave. N has some concerns about the amount of runoff from the construction occurring in the area flooding the park. He also had concerns about how the bikes would interact with people walking their dogs; he stated there are a lot of people that walk their dogs in the park. He is also concerned with the number of people increasing in the park and the impact on wildlife, animals will leave the park due to more human activity.

Richard Schroeder, 11347 30th St. N. He also submitted an email. He feels not enough people are aware of the mountain biking, he also feels that the trails are a large footprint of the park and there could be a better balance.

Mayek commented that all of trails developed for mountain biking in MN have been developed for multiple uses, such as trail running, not just mountain biking.

Robert Berkowitz, 11063 11th St. N, has lived in his home for 18 years, works for South Washington Schools and has a senior in high school on the Mountain Bike team. He has a younger child that also bikes. He said these trails are for younger kids starting out and for families, not competition type trails.

A resident (that did not state their name or address for the record) asked why mountain bikers need more access to trails and is concerned about safety along 31st St.?

Craig Knoll, 3127 Laverne Ct. N is excited to see some development to the park since it is largely undeveloped, however is looking for some balance. He is an avid dog walker in the park. Asked about the parameters of trail usage between snowshoe and mountain bike.

Frick stated that there is money in the 2018 CIP for Reid Park to improve the walking trails.

Prchal confirmed there is \$25,000 for the trails.

Questions about regarding how the public was notified about the park plan. Prchal responded that it was put into the CIP in 2017. All of the meetings about the CIP are public, including Parks, Planning, and City Council. There was a Public Hearing at the Planning Commission. It was published in the Fresh and the City Facebook page.

Discussion about signage and funding for signage. There is funding for intersection and directional signs, however maps or rule signs would require fund raising.

Steele said he would like to see this brought back in March to the Parks Commission with all the changes to the language mentioned and all the neighbors within a certain radius notified.

Mayek said that he feels they have provided a good plan and it is ready to move forward.

Olinger asked if this was brought back in a month would it cause a significant delay and would they be able to complete this in a year?

Lehmann stated that Valley View took six months to build but that it was a much more difficult trail.

Mayek made the motion to approve the development of a trail by SASCA, seconded by Olinger. Motion passed. Zeno abstained and Frick and Steele voted no.

Presentation – Drafted Parks Chapter for the Comprehensive Plan

Jennifer Hanscamp presented an outline of Comp Plan and mentioned the requirements from the Met Council. She is proposing that the two chapters that are related to the Parks Commission are combined into one. The combined chapter would become a higher level comprehensive goals and the details would be moved to a system plan. Additionally she is looking to expand the natural resources component.

Hanscamp said that all of the information is available on the project website. She mentioned that the Advisory Panel and the public – parks and open space is the defining character of the community – the theme of access whether private or public and how to be active

Chapter would be available next month. The workshop handout would be completed and returned to Hanscamp by March 9 to be included into the Chapter.

Hammes 3rd Addition Final Plat - Update

Prchal gave a brief update, stating it was approved and providing a copy of the approval. No action needed for this item.

Adopt-A-Park

Weeks made a motion to table this item to the March meeting, seconded by Mayek. Motion passed.

March Meeting

Adopt-A-Park

Sally Manzara Interpretive Center presentation/update on the project

Staff Reports and Commission Update

Prchal gave an update on Central Greenway. Prchal reported that City staff met with Washington County staff – they will be calling on Mayek in near future.

Prchal reported the Royal Golf Money for Park Dedication – Per the Development Agreement: The Developer shall pay the City a cash donation of \$1,000,000.00 upon the Royal Golf Club at Lake Elmo 3rd Addition final plat being approved by the City, or upon approval by the City of that phase of the development where the Tartan Park ballfields are no longer able to be used by the City, whichever happens first.

Weldon gave an update on Forest Management Plan 2018 – staff does not have time or forestry ability, they will need would need to hire this out to a company. Great River Greening was a company that has reached out for projects.

Weldon also reported that he is looking to use Sentence to Serve individuals for buck thorn removal and other beautification in parks one day a week during the year.

Frick and Mayek stated that the trails were groomed well this year.

Steele asked that if grants are applied for that the information is relayed back to the Commission. Prchal reported that he submitted for a grant for Parks for Kids.

Meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Tanya Nuss**