

EDINA PARK BOARD
TUESDAY, JUNE 13, 2006
7:00 P.M.
EDINA COMMUNITY ROOM
EDINA CITY HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Todd Fronek, Mike Damman, Ray O'Connell, Jeff Sorem, George Klus, Mike Weiss

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeff Johnson, Linda Presthus, Gordon, Roland, Andy Finsness, Karla Sitek

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton

OTHERS PRESENT: Idelle Sue Longman, Jessica Selleck

I. APPROVAL OF THE MAY 9, 2006 PARK BOARD MINUTES

Ray O'Connell MOVED TO APPROVE THE MAY 9, 2006 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Mike Damman SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

II. SCHOOL DISTRICT STORAGE BUILDING REQUEST FOR CREEK VALLEY PARK

Mr. Keprios explained to the Park Board that the Edina School District is proposing to build a new storage facility at Creek Valley Elementary School; however, the property where the building is proposed is owned by the City of Edina. He pointed out that after researching all of the old records involving the construction of Creek Valley School Park he found no formal agreement about who has rights to each other's property. Mr. Keprios commented that he did find some letters of understanding between the officials who were in power at the time who agreed that this would serve both the school and the community at large to serve both the park and school needs.

Mr. Keprios explained that as a result of their construction, the Edina School District has run out of storage and therefore, they need to find a new location to replace the huts that were previously at the Community Center. He pointed out that the building they are proposing would be 30' x 60' and the tallest peak would be 14' high. Mr. Keprios commented that he has spoken to Gordon Hughes, City Manager, regarding this and Mr. Hughes feels this would be a good site and is a reasonable request. He noted that as a matter of good practice it makes sense to have the Park Board formally approve the construction of any permanent school district owned structured proposed to be placed on city-owned property. Mr. Keprios pointed out that he doesn't really see that this would impede any future park use other than possibly an off-leash dog area.

Mr. Klus asked why the school district doesn't put this on their own property to which Mr. Keprios replied that they really don't have a good spot for it from what they are telling him that wouldn't be obtrusive to nearby residents.

Mr. O'Connell suggested that they make a formal type of agreement that clearly highlights that it will be on the record. Mr. Klus asked whether this would have to go through the City Council to which Mr. Keprios replied that he does feel this should go before the City Council. Mr. Keprios commented that he really likes the idea of putting something in writing that defines it is the schools liability that the building is there and it is the schools responsibility to maintain it. Mr. O'Connell noted that he thinks that whoever proposes the motion should make it as formal and defined as possible.

Mr. Damman asked when the park shelter building was put in at Cornelia School Park in place of the temporary structure was anything said at that time. Mr. Keprios replied there is no formal written agreement regarding that project. Mr. Damman commented that he wonders what the issue would be if someone got hurt on that property to which Mr. Keprios replied it would be very interesting to see how things would play out in a court of law when it comes to some action on the property that's shared by both because there clearly are defined property lines.

Mr. O'Connell stated that to satisfy the question he thinks the one paragraph from Mr. Keprios staff report covers all of the bases and he would make that motion. Ray O'Connell MOVED THAT BASED ON PAST PRACTICES AND PREVIOUS DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS, THAT THE PARK BOARD APPROVE THE SCHOOL DISTRICT'S REQUEST TO BUILD A STORAGE BUILDING ON THE CITY'S PARK PROPERTY AS PROPOSED.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that one thing he did not mention is he did ask the school's business director that the school cover the insurance for the development of the building as well as cover the insurance liability. Mr. O'Connell stated he would add that as an addendum to his motion.

Jeff Sorem SECONDED THE MOTION.

Mr. Klus stated that he still thinks there needs to be an agreement because if they are going to do it they should do it right. Mr. Weiss replied that they do have a formal motion. Mr. Klus indicated that he can't support it unless they do it right because he doesn't like gentlemen agreements because he doesn't think they work in the long run. He noted that there are too many personnel changes over the years and it's all forgotten. Mr. Klus pointed out that he's not against building it but he thinks they need to have an agreement in writing. Mr. O'Connell noted that he understands what Mr. Klus is saying, however, he thinks the motion covers everything especially with the addendum.

Mr. Fronek asked is there a timing issue they need to worry about if this needs to go before the City Council. He noted that maybe they need to add their own clause that says as long as there's a formal agreement in place that's been agreed to by the City Attorney and then recommend that it goes onto the City Council. Mr. Fronek commented that maybe they need to amend Mr. O'Connell's motion to assure that a formal agreement is in place before they recommend it to the City Council. Mr. Keprios pointed out that he

cautions going down the road of establishing a formal agreement at this point. He explained that the city probably stands to lose with their park shelter building at Cornelia School Park as well as multi-purpose fields that are on school property.

