

MINUTES
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
CITY COMMISSION ROOM
August 6, 2018 - 4:30 P.M.

Present were the following members of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board: Mr. Mark Bachamp, Ms. Elaine Johannes, Mr. Ed Klimek, Mr. Dave Schafer, Mr. Darell Edie, and Ms. Sue Maes.

Absent: Mr. Curt Herrman.

Employees present: Mr. Eddie Eastes, Director of Parks and Recreation; Mr. Randi Clifford, Recreation Director; Mr. Scott Shoemaker, Sunset Zoo Director; Ms. Susan Adams, Flint Hills Discovery Center Director; Ms. Melissa Kirkwood, Community Relations Officer; Mr. Wyatt Thompson, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation; Mr. Alfonso Leyva, Park Planner; Ms. August Titus, Park Planning Intern; Mr. Casey Smithson, Park Superintendent; Mr. Brian Johnson, City Engineer; and Samantha Estabrook, Bicycle-Pedestrian Coordinator.

MINUTES

Mr. Klimek called the meeting to order. It was moved by Mr. Schafer, seconded by Mr. Edie, to approve the minutes of the meeting held on July 2, 2018. On vote, motion carried 6-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

WARNER PARK MASTER PLAN

Alfonso Leyva, Park Planner, and August Titus, Park Planner Intern, provided an update on progress to date on the Warner Park Master Plan. Mr. Leyva shared a history of the current master plan process with the board. Since the last update to the PRAB in April, City Staff have been collaborating with the LAR-320 K-State Design Studio. The studio provided 9 concepts and the concepts were presented to the public on April 14th at the Flint Hills Discovery Center and at a City Commission Work Session on April 24.

City Staff, with the assistance of one of the landscape architecture students as intern, has condensed the 9 concepts down to two. The two concepts have been presented to the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Historic Resources Board, Arts and Humanities Board, two public meetings, and an open house booth at the Riley County Fair. City Staff plans to take the two concepts and all input from the community and advisory boards, to develop an overall concept. A draft of the final master plan will be presented to the PRAB along with other advisory boards and the City Commission at a later date.

Ms. Titus presented the existing conditions of the park. The maintenance concerns from the community were presented with trash pickup and mowing. The disc golf course design is in progress to expand to an 18-hole course. The two concepts presented were Aromatic Sumac and Blue Sage. The Aromatic Sumac concept includes visitor center and play area; overlook and amphitheater; education pond and informative signage; dog park; rockery gardens; ravine bridges; and a trail to Seth Child Commons. The Blue Sage concept proposes new parking lot and road; grassland pavilion and restrooms; pond boardwalk; nature playground; ravine amphitheater; and a ravine bridge and staircase.

The goals of the project are to maintain the park as natural and rustic as possible and provide low-impact amenities for all park users. To address concerns from the community, the land management plan will be updated along with the park master plan.

Ms. Sue Maes asked where the expanded disc golf course would be placed. Mr. Leyva responded that we have engaged with a disc golf course designer to provide direction on the plans for the expansion. Ms. Johannes asked about cost of each concept. Mr. Leyva indicated cost would be evaluated after a single concept was determined. Ms. Maes asked about the cost of maintaining a nature center. Mr. Leyva indicated that educational partnerships with the Flint Hills Discovery Center have been proposed in that area. Mr. Bachamp asked about the proposed parking lot on the North end of the park. Mr. Leyva indicated that community members have concerns about the parking and it will likely not be included in a final concept. Mr. Bachamp mentioned concerns about the detention pond being identified as an education pond since it does not always have water. Mr. Leyva indicated that the Corp of Engineers will need to be involved in any discussion about the pond. Mr. Bachamp asked about the disc golf expansion and whether there were enough other courses in the area to draw disc golf tournaments and if parking was adequate for tournaments. Mr. Leyva identified the 18 hole course at Fairmont Park and Tuttle Creek State Park. Parking would be accommodated in a manner similar to cross country tournaments. Mr. Schafer asked what the top two or three concerns from the community are with the park master plan process. Mr. Leyva shared that trail maintenance, restrooms, and disc golf expansion. Mr. Edie indicated that potential restrooms in the area would be beneficial, but felt that restrooms would require additional maintenance and upkeep to keep the facility clean during peak times.

Tom Vilkanskas, 401 Warner Park Road, expressed concerns about trail clean-up. He has concerns about maintenance for a restroom and the park. He feels another entrance to the park is necessary. He is not in favor of an amphitheater as parks close at sunset.

Mr. Klimek indicated that he has visited the park and the trails are in rough shape. He asked about the commitment that the City currently has for maintenance of the park and what the future commitment would entail. Mr. Eastes indicated that the park is maintained as a natural park and has a maintenance schedule that is followed for the mowing. The trails are natural surface trails and are not maintained in the same fashion as screened trails. The future maintenance will be identified and determined by the master plan process.

