

MINUTES

City of Lake Elmo Park Commission Monday, December 15, 2014

Members Present: Hartley, Weis, Silvernale, Frick, Ames, Steele, Zeno

Members Absent: Nelson, Hietpas

Others Present: Taxpayer Relations & Communications Coordinator MacLeod, Planning Commissioner Rolf Larson, Park Maintainer Colemer, City Administrator Zuleger, Planning Intern Riley

The meeting was called to order by Chair Weis at 6:41 PM.

Approval of Agenda

Zuleger requested to add Item B under New Business – DeMontreville Pool Issue.

M/S/P: Ames/Frick: Approved as amended 7-0

Approval of November 17, 2014 Minutes

Ames asked to change third paragraph, second page: “Ames is uncomfortable”

M/S/P: Weis/Hartley: Approved as amended 7-0

New Business

a. Carriage Station Park Deed & Maintenance

Two parcels of land in Carriage Station have never been deeded back to the city, as should have been according to previous agreement. The first is an approximate 3.2 acre parcel where the park is located, and a .5 acre parcel where the city well house is located. Zuleger said that he spoke to the representatives of the HOA (Ed Kunnary and Dave O’Neil), and the city has an agreement verbally to take two pieces of land and deed them back to the city. He is suggesting that the park commission ratify two parcels at this time.

Zuleger suggested that they have E.G. Rud survey and quitclaim the land, at the city’s expense.

Ames asked where the assumption of land for the park was. He asked where the maps identifying park land were created and how the boundaries were determined. Zuleger said the only boundary they had was the outlot, and there was no boundary delineation for the park specifically.

Zuleger asked the commission to recommend to council to create two outlots in Carriage Station Park (outlot #1 carriage Station Proper 3.2 acres and the wellhouse .5 acres).

Motion made to create two parcels carriage station proper 3.2 acres, and .5 acres for the well house at Carriage Station Park at the City expense

M/S/P: Hartley/Ames: Approved 7-0.

Dave O’Neil arrived at 6:50 pm after motion was made and approved. He was president of the HOA at the time working with Marty (Rafferty), when he learned that the park was the back-up site for the wastewater treatment system. An easement was also acquired across 50th in order to remain compliant.

O’Neil presented a map that identified the area of land that the HOA previously agreed to deed to the City. The borders provided by the HOA were slightly different than what the City is proposing. O’Neil said that what was discussed as a border in the past was the tree line.

Motion amended by Weis to be consistent with the agreement that the HOA created 8 years ago in relation to the path.

b. DeMontreville Pool

The home at 7920 Demontreville Trail had a pool built beyond the property line, in DeMontreville Wildlife Park. The property was permitted and passed inspection at the time (before current staff); it was city error. Zuleger said that they had worked with land owner to buy a tenth of an acre to extend the lot line to include the pool. The city will get it appraised, and come back to park commission and council for approval; money would go to the park fund. Estimate between \$4-10k.

The homeowner is interested in purchasing the land at market price. If the landowner does not agree, they city will ask them to remove the pool.

Motion made to proceed as suggested to sell parcel of land to homeowner at market value to allow for setbacks approximately 1/10th of an acre.

M/S/P: Ames/Hartley: Approved 7-0.

Old Business

a. Bee Safe City Ordinance

Riley gave a presentation outlining the declining health/population of bees and how cities are passing bee-safe policies to address the issue. The ordinance would primarily ban neonicotinoids and systemic insecticides. Shorewood is the first city in the metro to pass the ordinance. Stillwater is currently working on one.

The City's land treatment methods are currently in compliance with the bee-safe ordinance, and there would be no additional cost to become a bee-friendly city.

Steele asked for confirmation on what making a bee friendly habitat entails. Riley replied that it would be ceasing the use of chemicals, and she said that they could potentially plant native species on city land. Steele suggested that they could be more aggressive in their efforts to be bee friendly.

Hartley shared that at a recent conference she attended she learned that the packaging on some of common chemicals tells you to use amounts that are about 10x the amount that most agricultural farmers would use.

Hartley asked if we have discussed emerald ash borer. Zuleger replied that they had proposed to put out trays, but when the forestry program was disbanded, the effort lost steam. He said that they are telling folks not to plant certain varieties of ash. Hartley said that some people are treating the ash with the systemic insecticides (injections around the root zone).

Zuleger said he highly supports a bee-safe policy, and with the Engstrom development they will see a bee friendly habitat; he will prescribe pollinator-based landscaping as well.

