

MINUTES

City of Lake Elmo Park Commission Thursday, January 30, 2014

Members Present: Hartley, Silvernale, Frick, Steele, Hietpas,

Members Absent: Weis, Nelson, Zeno, Ames

Others Present: Administrator Zuleger, Council Member Reeves, City Planner Nick Johnson, Planning Commissioner Rolf Larson

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Hartley, acting as president at 6:35 PM.

Approval of Agenda

Hietpas requested the addition of the Jamaca Storm Planting update.

M/S/P: Hietpas/Hartley: Approved 5-0 as amended

Approval of December 16, 2013 Minutes

Deferred approval of minutes to February meeting.

Election of Officers

In Weis' absence, Zuleger shared with the commission that Weis was interested in serving as Chair again if it were the council's pleasure. 2014 officers were elected as follows:

Chair: Shane Weis, moved by unanimous consent

Vice Chair: Mary Frick, moved by unanimous consent

Secretary: Jacob Silvernale, moved by unanimous consent

New Business

a. Hammes Estates Proposed Park Facilities (Johnson)

Zuleger noted that this is the third iteration of the park plan. A concept was presented on August 19, which the commission approved 6-0. The plan included small neighborhood park/tot lot. Since then the plan has been revised and staff advised them to return to park commission in order to move toward preliminary plat.

The new concept has decreased from 172 lots to 164, and includes additional trails and a proposal to expand and utilize city own parcel near Goose Lake that will house a shelter, tot lot and fishing pier. Traditional parkland dedication per city comprehensive low density urban district is 10%, which would be 7.8 acres in this development. The current plan would include more than 11 acres eligible for parkland dedication, if all parkland dedication is consumed by 100' buffer trail it may be necessary to find an alternate/additional funding.

Steele questioned how the plan could connect into the larger trail plan for the city. Johnson discussed connections to surrounding developments.

Brian McGulrich, with the Hammes West Development, addressed the commission. He noted that the development is intended to promote an active lifestyle. Considering house prices will range between \$400 and \$800k (not starter homes), McGulrich believes that a tot lot wouldn't serve most of the neighborhood. Therefore the park plan was modified to extend the trail system to cater to walkers, runners etc., and added the concept for Goose Lake to give the development character. Ryland Homes partner in the development – driving force behind giving it more of a neighborhood feel.

Amended motion.

M/S/P: Steele/Silvernale: Approved plat as is contingent on the addition of a tot lot, picnic shelter, berm along the road, linkage of trail into cul-de-sac on north and west, and the pier. Approved 5-0

Motion amended to include the commission's support of the connection to Stonegate, per Johnson's recommendation.

b. Easton Village Park Plan (Johnson)

Staff asked the Park commission asked to review four critical questions regarding the Easton Village Park Plan: 1. What type of facility should the city plan for in terms of community park in village? 2. How much acreage is required to site those facilities? 3. In terms of what applicant is presenting, is that location of parkland appropriate? 4. Are there any expansions of Reid Park that may be appropriate to include with this development?

According to park plan, the area is slotted as a community park or community sports complex. The area subject to airport Safety zone, meaning that passive parks are allowed, but state rules do not allow areas or events where people congregate. The City is working with MnDOT on a specific plan/zoning that would allow for a limited amount of residential activity in the area.

The current development plan includes 224 single family lots. The developer has presented two general park areas: 5.1 acres in the northwest corner of site, and a 0.5 acre park area near proposed entrance of the development. Pure parkland dedication would be 9.8 acres; more land than currently proposed.

Steele shared that he envisioned the area more like a English garden type of park with ponds, trails and a band shell. Zuleger added that the council sees the village green area closer to Lake Elmo Avenue, and that the section in Easton is more likely to be developed into a sporting complex. Zuleger added that the Old Village Comp plan was just approved in December and that there will be a Downtown redevelopment meeting in March.

Steele expressed concern about the sports complex being so close to housing. Hietpas noted that the amount currently allocated in terms of acreage wouldn't be large enough to accommodate a sports complex.

Steele suggested taking cash in lieu of park space because residents will be served by nearby park space (Reid). Zuleger agreed that accepting cash to augment and add to existing parks is a good idea. He expressed a shortage in staff and resources presents a challenge to add more acreage to the park system.

Hartley asked if the developer would help the committee/City develop Reid Park.

