

CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS
Regular Meeting of the Parks & Recreation Commission
City Hall
2077 West Larpenteur Avenue

MINUTES
November 6, 2023 at 6:30 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER: 6:30 P.M.

B. ROLL CALL:

Jeff Yager X Mike Bradbury X Eric Brenton X
Paula Mielke X Tom Faust X Randi Lundell X

COUNCIL LIAISON:

James Wassenberg _____

STAFF PRESENT:

Kelly Nelson X

C. PRESENTATION:

1. Presentation on the Community Park Remodel by WSB and HCM Architects

Commissioner
Mielke motioned to approve the presentation;
Approved 4-0
(Commissioners Faust and Yager arrived just after the motion)

WSB, a civil engineering and planning firm, was hired by the City to act as project manager on the Community Park remodel. Bob Slipka from WSB presents four park layouts, all with the understanding that the concepts have flexibility; the amenities and structures can be rearranged, amended and omitted, as desired. The goal of looking at the four concepts is to discuss the optimal layout and amenities from the materials presented.

City Administrator Linehan states that the redesign has been in motion for the last ten years but will now pick up speed and move fairly quickly.

While looking at the park layouts and the parking lot examples, in particular, Linehan adds context to say the Community Park's current parking lot is approximately 20,000 square feet with 55 or so parking spots.

Lundell would like to see the proposed splash pad have more distance between it and the parking lot.

Yager asks about adding lighting to the ball and soccer field area. Although lighting has not yet been discussed, Bob responds that they will take into consideration how to power the park for future use even if lights are not installed immediately.

Faust wonders if live music from a band shell would overpower the adjacent playground as show Mielke asks where the outdoor picnic tables would be located and Bob points out a trellis icon on the concepts; whether there is a stand-alone space or a roof overhang, tables would be just off of there.

A resident asked why proposed layouts showed no amenities in the northwest area of the park. Linehan explained that grading in that area is challenging due to slopes and marshy areas west of the community

garden. Georgiana May stressed keeping the community garden in the current location because the soil is well amended.

Lundell asks if there is a plan for trees and Bob says the landscaping will be incorporated into the design at a later date. For now, this is the mile-high view. But, they will navigate around existing trees as best they can.

Faust asks about a buffer space between east side of the park and the Falcon Woods neighborhood. Bob suggests that there is probably 60 or 70 feet from the property line to the edge of the basketball court (when looking at concept 2, for example).

A Falcon Woods neighbor says the existing buffer is 50-feet, at best.

Linehan explains that the objective of the project was not to move amenities (i.e. the tennis court) just to move them. The tennis court doesn't need replacing at this time so the City would prefer not to do that just to move it to another area.

A resident asks if the trails will remain. Bob explains that the paths may or may not undergo changes if the City considers paving or widening them, for example, but the paths will remain. Additionally, the majority of the remodel happens north of the current baseball and soccer fields.

Resident, Mike Tracy, suggests putting the majority of the dollars into the building and not into redoing areas that have been working and are working now.

Resident, Eric Meyer, asks about the baseball field's current use. And, wonders if disc golf would be an option there.

Bob says disc golf takes a significant amount of space and this park may only allow for 3 to 6 holes; he wonders if it would be a good fit then.

A Falcon Woods resident says that she never sees the baseball field being used.

A resident asks how many acres Community Park sits on as compared to the 45 acres at Acorn Park where disc golf is played.

Linehan responds that it is 15.6 acres.

Resident, Kris Grangaard, says that soccer is important.

Next, Matt Lynse of HCM Architects presents four architectural styles to depict the general roof lines and architectural details rather than a final image of the park building. He also presents two layouts to help illustrate the general size of the building and the rooms within. Both feature a community room that can accommodate 50 to 60 people at tables or 80 to 100 with rows of chairs/auditorium seating.

In layout one, there is a room labeled "Warming Room," which is a flex space. It can be used as a warming room, a conference room, etc.

In layout two, there is potential to have an operable wall, which either seals off the community room, or, opens to allow the space to spill out into the other parts of the building. The warming house area utilizes the entryway.

Yager asks if either building layout works better or worse with the park layouts shown.

Matt feels both will work well but it comes down to the orientation of the building and are there overhangs or add-ons?

Lundell wonders if they've used operable walls elsewhere and how they've worked.

Matt describes a library that utilizes an operable wall. He adds that a con of them is that acoustics suffer.

Discussion of a splash pad brings up discussion of their necessary water/utility room. Matt says that Hugo has an approximately 140 square feet water utility room devoted to their splash pad.

Bob adds that a metal cabinet can also be used outdoors to house the plumbing mechanicals with electrical on the inside of the building.

Kris Grangaard and other residents asked that the City consider environmentally friendly and efficient heating and cooling options, despite a higher upfront cost.

A resident asked that the bathrooms be gender neutral.

Lundell asks if solar panels are possible.

Matt shows where solar panels are possible on each of the four styles of buildings.

Bradbury wonders if all four architectural styles require the same amount of maintenance.

Matt says the rustic design would require regular treatment/stain of the wood elements, the windows shown on the modern design concept would require new gaskets, and a roof would be needed every 20 years or so on any of them.

Yager likes the extended roof idea to help provide shade and to also help control weather from completely ending an outdoor gathering.

Brenton adds that an extended roofline adds to the park's flex space. It can be an overflow area from an indoor room to the outdoors and it could be rented as a separate picnic area.

Resident, Eric Meyer, asks how square footage is determined. And, what is the price per square foot?

Matt says that you can look at it two ways. How big of a gathering space do you want? And, what is your budget? A 50 to 60-person community room at our budget then equals an approximately 2,500 square feet building. The current pricing is between \$500 and \$550/square foot.

Resident, Rice' Davis, asks if the City is staffed to take on the maintenance of the new park building. Linehan says that we may not necessarily have someone on staff to currently lock the doors of the new building at night and that it may take a bit of figuring out.

Yager mentions that when the Parks and Recreation Commission toured the Roseville park building at Lexington and Co. Rd. B. a couple of years ago, that building had automatic locking doors and no warming house staff onsite.

A general discussion of amenities takes place for a few minutes and Bob says that the City and residents will have to decide which amenities they want because the budget will not allow for everything shown on the concepts.

Resident, Eric Meyer, asks about the potential for indoor basketball.

Linehan shares that we have approximately \$2.75 million total in the budget to build the new park building and desired amenities with.

Bob says that indoor basketball drives the price up very quickly and a building like that would exceed the City's total budget.

Lundell mentions the Appétu Téča Education Center nearby in Roseville and the fact that they have a basketball court, pool, etc. She points out that maybe we don't have a need for similar amenities within a certain geographical area.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. October 2, 2023 - Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioner
Lundell motioned to approve the minutes;
Approved 6-0

E. AGENDA:

F. INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENT

The Parks and Recreation Commission talks about what they'd like to discuss at their upcoming December meeting. There may be preliminary survey data from the public on the Community Park renovation that would be discussed at that time and they will focus on that. Staff Liaison Nelson will also share the 2024 Parks and Recreation budget then.

Commissioners also determine that the park layout labeled #3 that was presented has too many things working against it and feel that concept should be eliminated; they would prefer to have tweaks made to the other three concepts since they are mostly on the right track.

G. ADJOURNMENT: 8:55 PM

Commissioner Yager motioned to
adjourn;
Approved 6-0