Charles Reagan, 3022 Cherry Hill, shared the history of the park during his 29 year residency near the park. Mr. Reagan prefers that if a restroom were part of the park that it needed to lock at dark and not be available during night hours. He expressed concerns with opening the park to traffic again. He is favorable to keeping the park an open natural area and maintaining what we already have. He is not in favor of an amphitheater.

Brenda Bandy, 3005 Cherry Hill, expressed concerns about restrooms being installed in the park. She is favorable to bringing in portable restrooms for events such as cross-country track meets and disc-golf tournaments. She felt a dog park, ravine bridges, erosion control, pond education, and disc-golf expansion would benefit the park. She was not in favor of increasing roads or structures in the park.

Bill Varney, 216 Fordham Road, spoke about the two informal north side entrances to the park. Those entrances are very rough. He invited the board to walk the park and understand the landscape. He spoke about the maintenance issues with the previous restrooms in the park. He felt the park is for individuals who wish to walk, jog, or enjoy nature. It does not require a public restroom. He asked the board to do things to enhance the beauty of the park.

Adam Johnson, Brockman Street, represented the disc-golf group. He indicated that the disc-golf group does a lot to maintain the course and area. The group is excited about the potential to expand the disc-golf course. Mr. Klimek asked if the city needs to incur the expense of a designer or if the group could help design the additional nine holes. Mr. Johnson shared that the positive use of the park would reduce the negative use of the park. The group has a lot of respect for the designers that are working on the

course and the park has some landscape challenges that the group would not be able to navigate. Rufus Bandy, 3005 Cherry Hill, shared that disc-golfers leave trash behind.

Michael Walter, 2921 Arbor Drive, feels anything that will enhance its current beauty would be beneficial. He suggests that time be spent to discover the history of the park being open and closed to the public and address the concerns of those surrounding the park.

Crystal Koenek, 3011 Cherry Hill, would like the board to consider minimal improvements and not increasing traffic in the park. She encourages maintaining the park as a natural environment and control erosion.

Tim Donahue, 421 Warner Park Road, asked who is driving the development of the park.

Mr. Eastes indicated that administration is looking for input from the board about the master plan concepts that have been developed. Mr. Eastes shared that a request to expand disc-golf in Warner Park was received by the board and the City Commission. The current master plan for Warner Park does not include disc-golf. In order to consider the expansion of the disc-golf course, a master planning process was required.

Mr. Bachamp shared that he felt August did a good job delivering the master plan and receiving comments. He spoke to a master plan process being an idea generation process and finding those concepts that gain traction. He does agree that parking needs to be enhanced, but is uncertain about how you add parking without disrupting either the park or the surrounding community. He agrees with the community members who feel that restrooms can be brought in for special events.

Ms. Maes shared that the park does need trail and pond enhancements. She does not support building structures inside the park. She indicated that the ravine steps and bridges would be beneficial as well as more mowing.

Mr. Schafer commented that the disc-golf group has visited the board on several occasions. The park is a wonderful resource for the city. It should be as natural as possible and provide regular maintenance the natural park.

Mr. Edie has concerns about the bridges being proposed because of the financial impact to the city. There could be safety issues with having bridges. He is favorable to enhancing disc golf. He would like to keep the park as natural as possible. He also agrees that portable restrooms can be brought in for events.

Mr. Johannes spoke about the Northeast Community Park and having that area as a natural park area. She thinks that natural park areas promote positive mental health. She feels open space and natural terrain is as important as developed parkland.

Mr. Klimek commented about the park closure. He feels that the evolution of the growth in residents in the area would deter vandalism and criminal activity in the park. Mr. Klimek grew up next door to Kern Warner, who is the person that donated the parkland to the City. He wants to maintain the vision of people using that park that was shared with him by Mr. Warner. He is favorable to keeping a minimal approach and creating a restroom if you open the park to the public with restrooms. He would like the parkland, trails, and ponds to be better maintained. He is favorable to the disc-golf course expansion, bridges, trail screening and accessibility improvements. He feels that parking will need to be considered and addressed in the master plan.

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD BY-LAWS

Mr. Eastes shared that the Board of Education has requested a review of the bylaws having a requirement that two board members be Board of Education members. Also included in the proposed bylaws is new language that incorporates the City Commission's meeting/public participation policy that was recently adopted by the City Commission to be included in all City advisory board bylaws. One other alteration being proposed for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board by-laws is to clarify the PRAB does not include animal shelter/animal control. The last time the City did an overhaul of the animal control ordinances, the governing body formed a separate committee (the Dangerous Dog Task Force). The board has not considered animal shelter/animal control matters.

Ms. Maes asked if the change from the school board came from the President or the Board of Education (BOE). Mr. Edie shared that the BOE did not vote upon the request. Historically, getting both BOE board members to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meetings is challenging. Mr. Edie indicated that they have felt that a facilities person would be better served at being part of the board as we develop additional indoor space. Ms. Maes commented that someone representing the facilities for the school would not be someone who is representing the community as a whole. Mr. Schafer indicated that the bylaws state when possible a BOE member. Mr. Klimek thinks that having two representatives from the school district is important to keep strong relationships. Mr. Klimek thinks we need to removed when possible from bylaws. He was favorable to having a BOE member and possibly a district employee would work. The board agrees that a BOE member and possibly a senior district employee would be beneficial and striking when possible from the delegation of those two seats.

