

**Lake Elmo Park Commission
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
May 19, 2008**

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

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Ames, Blackford, Booher, Bruchu, Dunn, Larson and Zeno.

STAFF PRESENT: Project Assistant Kriegler

Agenda

Agenda was approved, (M/S Ames / Blackford) with 2 additional agenda items:

- 2.B Jennifer McCormick presentation
- 9 B Information item: Trail map
- 9.C Park walk-throughs

2A. Minutes

April minutes to be considered at June meeting due to late receipt for review.

2.B Jennifer McCormick presentation

Jennifer McCormick appeared before the commission. She thanked the commission for their past support of improvements at Carriage Station Park and encouraged them to consider including a picnic shelter for Carriage Station Park in a future park improvement planning. She explained that \$4,000 has been committed by the Lake Elmo Jaycees for such a project. \$10,000 had been requested. McCormick expressed that there is a high level of appreciation for the park though a shelter is considered that last remaining needed amenity.

Commissioner Ames expressed concern regarding the availability of parking at the site. Chairman Steele requested that staff research what such a shelter might cost. Mike Bouthilet encouraged research and consideration of both the purchase of a shelter “kit” as well as a custom built shelter.

3. Sunfish Lake Water Quality Improvement Project

John Hanson of the Valley Branch Watershed District gave a presentation on a proposed water quality project at Sunfish Lake. John reported that the proposed project involves adding alum to the lake and seeding it with zooplankton. The alum would be sprayed on the lake’s surface and sink to the bottom of the lake, where it will react with the phosphorus in the lake’s sediment. This reaction will prevent phosphorus from causing so much algae growth, which will improve the water clarity. Adding alum to a lake is a safe and proven lake improvement technology.

4. Sunfish Lake Park Land Trust Update

The revised Minnesota Land Trust “Proposed Rights and Restrictions for a Conservation Easement” document as submitted by Sarah Strommen was reviewed. Members expressed general agreement with the document while identifying the need for some clarification / explanation in limited subject areas. Those subjects included lighting, interpretive center size limitations and the nature of permitted structures and

improvements associated with informal activities in area 2. It was requested that a small working group, consisting of Judith Blackford, Sue Dunn and Carol Kriegler, conduct a meeting with Sarah to address these issues and report back to the commission.

5. Provide comments to the city council on the possible locations for lift station in Reid park for the I-94 to 30th Street Infrastructure Project.

City engineers Ryan Stempski and Jack Griffin gave an extensive presentation regarding the locating of a future lift station in Reid Park or at an adjacent location just outside of the park. That presentation is attached.

In response to the presentation and request to provide comment to the City Council, discussion took place reflecting the general displeasure with the concept of using park land for the purpose of locating infrastructure.

Commissioner Blackford expressed the understanding that it is her role to preserve, protect and care for the parks to ensure their availability for future generations and that she therefore objected to placement of the lift station in the park. She also mentioned that Tartan Park site could be considered potential replacement for the loss.

Commissioner Ames: Expressed that if location 2 is to be utilized, there ought to be a provision for the replacement of that land so there is no resulting net loss of park land from the transaction.

Bouthilet: Recommends site #2 from a public works perspective. Commented that the lift station must be visited / serviced on a daily basis.

Commissioner Dunn: When the park was sold to the city for a park, it was for a **park**. Thanked the engineers for their work and presentation. Expressed concern that residents are not aware of this issue. Placement of a lift station in a park is not appropriate.

Chairman Steele: Questioned whether locations 1,2 and 3 are the only available options. Engineer Griffin confirmed.

Ames: Inquired about the concern on the impact on neighbors (noise, smell). Bouthilet expressed that the impact would be minimal.

Resident in the audience was identified as living in very near proximity to the potential lift station locations.

Chairman Steele: Expressed that locating of the lift station was setting a very bad precedent, but if it must go there – would support site 2 while utilizing site 3 as a potential source of park land replacement. David expressed that he would draft a document reflective of the commissions sentiments.

6. 2008 Park and trail improvement program implementation plan and priorities.

Chairman Steele expressed concern about continuing the meeting given the late hour. Several commission members expressed a willingness to continue with this agenda item given the interest gaining resolution on the Stonegate trail project and given that the engineers are present and available with their presentation.

Project manager Kriegler provided an introduction with a reminder of the current Park Improvement fund balance and the need to prioritize projects and associated expenditures. Engineers Stempski and Griffin followed with a presentation outlining the requirement and procedures associated with the public bidding process. That Powerpoint presentation is attached.

Discussion followed the presentation with Chairman Steele expressing concern about spending the anticipated \$150,000 on Stonegate trail improvements given that the costs are significantly more than originally anticipated. David expressed the desire to go back to square one and prioritize the trail segments.

Commissioner Bruchu: Questioned the need for engineering on the trail and suggested calling a local asphalt contractor to lay the asphalt with little or no engineering involvement.

Commissioner Brooher: Reminded the commission that the item has been budgeted and encouraged it moving forward.

Commissioner Larson: Questioned whether there were any other technologies available that could possibly decrease the cost of the project.

Commissioners Blackford, Steele and Dunn: Expressed appreciation for all of John's work in moving the Stonegate trail project forward, but expressed some concern about the cost and merits of moving the project forward without further study.

Commissioner Ames: Expressed that this is a big pile of money.

Commissioner Steele: Advocated that the segments be prioritized and that the commission only move forward with a recommendation knowing that a particular segment is the highest priority.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Kriegler
Project Assistant