IN FAVOR: Jeff Sorem, Mike Damman, Ray O'Connell, Todd Fronck

OPPOSED: George Klus, Mike Weiss

MOTION CARRIED.

III. REVISION TO PRIORITY USE OF EDINA'S SCHEDULED OUTDOOR ATHLETIC FACILITIES POLICY

Mr. MacHolda explained to the Park Board that he is recommending that they revise the current Priority Use Policy for Edina's outdoor athletic fields to better serve Edina residents and reduce the wear and tear of the athletic fields. Mr. MacHolda stated that because of recent field improvements the non-resident demand has increased dramatically. He pointed out that to better maintain the premier scheduled athletic fields he recommends that they change the existing use of Edina's Scheduled Outdoor Athletic Facilities and Recommended Guidelines policy to demand that nonprofit teams or adult organizations have a minimum of 50% Edina residents. Currently the policy states a minimum of 25% Edina residents.

Mr. Klus commented that he had a discussion with an employee of Seagate who informed him that a group of people from Seagate use the soccer fields at Lewis Park from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. He noted that he would hate to discourage those businesses from being able to use those fields they enjoy so much. Mr. MacHolda replied that he has a great relationship with Seagate and added that they would not be affected because 100% of their participants work full-time in Edina.

Mr. MacHolda pointed out that Scott Johnson, an Edina Soccer coach, called him to let him know how he struggles when he drives by the Lewis Park soccer fields and sees 85% of non-Edina residents using the field. Mr. MacHolda noted that the reason why Mr. Johnson struggles with this is because his soccer team of 15 year-old Edina residents has no place to practice. Mr. MacHolda commented that he is on the same page as Mr. Johnson in this situation.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that he asked Mr. MacHolda to contact the adult groups who are currently using these fields regarding 60% versus 25% residents. Mr. MacHolda pointed out that Donna Hanbury's group doesn't have a problem meeting the 60% resident use. Mr. MacHolda indicated that he thinks some of the adult soccer teams could consolidate if push came to shove. Mr. Klus asked if Lewis Park is the only park they are using to which Mr. MacHolda replied that as far as a senior size multi-purpose athletic field Lewis and Braemar Park are the only ones.

Mr. Keprios commented that he thinks their biggest challenge would be to enforce the policy rather than change the policy.

Mr. Sorem asked what are the requirements in order to be able to use these fields? Mr. MacHolda explained that the teams fill out a roster each year and they indicate how many people either live or work full-time in Edina. He noted that he has gone on good faith. He pointed out that he hasn't gone to the assessment department to confirm residency nor has he gone to places of employment.

Mr. Klus asked if staff has the right to turn down teams playing on city fields if they are at the bottom of the priority use, can staff turn them away and say the fields can't take the use. Mr. MacHolda replied that he believes they have that authority. He noted that what he tries to communicate to the adult programs is that he needs to schedule the youth first.

Mr. Sorem asked Mr. MacHolda if going from 25% to 50% would eliminate some teams to which Mr. MacHolda replied yes. Mr. Sorem asked if that percentage needs to be higher to which Mr. MacHolda replied that he thinks 50% would be good. Mr. Keprios pointed out that they used 60% because that's also listed later in the priority document and therefore it would stay consistent.

Mr. Fronek asked Mr. MacHolda if he turns away teams that want to practice on those game fields to which Mr. MacHolda replied that right now all they are doing is scheduling games on those sites. He noted that they have one practice site for teams aged U13 and above. He pointed out that they are about four fields short and therein lays the problem. Mr. Damman asked Mr. MacHolda if he's going to allow teams to practice at these other fields to which Mr. MacHolda replied that he's almost of the mind that he would like to see some practices with discretion at Lewis because they have no place to go. Mr. MacHolda stated that he would rather see Edina kids ages 13 to 17 have a place to practice rather than schedule very few adult residents of Edina. Mr. Weiss asked does that take a charge from the Pak Board to change it from games only to include practices. Mr. Keprios responded that should be done internally. He explained that it's their way to protect the millions of dollars that have been invested in their fields so far.

Mr. Weiss indicated that from his perspective from a consistency standpoint it does seem a little odd that they have 25% in priority 4 and 50% in priority 9. He stated that the other question he has is 60% the right number or is 50% the right number. Mr. Keprios pointed out that the rationale that was used when the policy was first created was that fields are in such demand that this was the only vehicle that would limit access to manage the excess demand.

