

APPROVED
Lake Elmo Park Commission
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
August 18, 2008

Chairman Steele called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Steele, Ames, Blackford, Bruchu, Adanene, Dunn and Wagner.

STAFF PRESENT: Project Assistant Kriegler, Public Works Superintendent

Agenda

Agenda was approved, (M/S Dunn / Wagner)

Kevin Schwarz Eagle Scout Project Proposal

Kevin Schwartz presented the Commission with an overview of a veterans memorial project he is proposing for VFW Park as his eagle scout project. Kevin explained that he has developed two design options. Option 1 would entail a central flag pole protruding from small rocks with engraved bricks and a surrounding garden consisting of perennial natural wild flowers and grasses. There would be two benches placed directly across from each other, centering on the flag pole. The second design option would entail two additional flags, the POW and Minnesota State flags. The flag(s) would be illuminated at night with electrical run from a nearby source. The proposed site for the project is near the southwest corner of the park near the batting cages. Kevin and Mike Bouthilet have met on site and feel that VFW Park is most appropriate for such a memorial and feel that the southwest corner provides the best location within the park.

Kevin further explained that the project is still in the formative stages with financing of the project yet to be determined. Funding is being requested from the Lake Elmo JC's, the Rotary Club and the Lake Elmo Lions.

Discussion took place regarding the proposed location for the project. Concern was expressed about locating such a memorial in close proximity to the batting cages. Bruchu / Steele: expressed a strong desire for such a memorial but would hope that it would be placed in a solemn and respectful location. Concern was expressed about the high level of batting cage activity and pre-game congregating in such close proximity to the memorial. Bouthilet: Pointed out benefits of the location include good access to electrical and that the memorial would also be visible and easily accessed by Lions Park visitors. Steele: suggested that the VFW be consulted for their input on placement, and to determine if there are any national standards or guidelines for design and placement of such memorials.

The commission offered much support and encouragement for the project and expressed that such a memorial in the area was probably overdue. Steele: requested that Kevin

continue to work with Mike to determine the best possible location. Dunn: requested that lighting options also be thoroughly researched.

M/S/P (Dunn /Ames) Support placement of a veterans memorial in VFW Park, with the location to be determined after further exploration and assessment as to the best possible location.

Sunfish Lake Park Land Trust Easement

Project assistant Kriegler reviewed that the current draft of the Proposed Rights and Restrictions includes a provision for the allowance of interpretive center and other low impact recreational improvements according to a Park Plan approved by the Land Trust in area 2 of the park. Use of a park plan was suggested by Sarah Strommen of the Land Trust so as to provide the city with some flexibility in managing and improving area 2 of the park in the future.

A small working group had corresponded by email over a couple of weeks in an effort to produce a definition of “low impact” recreational improvements that would be utilized in determining what types of future structures and improvements would be considered acceptable. The definition was accompanied by a list of examples of types of improvements that could be considered by future park commissions / councils for placement in area 2. These examples were only cited as possible improvements to be considered in a future plan for the park and did not in anyway obligate the city to such improvements.

Blackford: expressed appreciation to Rolf Larson for taking a leadership role in, and working on crafting the definition.

The commission expressed that the definition allowed for more structures and improvements than they would prefer. They expressed that they just want the area preserved. Suggested that all other city parks are available for the placement of the types of activities / improvements listed. Would like to see improvements in area 2 limited to a pleasure skating rink, warming shelter, interpretive center, trails, signage and prairie restoration.

Steele: Offered to draft a paragraph expressing that area 2 be limited to the above mentioned improvements.

M/S/P Improvements and structures in area 2 of Sunfish Lake Park be limited to those that are consistent with the spirit of the paragraph drafted by David expressing the commissions desire to focus on preservation of area 2.

Lowes Partnership Program Update / Carriage Station Project Update

Project Assistant Kriegler provided a brief history of the Lowes Partnership Program and Carriage Station picnic shelter project. Originally the city was told that it was eligible to receive \$7,000 in building materials from Lowes for the construction of a picnic shelter.

Confirmation has since been received that the city will be receiving materials and supplies for the project valued at approximately \$11,000.

At the July commission meeting, a motion was made and passed limiting the project resources and budget to the Lowes donation and the \$4,000 gift from the Lake Elmo Jaycees.

Carol Kriegler provided an overview of a couple of different picnic shelter budgets, one at approximately 400 s.f. in size, and another at about 650 s.f. The budgets identified essential budget items such as site preparation, concrete pad / footings, materials / supplies, time and labor. Kriegler explained that the purpose of the exercise was to provide the commission with information essential to establishing an appropriate budget for this type of project. Kriegler expressed concern that the budget established for the project at last month's commission meeting was not adequate. Specifically, she expressed concern that \$4,000 would not be an adequate budget for placement of a concrete slab and time and labor to erect the structure.

Concern was expressed about the size of the proposed shelter for Carriage Station Park. Several members expressed that a smaller shelter would be more in scale with the size and nature of the park. Lack of parking at the park was identified as a potential problem in that a larger shelter could draw from outside the immediate neighborhood creating on street parking problems. Wagner: expressed that her interest in limiting the Carriage Station picnic shelter project was based out of concern for spreading the city's financial resources evenly throughout the park system.. Several members expressed concern over the extensive improvements and high level of resources committed to Carriage Station Park in recent years and expressed an interest in a more modestly sized shelter limited to meeting the basic needs of the immediate neighborhood..

Inquiries were made about scaling back the Carriage Station shelter. Staff responded that this would be possible, though there would then be substantial material resources from Lowes that would go unused. Discussion then turned to identifying a location for larger shelter. Demontreville Park was raised as being a potential location for the shelter sized to accommodate 4 tables, due to the scale of the park and the fact that a comparable picnic shelter is scheduled for that location in 2009.

M/S/P Support moving forward in the design process for the construction of two picnic shelters of the appropriate size and scale for Carriage Station and Demontreville Parks.

Discussion of City Trail System Improvements / Trail Segment Inventory

Project assistant Kriegler reported that the matrix structure and associated maps for the comprehensive trail segments inventory was nearly complete and would soon be available for the compilation of information and data.

A memo drafted by the city's consulting engineer, providing an update on the reconstruction of Demontreville Trail. The update reveals that the project is scheduled for 2010, will be funded by the county and that there are issues that make widening the

road or adding a trail very difficult. Steele: Expressed the high level of bikers and pedestrians on the road in this area and the need for including a trail as a part of the project to reduce hazards.

Fall Pebble Park Buckthorn Removal Project:

Carol Kriegler reported that she was working with the city forester in organizing a fall buckthorn removal project for Pebble Park that could possibly involve Washington County's Sentence to Serve Program.. Ames encouraged the use of community volunteers, scouts and the Tri Lakes organization as well, which participated in a removal event earlier this year.

Information Items

Wagner reminded the commission of the upcoming Fall Festival to be held September 5 and 6.

Dunn expressed concern for the plantings done early this spring and the need for watering through the first growing cycles.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Kriegler
Project Assistant