Developer Tom Walter addressed the commission. He confirmed that what he is hearing is that they were looking for walkability. Walter discussed a redesign option replacing the allotted park space with one or two pocket parks, increasing connectivity with cul-de-sacs and trails, and getting pedestrian traffic from east side to Reid Park.

Commission thinks only one pocket park is necessary (further to the north, east), if there is good connectivity into Reid.

Walter answered the commission's question that they could not build facilities in Reid Park – they would give money in lieu of space, and it would be up to the commission to make further improvements.

c. EMWREP "Clean Water" Geocache trail in Sunfish (Zuleger)

East Metro Water Resource Education Program wants to do a clean water geocache trail in Sunfish Lake Park. It is being brought to the commission for their approval. Chair Weis has already approved the idea.

M/S/P: Steele/Hietpas: Approve of the EMWREP Clean Water. 5-0

d. February Meeting Date Change (Zuleger)

The regularly scheduled park commission meeting in February falls on a federal holiday – Presidents Day and the commission is being asked to choose another meeting date. Meeting date changed to Wednesday, Feb. 19 at 6:30 pm.

e. February 11th Workshop with City Council (Zuleger)

Zuleger informed the commission that per ordinance there needs to be an annual meeting with the park commission and council. Zuleger suggested that the park commission has a 2.5 hour workshop with the council on Feb. 11th to discuss the key points of the plan of work. The primary issues to be discussed will be park revitalization, park utilization, trails, forestry, and the Sunfish Lake Park plan of work.

f. Jamaca Storm Planting Update (Hietpas)

Hietpas informed the commission that they did not receive the funding for the planting. 20 applications were received and 16 were approved; Lake Elmo was not one. Zuleger asked why. Hietpas said that it might be because their project wasn't as closely tied to water quality as some of the other projects, and that not enough funding was available to support all of the projects.

Hietpas said that the money that they currently have could be used to purchase and install plants and also to get them in, and that there was a time frame in which the funds needed to be spent.

Steele asked if they could tap into the capital fund to supplement.

Item will be added to February agenda for further discussion.

Old Business

a. New Development Review Process (Zuleger)

Zuleger expressed to the commission that when talking about park strategy in new developments should not break them down into subcommittee. He would like to see development issues addressed by the committee as a whole. Steele responded that he feels some matters are better suited for smaller committees but agrees with Zuleger toward development.

Hietpas added that the commission needs a greater amount of background information in order to make development decisions.

Steele stated that he would feel more comfortable if the commission could nail down a design of central green and the sports complex in order to find out how much space is needed. He believes this will better equip the park commission to determine a location to place the parks.

Frick asked if the park plan needs to be revisited as it was developed in 2006. Zuleger replied that, yes, the commission should reassess.

b. Trail Committee Update (Johnson)

Johnson has been serving as the primary staff person assisting the LERT subcommittee. Johnson talked about breaking the trail plan into segments and what funding options are available. His role is to help get a plan in place that the county will support. Johnson stated that city staff has met with county staff members who are the key players in parks and trails, who support the efforts of the LERT.

Met Council is currently working on a regional bikeways plan, which will fit into what the trail committee is looking to do. Johnson stated that the main message from Washington County was "Where have you been for so long?" The City will soon be sending the County a formal letter to initiate a master planning process. Johnson will email a summary from the meeting with Washington County to all commissioners.

c. New Park Signs (Zuleger)

Zuleger reviewed several past meetings on signs. Zuleger presented a sign design was low maintenance to meet the request of public works, and that maintained the style previously presented by Carol Kriegler. The template of the sign would be a monument sign displayed at each park. The proposed sign company is located in Oakdale. Steele asked to remove the park designation from the sign design. Zuleger said that with a motion from the commission they would have a prototype sign available to present at next meeting.

M/S/P: Frick/Silvernale: Approved sign design with modifications as discussed. Approved 5-0

Staff Report and Updates

a. Park Commission featured on “Mayor Show” (Zuleger)

Zuleger told the park commission that the city is ramping up cable programming. One new show will be “The Mayor Show.” Zuleger said that episodes will feature parks. There will also be a 13-minute video featuring our parks.

b. Public Works Update – Sunfish Gate (Zuleger)

As soon as the snow clears the gate will be installed, as reported by Bouthilet.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Alyssa MacLeod, Recording Secretary