

**Lake Elmo Park Commission
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
October 15, 2007**

Chairman Steele called to order the meeting of the Lake Elmo Parks Commission at 7:00 p.m. COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Ames, Blackford, Booher, T. Bouthilet, Bruchu, Larson, and Steele. STAFF PRESENT: Planner Matzek, Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet, and Project Assistant Kriegler.

Approval of Agenda

Chairman Steele added 8F. Heights Park Update

M/S/P, Ames/Booher, to approve the agenda as amended. Vote: 7:0.

Approval of Minutes – September 17, 2007

M/S/P, Blackford/Booher, to approve the minutes as presented. Vote: 6:0. Abstention: Commissioner Ames.

Sunfish Lake Park Uses – Draft Report

Commissioner Booher asked to add an emergency telephone to the report on page seven.

Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet said that due to the popularity of cell phones and potential vandalism, money may be better used on other items for the park.

Chairman Steele made the following recommended changes to the document:

- the staff comments be a separate document from the commission's recommendation;
- separate the area covered by the MCPA easement as Area Three on page five and identify the area as located west of Area One
- on page five the term "current standards" should be replaced with "the existing trail system should be groomed, mowed, or maintained with dirt or biodegradable woodchips"
- on page five add the following words "...interpretive signage to help users better navigate the trail system and understand the flora and fauna."
- on page seven, paragraph one – take out the colon after the word "setting"
- on page seven, add "Future uses of area two may include" before the list
- on page seven, add the wording "...installation of permanent ball fields was discussed..."
- on page seven, add the wording "...for permanent ball field use..."
- on page eight, get rid of the word "after"
- on page eight, change the wording to say that the commission voted unanimously to recommend the document and take out wording regarding "of those present"
- on page eight, replace #1 under allowable uses with the following sentence "Allowable uses should not be expanded to include activities not currently pursued in this area. Current uses include horseback riding, jogging, walking,

flora/fauna identification, cross-country skiing, sledding, picnicking, and snowshoeing.”

- on page eight, delete number two under allowable uses
- on page nine, add the following wording to number two “Allowable activities should not include uses beyond those integrated here;”

Commissioner M. Bouthilet asked that “periodic deer harvesting” be addressed in the list of current uses on page eight.

Chairman Steele asked for input on the suggested wording “...and maintains as a small mowed field...” regarding the area of a seasonal ice skating rink with removable wooden walls.

Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet suggested the boards be permanent. The rink boards in Lions Park are removed and more money is spent on the boards. He asked if it could be left as an option.

Chairman Steele made the following recommended changes to the report:

- on page nine, number two under Facilities and Construction, change the wording to read “The construction of an ice skating rink and lighting that are consistent with the Lake Elmo Dark Skies policy would be allowed.”
- on page nine, remove the text “Upon removal of the ice rink each spring”
- on page nine, delete the word “seasonal”
- on page nine, number five under Facilities and Construction, add the wording “A small covered picnic area....”
- on page nine, would like to add “Area Three – MPCA Area” and the following sentence “Area three is an integral part of Sunfish Lake Park, but is currently under an easement by the MPCA and could not be included in the MN Land Trust easement.”
- on page ten, he would like the Park Chair to give the report instead of the Planner
- on page ten, change the text to “Questions to staff/commission” and remove the last two bullets
- on page five, change “MCPA” to “MPCA”

Commissioner Ames had the following recommended changes to the report:

- on page nine, number two under Facilities and Construction, suggested changing “flat area” to “recreational area”
- on page nine, suggested replacing the text “...despite the Land Trust easement” with “...in keeping with the Land Trust easement.”

Commissioner Blackford had the following recommended changes to the report:

- on pg one, change “park” to “woods” and “claimed” to “stated”
- on pg five, add “quiet/solitude” to the bulleted list under current uses because it was included in the Park Plan

M/S/F, Blackford/Larson, motion to include “quiet/solitude” to the list of current uses because it is included as an activity in the park plan. Vote: 2:4:1 – Larson abstained.

M/S/P, Larson/Blackford, motion to accept the suggested changes to the report. Vote: 7:0.

M/S/P, Blackford/Larson, motion to forward the document as amended to the City Council. Vote: 7:0.

Park CIP Discussion

Project Assistant Kriegler said she would like to start with her suggestions in the staff report. She suggested that the city website could provide information on individual parks, trail maps could be made available, and fliers could assist park users. She encouraged the commission to create a design guide for identification and entrance signage. She suggested a two-pronged approach to the CIP – continuing on with how it was done previously and also to specify which parks should be focused on each year.

Chairman Steele suggested signage on Highway 5 for Sunfish Lake Park. He said at the November meeting the commission should look at the CIP, the suggestion to pave the trails in Stonegate, and a 2008 plan with priority parks identified by Project Assistant Kriegler.

Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet said the items not completed were: the parking lot in Reid Park, Heights Park, tennis court resurfacing at Pebble Park, the Master Plan for Sanctuary, Master Preservation Plan at Sunfish Lake Park, overlay at Tablyn Park, and the net and drinking fountain at the VFW Park. He said that the parking lot expansion at Reid Park was postponed to do in conjunction with a street overlay project. He said that he measured the trails in Stonegate to be 1.4 kilometers at \$24 per lineal foot with a total cost of approximately \$50,000. He said it is not plausible to create a trail to County Road 19 as it crosses a water body.

Park Equipment at Lions Park

Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet said that a merry-go-round is proposed to be added to Lions Park. He is recommending \$3,620.08 for a new merry-go-round

M/S/P, Ames/Bruchu, motion to recommend approval of the purchase of a merry-go-round for Lions Park. Vote: 7:0.

Impact of Horses on Trails

Commissioner T. Bouthilet asked that this be discussed as he has found Sunfish Lake Park messy due to horses. He suggested not allowing trailers to bring horses to the site.

Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet said he has not found it as an issue.

Commissioner Ames stated that horses do damage trail surfaces. He suggested researching the sticker permit process used for skiers.

Trail Guide Plan Implementation

Planner Matzek suggested deferring the item to the following meeting. She also said that from the information she received, the Discover Crossing development paid the appropriate park dedication fees.

Commissioner Ames suggested considering adding trails whenever and wherever possible.

Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet asked the commission to consider trail connections. He said it is important to make trail connections and not necessarily have every trail as the maintenance would become too much.

Updates

a. Park Partners Reports

Commissioner Ames said he found trail erosion in Sunfish Lake Park.

Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet said there is still trail maintenance to be done.

b. Comp Park Plan

Planner Matzek said she is still working on updating the proposed changes and is planning to hold a public hearing at the Planning Commission meeting in November.

c. Rezone Park Property to PF

Planner Matzek said the Planning Commission recommended approval of the rezoning for the two properties that make up Lake Jane Hills Park and was forwarded to the Council.

d. City website

Planner Matzek said that the agendas and minutes are available for review on the city website. Staff is working on individual park information to be added as well.

e. Klondike Avenue Trail

Planner Matzek said this item will be discussed in the future.

f. Heights Park

Project Assistant Kriegler said a letter went out to the neighborhood residents thanking them for their input and letting them know there will be future chances for further input.

Adjournment

M/S/P, Ames/T. Bouthilet, motion to adjourn. Vote: 7:0.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelli Matzek
Planner