Steele thinks this is good work and would like to support this. He feels as part of the resolution they need to include a more detailed plan. He would like to go beyond stopping the negative factors, and work on implementing positive changes that encourage the bees. Zuleger responded that the ordinance would be a good kick off and they could use the next 6 months to create a solid plan.

Motion made to accept the Bee Safe ordinance and approve staff to design an operational plan to implement concepts by July 1.

Ames suggested that this be incorporated to the planning functions for upcoming developments to make sure that they are in compliance.

Steele asked if there was something similar to help the butterfly population and was wondering if they could look at a similar resolution in the next couple of months. Zuleger suggested that it's covered in the pollinator.

M/S/P: Frick/Hartley: Approved 7-0.

b. Comprehensive Plan Updates

Riley presented updated information: playground equipment inventory, activities and amenities, parks service map. 18,500 will most likely be the updated population projection for Thrive MSP 2040 (population needs to be updated in Riley's updates but remains concentrated in the I94 area).

The commission discussed that more parkland may be needed in the I94 corridor to compensate for density. Zuleger asked what kind of space are they talking about and that having a definition to appropriate size would help with planning efforts going forward (they want a minimum number for parkland when dealing with concept plans). Ames suggested 3 acre minimum.

Steele thinks that they need to be aggressive with future developments to say they need the park land instead of money in lieu of.

Zeno discussed the illusion factor to use landscaping to make parks feelings larger than they are.

Weis feels that they should leave a little bit of room for the developer to determine how much park is needed based on demographics.

Larson said that he thinks a mistake they've made in the past is basing parkland on size rather than density. Frick asked if changing the PUD language is needed.

Steele discussed incorporating wetlands into the park plans. Zuleger said that there are shoreland ordinances that need to be taken into account.

Riley reiterated that they should have a strong definition of what open space is because now many developments are putting storm ponds as their open space. Steele talked about adding some of these things to agenda early on next year to discuss.

Weis suggested adding open space discussion to the next park agenda.

c. Easton Village Park Budget

Weis said that he was surprised about being given the price tag for the Easton Village proposed park at the last meeting he did not want to penalize the developer for bringing a plan. He encouraged the commission to decide on a budget to give the developers to work with. Zuleger stated that he had spoken with the developers and were realistically looking at about \$70k, similar to the Sanctuary Park budget.

The park is about 3 acres; development will have 271 units. The commission discussed taking a phased approach, as no one was living there yet.

Ames stated that the park shouldn't be built while no one is living there, but also doesn't want to see happen there what happened in Sanctuary. Ames suggested setting a policy where the commission would commit to 100% park development once the homes are at 50% developed.

The commission will discuss and devise a formula for putting equipment in new developments next month.

d. Sunfish Lake Task Force Plan Discussion

Steele suggested that they send emails suggesting edits that they would like on the plan, and revisit in January. Weis suggested sending all items to Steele and have Steele discuss with the subcommittee (in order to avoid open meeting) and present changes at the February meetings.

Zuleger shared with the commission that SunShare, a company for solar energy wants to come and present to the commission about putting solar panels in Sunfish on the landfill. Ames talked about infrastructure in city parks and they have denied items in the past (ie. water tower). Hartley would still like to see a dog park put into the area. Zuleger reiterated that all they are looking for tonight is a yes or no toward whether they want these people to come in and present.

Motion made to recommend that SunShare reevaluate a different location for solar panels.

M/S/P: Weis/Hartley: Approved 7-0.

Staff Report

a. MPCA Update

Zuleger is having coffee with MPCA Commissioner Stein on Thursday. There was never a solid promise made by MPCA to provide funds in lieu of parkland – they would consider helping the city seek grants to cover the cost of land. The real issue is whether the city can be relieved from the obligation to provide replacement land. It is likely that the city can avoid penalization.

Zuleger confirmed that the next step (advised by the park commission) is to get the city out of obligation with the DNR to replace the land. Commission confirmed.

b. January & February 2015 Meeting Dates

Meetings dates will be changed from regularly scheduled dates to January 5 due to Martin Luther King Jr. Day on the 19th and February 2 due to Presidents Day on the 16th

c. January Meeting Prep

Formula for implementing new parks (at what percent complete)
Open space definition for PUD (include Johnson)

Meeting adjourned at 9:08 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Alyssa MacLeod, Recording Secretary