Mr. Klimek shared that the public comment limitation should be addressed by managing a meeting. Mr. Bachamp shared that he was comfortable with the other proposed changes. Mr. Edie shared that the school district only allows three minutes for public comment. Ms. Maes is conflicted by having a facility staff person from the school on the advisory board. She would like the person to attend meetings, but is not comfortable with them being on the board.

Mr. Eastes indicated that the concerns of board members would be carried forward to the City Commission.

TRAIL TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVE GRANT SUBMITTALS

Wyatt Thompson, Assistant Director, introduced Samantha Estabrook, Bicycle-Pedestrian Coordinator. Mr. Thompson presented two trail grant applications the City desires to submit to KDOT. The KDOT Transportation Alternatives program offers Federal transportation funding to municipalities to construct transportation-related projects in several categories: Historic Preservation, Bicycle-Pedestrian, Scenic-Environmental, and Safe Routes to Schools. City Administration has identified two projects that qualify under the Bike-Ped category: Casement Road Trail and Scenic Drive Underpass.

The Scenic Drive Underpass would provide a safe crossing under Scenic Drive from the Highland Ridge neighborhoods on the west side of Scenic Drive to the new trail recently completed across the east side of the Wildcat Creek Bridge. The underpass would connect these residents to Anneberg Park and new office/commercial development near the intersection of Scenic Drive and Anderson Avenue. Public Works has indicated that on-grade cross walks are not safe for pedestrians for a variety of factors.

The Casement Road Trail would be built on the west side of Casement Road from the Knox Lane Trail at Casement and Knox north to the bridge over the Marlatt Ditch between Northfield Road and Silo Place. This trail follows a route identified in the Linear Trail Phase 2 Master Plan. This portion of trail would help to connect residents to Marlatt and West on Marlatt to Denison Avenue.

Mr. Thompson explained that these two projects are what KDOT is funding with the grant options. That is why these two trail projects are being accelerated through the trail prioritization process. The grants require a 20% match from the City, which would be paid from a variety of funds including the new Rec and Trails Sales Tax. The City Commission will consider the grant submittals on August 21. The grant applications are due to KDOT by September 10.

Mr. Bachamp thinks the underpass is a great idea. Mr. Bachamp asked if the trail connection was going to be coordinated with the drainage ditch project. Mr. Thompson shared that this project will stand-alone and allow future roadway expansion to occur. Mr. Bachamp and Ms. Johannes felt the Casement improvements would allow students at Marlatt Elementary get to school safely. Mr. Schafer shared that the 10-foot wide sidewalk is ideal for pedestrians and cyclists, but felt the cost of the project would be high. Mr. Thompson indicated that the grant dollars require us to meet the federal multi-use trail width of 10 feet. Mr. Edie shared the wide sidewalk would benefit the area and especially in delivering students safely to the pool and schools. Mr. Edie asked about the connectivity of the Scenic Drive trail. Mr. Thompsons shared the different access points that created a loop for that West Manhattan Neighborhood. Mr. Klimek pointed out that a similar loop exists at the North Manhattan Linear Trailhead.

Mr. Edie moved, [REDACTED] seconded, a motion to recommend the City Commission support of an application to the KDOT Transportation Alternatives program for the Casement Road Trail and the Scenic Drive Underpass. On vote, motion carried 6-0.

TRAIL PROJECTS UPDATE

Mr. Thompson introduced Chuck Klutho, Park Planner Intern, to present a progress update on trail planning that has been ongoing through the Summer. Chuck provided an overview of community engagement efforts including neighborhood Trail Talks, intercept surveys, and an online wiki map that are being used to gather input from residents on trail projects and priorities. He also presented the final draft metrics that will be used to prioritize projects for potential Rec and Trails Sales Tax funding.

ROGER SCHULTZ PARK FINAL MASTER PLAN

Wyatt Thompson, Assistant Director, will update the Board on the master plan for the Roger Schultz Community Park (formerly known as the Park at Lee Mill Heights). A Final Draft Master Plan report is published on the MHKPRD website: Report and Appendix. The park master plan is a long-range vision for the Park, and is based on public input collected at numerous public meetings, online surveys, and special events. The Master Plan was completed with support from the National Parks Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program. The final draft Plan incorporates feedback from residents, advisory boards, and the City Commission received at a March 27, 2018 work session.

Land for this park was acquired through a combination of purchase and donation from Tim and Angie Schultz. As part of the land transfer agreement, Tim and Angie Schultz retained naming rights to the park. Tim and Angie have requested the park be named Roger Schultz Community Park in honor of Tim's father.

Meeting Adjourned.