Mr. Klus asked Mr. Keprios if they can take fields out of play anytime, just like the school does, and say they are resting the fields. Mr. Keprios explained that we can't be arbitrary about who they allow and who they don't. They have to have a policy with sound reason. Mr. Sorem pointed out that the issue here is not resting the field, it's about the field getting used and currently Edina teams aren't always able to use the fields because they are being used by non-residents of Edina.

Mr. Weiss indicated that even when fields are resting he knows that people will still go out and use them and that needs to be considered as well. He noted that personally he thinks it would be better to have the fields scheduled with what they want rather than somehow try to enforce it.

Jeff Sorem MOVED TO CHANGE IT TO 60%. Ray O'Connell SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

IV. UPDATES

- A. Needs Assessment Survey – Mr. Weiss informed the Park Board that Ms. Presthus, Mr. Keprios and himself just met with Ron Vine from Leisure Visions regarding the needs assessment survey. He noted that Mr. Vine had issued a proposal for approximately \$22,000 to do a high end needs assessment survey for Edina. Mr. Weiss pointed out that after discussions with Mr. Vine he has agreed to reduce the cost of the high end-needs assessment survey to \$19,000. He noted that basically the survey would include the additional options which would really expand the survey as well as make it more user-friendly. He stated that at this point they are just waiting for the final proposal. Mr. Weiss indicated that the needs assessment survey will start by interviewing the major stakeholders in August. He explained that the “major stakeholders” are the involved individuals with a vision for the future of Edina and then the development of the survey with the needs assessment committee. Mr. Keprios indicated that Mr. Vine will probably hold the stakeholder interviews individually.

Mr. Keprios explained that Mr. Vine has essentially guaranteed them 500 results from the survey through a combination of a mail-in survey and a follow-up phone survey. He noted that Mr. Vine is also going to include national benchmarking which includes how these answers/results stack up and what they mean in comparison to the rest of the country, which will give more meaning to the survey.

Mr. Keprios commented that Mr. Vine agreed that the environment should be a focus group of itself which would include everything in the environment such as trees, buckthorn, water quality, noxious weeds, etc. Mr. Keprios noted that this might be an appropriate venue for the proposal for a nature center. He indicated that they want a lot public input. They talked about having a one day public forum where everyone can come to a City Council meeting and share their views. He noted that the city could also advertise it on their website informing people that they are ready to embark on a needs assessment survey and would like to know what kinds of questions people would like to see in this survey and to send those questions via e-mail.

Mr. Weiss informed the Park Board that the way Leisure Visions delivers the results it will enable them to prioritize what needs to be in the next five years in terms of this is what the community thinks is important and what our community thinks we need to work on. He commented that one thing he found interesting is that only about 40% of Edina residents have kids at home. He stated that across the country 70% of the population use public parks. He noted that the reason he looks at that is because they will be compared to other cities. Mr. Weiss indicated that a nice part about this vendor is they have done enough of these that he can benchmark across the country in terms of meaningful data that is returned to them.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the plan is to conduct the survey in September and have the results in October.

Mr. O'Connell stated that focus groups to him implies specific and asked how are people going to be informed about these focus groups. Mr. Keprios replied that they are going to have to get the information out via the paper as well as he knows a lot of people who he thinks would make up and have an interest in those areas. However, they mostly need to rely on the newspaper and their website. Mr. O'Connell pointed out to Mr. Keprios that he is mainly connected with activists and needs to remember there are a lot of other people who have opinions.

Mr. Weiss explained that the focus group is utilized to draft the survey for results. He indicated that he thinks 1,100 surveys will be sent out to Edina residents in a widespread area and Leisure Vision is guaranteeing 500 results. Again, the focus groups will be used only to craft the questions for the survey.

- B. Proposed Nature Center – Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board there was a group of citizens who went directly to the City Council with a 35 minute presentation regarding a proposed nature center. Mr. Klus asked why they didn't go to the Park Board first to which Mr. Keprios replied because that's the way they chose to do it and the City Council accepted. Mr. Keprios explained that the group is requesting the development of a nature center at Bredesen Park to educate the community on the environment. He noted that they did their homework and gave a very nice presentation. Mr. Keprios commented that the City Council asked him what he thought to which he said he replied it would be an excellent topic to put in the needs assessment survey and find out what level of community support there is for such a project. He noted it will be included as part of the environment focus group.

Mr. Klus commented that hopefully this will come back to the Park Board to discuss at some point if it ever gets that far.

- C. Youth Sports Taskforce - Mr. Klus informed the Park Board that the City Council feels there needs to be another public forum on youth sports, which will take place next Tuesday. He noted that the Youth Sports Task Force spent eight months working on this and came up with two documents. He commented there was nothing negative said about the core values document, however, everyone seemed to have an issue with the relationship agreement between the Park Board, City and athletic associations.

