

**Lake Elmo Park Commission
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
December 18, 2006**

Chairman Schumacher called the Parks Commission meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Schumacher, Watters, Larson, Blackford, Steele, Wagner, Ames, and Booher. COUNCIL MEMBER PRESENT: Mayor Dean Johnston. STAFF PRESENT: Public Works Superintendent Mike Bouthilet, Assistant City Planner Matzek, Project Director Susan Hoyt. CONSULTANTS PRESENT: Rich Gray and Berry Farrington from TKDA; Bruce Jacobson from Close Architecture.

Agenda

Commissioner Steele added 4A. "Resignation of Chair" to the agenda. Commissioner Booher added 4B. "Walking Paths in Stonegate" and 4C. "Lake Property Use – Drainage Site" to the agenda. Assistant Planner Matzek requested 2B. "Old Village Plan" be added to the agenda.

M/S/P Watters/Booher to approve the Agenda as amended. 8:0

Minutes

Commissioner Steele requested "such as a mathematical equation" be removed from page 2, sixth paragraph and to add the reasoning behind why the Council postponed naming Martin Rafferty Park on page 3.

Commissioner Watters stated "slough" was misspelled.

M/S/P Steele/Watters to approve the Minutes of November 20, 2006 with changes. 7-0 abstain Wagner.

Old Village Plan

Mr. Jacobson with Close Architecture presented a working draft of the Old Village Master Plan. He spoke of the various kinds of parks represented, both existing and proposed as portrayed on a variety of maps. The consultant then reported on the implementation of the plan. Prioritization and phasing are important steps in bringing the old village plan into reality. He presented the potential sites for senior housing, a new city hall, and a potential fitness center.

The consultant then identified potential future parks, greenways, and trails. He spoke of "signature parks" for the new park system in the old village area.

The draft Village Master Plan proposed including a park in the west portion of the old village area of approximately 8 acres in size. The proposed use would be a multi-purpose field. The plan also included an area for three soccer fields near the existing VFW park and Reid Park. City Hall is proposed to have a plaza to function as a formal gathering

space. A park was shown as an option to preserve the barns in the southern portion of the Schiltgen farm.

Chairman Schumacher asked Mr. Jacobson about the planning team and a proposed timeline.

Mr. Jacobson responded that there are approximately six people on the planning team. The consultants plan to make a presentation within the month to the Council and will continue to work with the city.

Chairman Schumacher then asked what kind of financial impact and potential costs are associated with the plan.

Project Director Hoyt stated that a financial consultant will be bringing options to the Council.

Commissioner Larson asked Mr. Jacobson if a northern connection was planned for the Lake Elmo Regional Park.

Mr. Jacobson said the assumption was made that it would all be connected.

Commissioner Larson suggested a member of the Park Commission be an advisor or observer of the continuing process regarding parks in the Old Village Master Plan.

Commissioner Steele asked if the Comprehensive Trail Guide Plan was integrated into the plan.

Mr. Jacobson stated that he does have a copy of the plan at his office.

Commissioner Steele stated the location of soccer fields near the proposed senior housing does not seem appropriate.

TKDA Park Plan Update ~ Rich Gray and Berry Farrington

Mr. Gray stated that they have reviewed all the input they have received and created a first draft of what the park plan would look like for the entire city. A number of maps were shown identifying existing parks, existing service areas, areas lacking parks, and search areas. The search areas were chosen for a number of reasons including natural resources, trail system location, and existing park location.

Mr. Gray acknowledged a deficiency in parks currently south of 10th Street. Potential solutions include a large community park or a number of smaller parks spread throughout the large area. An additional option would be to create an east/west greenway south of 10th street that could assist in creating links between smaller parks.

Commissioner Steele requested clarification on what was meant by a “greenway.”

Mr. Gray replied that a greenway could have a trail on one side, boulevard trees, a sidewalk, spaced intersections and traffic calming measures such as narrow roadways.

A sports complex is proposed to be located within the Old Village area. The consultants proposed a second complex be placed south of Tenth Street if future needs arise.

Mayor Johnston said he was concerned of the area between Manning Avenue and Lake Elmo Avenue and South of 10th Street is being planned for a business park. The Mayor asked the consultants if their plan for a sports complex and greenway was consistent with a business park.

Mr. Gray stated that it may still be valid to have a greenway, but that a Sports Complex may not work as well.

Commissioner Watters asked the consultants why there was an identified search area north of Highway 5 but south of Sunfish Lake Park?

Mr. Gray responded that a more active park area could be added to the area.

Ms. Farrington identified the text written on the sports complex included in the packet. A level of service was identified for baseball/softball fields and football/soccer fields. She stated due to the level of service predicted based upon the level of service, two sports complexes may be needed.

Ms. Farrington spoke about recreational programming within the City. Currently a number of other agencies provide programming and a need has not necessarily been expressed for the City to begin providing programming. She expressed that other communities actively communicate with agencies to identify gaps and underutilized amenities.

Commissioner Watters asked at what population other cities began having formal City run recreational programming.

Mr. Gray stated that Apple Valley had begun back in the 1960's to respond to resident requests. He was unsure at what population that began.

Assistant Planner Matzek identified two optional days for an Open House on the Park Plan. The Commission agreed upon Thursday, February 15th from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Assistant Planner Matzek also stated that a second survey was received from Heights Park residents and that this will be brought back to the Park Commission at the January meeting.

Resignation of Chair

Commissioner Steele began by stating he is the second longest serving Commissioner to date after Chairman Schumacher. Commissioner Steele would like to extend his thanks for all of his great work and service throughout the years.

Chairman Schumacher spoke to the entire commission and asked them to continue to visit the City's parks as he plans to continue to do. He stated he has spent 11 years with the Park Commission. He asked the commissioners to email Mike Bouthilet if they see anything that needs to be taken care of and to call the non-emergency number for Washington County when needed. He thanked the commission.

Walking Paths in Stonegate

Commissioner Booher stated he looked at the Park CIP and saw \$10,000 was allocated for the parking at Stonegate Park. He did not see a need for it and instead would like to see the money put towards reconditioning of the trails.

Parks Superintendent M. Bouthilet stated the money was to square off the parking so it is safer. He then said that the trails will be continued if the property to the south is developed. At that time, the trails would be paved.

Lake Property Use – Drainage Site

Commissioner Booher would like to continue the discussion from last month regarding acquiring city park property on Lake Elmo. He stated that although the small drainage area may not be conducive to a beach, other cities have utilized similar sites to rent canoes.

City Council Update

Ms. Matzek stated there were no park related items on the last City Council agenda.

Adjourn

M/S/P Ames/Larson to adjourn meeting at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelli Matzek
Assistant Planner