Mr. Klus explained that he was concerned when he was informed that staff has been told that they cannot go out and ask people to come to this public forum. Mr. Klus encouraged the Park Board members that if they know any youth athletic association directors that they should mention to them that it is important they try to attend this meeting. He noted that the opponents are currently contacting schools and people to come out and speak against it, apparently the opponents feel that Youth Sports Task Force didn't do their job and didn't represent the public. Mr. Klus stated that he is disappointed in the City Council for opening up a public hearing because it's the wrong thing to do. He commented that if the City Council is going to keep doing what he calls "knee jerking reaction" for one person in this community there are going to be a lot of meetings.

Mr. Klus pointed out that the Youth Sports Task Force dealt with every issue that was relevant to the mission. He noted that it makes him a little angry because he thinks they wasted the Youth Sports Task Force time to do this. Mr. Klus commented that he understands that the City Council has the right to make those decisions because that's what they've been elected to do and he respects that. However, they need to be careful how they do it.

Mr. Klus informed the Park Board that some people still want to see an oversight committee to which the Youth Sports Task Force still feels that would be the wrong thing to do for this community. The athletic associations are doing a good job.

Mr. Klus pointed out that no one on the Youth Sports Task Force got everything they asked for. There were great discussions and they always reached a good compromise. Mr. Weiss commented that he thinks the end result is something the whole group felt was their best effort and best statement they put forth. He noted that it was eight months of hard thought and consideration.

Mr. Keprios stated that in defense of why the council decided to have a public hearing is because they have received some criticism that it wasn't a very fair and open process because the athletic associations were invited to give feedback on the two documents. Therefore, the City Council decided to open it for a public hearing on June 20th and that is why he is not allowed to send notices to the athletic association presidents because that would be considered targeting a group. Mr. Klus pointed out that every Youth Sports Task Force meeting was open to public comment and that they never turned anyone away and in fact encouraged people to speak if they had a comment. Mr. Keprios noted that he agrees they couldn't have had a more open meeting and in his view the criticism is unjustified, however, the City Council felt they need to do this and added that he does not criticize the City Council for doing so.

Mr. O'Connell indicated that the Task Force went through a logical process, followed the rules, did everything listed and gave their time to produce a product and then the product was approved. However, now the City Council is dealing with emotion and logic should always prevail over emotion. Mr. O'Connell stated that the current City Council doesn't understand this is a republic, it's not a democracy. He noted that they are elected to make a decision and they are avoiding their responsibilities to make decisions. He stated that he knows that's critical but he has seen that in so many cases. Mr. O'Connell commented that what the Youth Sports Task Force has put together is good and can certainly do the job because it did receive input and did go through a logical process.

V. OTHER

- A. Todd Park – Mr. Sorem asked Mr. Keprios how it went taking down the hockey boards at Todd Park and asked where the boards are being stored. He also asked Mr. Keprios if he has heard any complaints. Mr. Keprios replied that that he did receive a few complaints that they weren't taken out soon enough but in all fairness he too had hoped they would have been taken down a little sooner but recognizes the pressures placed on maintenance staff to have ball fields ready for play early spring. Mr. Keprios commented that the boards survived the winter fairly well with one minor

exception on one panel. He commented that he hasn't heard anything from the neighborhood since they've been taken down. Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that he took photos of the area yesterday just to show that there is green grass and added that he never sees anyone using that open space. He noted that the boards are being stored at the Creek Valley warming house and they will be put back into the ground this fall. He commented that at the end of the season they are going to analyze all of the data, conduct a survey and give a report by the first of July next year.

Mr. Keprios explained that part of the criticism they were receiving from the neighborhood is that the City of Minneapolis had their portable rinks out for four weeks before Edina. He explained that the boards they are using are not really a portable system. These hockey rink boards are basically a permanent board system that requires metal support posts to be driven into the ground. They require power equipment to jerk the posts out of the ground which requires heavy equipment that can sink into the soft soil that's vulnerable during early spring so it's really not an apples to apples comparison.

- B. Oak Savannah at Braemar - Mr. O'Connell shared a wonderful article about the Oak Savannah at Braemar Park and commented that it's not only an Edina treasure but a national treasure. He stated that he hopes they can save most of this unique treasure.
- C. Jessica Selleck — Mr. Klus asked that they recognize former Park Board school member Jessica Selleck. He commented that this is the first time they've had a student come back to attend a Park Board meeting.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Ray O'Connell MOVED TO ADJOURN. Todd Fronck SECONDED THE MOTION.
MEETING ADJOURNED.