

Minutes of the
Edina Park Board
Special Work Session
Tuesday, June 12, 2007
Edina City Hall, Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ray O'Connell, Howard Merriam, Randy Meyer, Todd Fronek, Karla Sitek, Andy Finsness, Linda Presthus

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeff Sorem, Mike Damman, George Klus, Carolyn Nelson

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton,

I. WAIVE FEE FOR FUND RAISER EVENT – BRAEMAR GOLF COURSE

Susie Miller, Assistant Manager of Edinborough Park, made a formal request of the Park Board to waive the fees for a fundraiser event on June 29, 2007. She explained that the fund raiser benefit tournament event is intended to raise money for the Larry Nelson Family Fund. Ms. Miller informed the Park Board that Larry Nelson is a golf professional instructor who has donated endless hours of his personal time and energy to the Edina Adaptive Golf Program. She noted that Mr. Nelson was recently diagnosed with brain cancer and therefore the golf community and staff would like to raise funds to help Mr. Nelson and his family during this difficult time.

Ms. Miller stated that they are asking that the greens fees and golf cart fee be waived for the participants of the tournament in order to give more money to the family fund.

Mr. O'Connell commented that Mr. Nelson has also been very involved with the junior golfers in Edina.

Karla Sitek MOVED TO WAIVE THE GREENS FEES AND GOLF CART FEES.
Todd Fronek SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that typically they charge a premium for greens fees for a group fund raiser, however, this is an exception because it really is a show of support for someone who has given so much to the city and adaptive programs.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ray O'Connell MOVED TO APPROVE THE MAY 8, 2007 PARK BOARD MINUTES.
Todd Fronek SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

III. REVIEW OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Mr. Keprios introduced Dan Cornejo, Comprehensive Planner. Mr. Cornejo first pointed out that the title is wrong and should read "Edina Parks, Open Space and Natural

Resources”. Mr. Cornejo explained what the big picture is of the comprehensive plan as well as what everyone’s role is in putting the plan together.

Mr. Fronck stated that he has two points to make. First, if an area is going to be redeveloped he thinks that it should almost be a requirement that the developer devote a portion of it to park land. Mr. Keprios replied that currently when new development takes place the developer can pay 7% cash in lieu of land if they don’t donate a portion of the land they are buying. However, this does not apply to renovation or redevelopment. Mr. Keprios explained that currently this issue is being revisited because state law has just changed. He noted that he agrees with Mr. Fronck in that this should be included in the comprehensive plan. Mr. Fronck suggested adding it in the Park and Open Space Land Acquisition Plan.

Mr. Fronck indicated that secondly he knows there is fishing at Lake Cornelia, however, he didn’t see it pointed out anywhere in the recreation programs. He stated that it might be something they may want to add because he knows other communities have fishing programs.

Mr. Merriam stated that, based on the needs assessment survey, the whole idea of trails and connectivity is very important. He noted that he thinks there should be some kind of provision that states there will be moneys available to at least look at land acquisition or easement acquisition so that they can start to build the system. He commented that it’s very difficult for people to get around within Edina.

Mr. Keprios commented that on page 12 where it addresses the goals and policies on that subject, the goal is to create connectivity between Edina’s individual interior trails and regional trails that connect Edina’s parks to neighboring community trails in particularly trails that are part of the greater regional trail system. He stated that he thinks it probably should be added under policies. The policy could state that when the opportunity arises to acquire property to make that happen. Ms. Presthus pointed out that there already is a very similar policy to that on page seven. Mr. Cornejo responded that it doesn’t specifically mention trail connections. Mr. Keprios suggested that they state “to acquire easements and property where needed and available to create regional connections”.

Mr. O’Connell indicated that on page 15 under the “Parkland and Open Space Land Acquisition Plan” where it states: “The goal is to also study the feasibility of acquiring additional park and open space land as more private land may become available for public acquisition”, he would like to take out “goal” and feasibility” and have more definite language. He stated that he thinks it should be similar to what is noted on page 7, as well as it would be more consistent.

Mr. O’Connell stated that on page 9, “Wildlife Management Plan” under the goal the first paragraph reads fine. However, under the second paragraph he thinks the word “control” should be taken out and be replaced with “manage” because they cannot control animals.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that under the “Natural Resource” area they really don’t have anything that addresses a mandatory buffer on shoreline. He noted that the Park Department’s involvement in water quality has been very minimal. Therefore, he’s

not sure where that should fall within the comprehensive plan and added that it may somewhat fall between the cracks.

Mr. Meyer stated that he thinks as part of the “Walking and Biking Trails Pathways Plan” maybe they should look at somehow incorporating those types of paths and trails from the schools to the parks. He stated that he thinks if more sidewalks were put in then a lot more kids would be willing to walk to school. Mr. Meyer commented that it may be reaching a little bit beyond the scoop but perhaps there could at least be some dialog. Mr. Keprios replied that he is going to ask Wayne Houle, City Engineer, where sidewalks fit within the master plan because he is in charge of the sidewalks.

Mr. Meyer indicated that he’s not sure what this would fall under but he would like to know how we can build community. He asked if there are things that can be done in the parks to build a sense of community. Mr. Merriam stated that he could envision some kind of signage system that would reflect the identity of Edina. He noted that it wouldn’t build community in the sense that people are face to face but it could be something that visually could start to tie things together.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that sometime in the near future he would like to see the Park Board change their mission. He noted that he would like to keep it simple and have it state “To create community to people, parks and programs”.

Mr. Cornejo commented that one of the negative things he has heard is that people don’t want multiple family dwellings near the parks because they feel that anyone who lives in anything other than a single family home is not a resident. He explained that as a planner one of the ways to mitigate some of the down side of a dense environment is through public spaces to create the “community” feeling. He noted that for people who don’t have a backyard and live within ¼ mile of a park along with single family homes the park becomes a way for people to meet their neighbors. Mr. Cornejo stated that they need to find a way to grow gracefully and in a neighborly way. He stated that they need to design facilities that are intended to be shared beyond the immediate neighborhood.

Mr. Keprios explained that the philosophy back when the parks were first built was to try to have a park within biking distance so that every kid in Edina would have a park to go to. However, as a result of that they are now scheduling large athletic events everywhere. Therefore, as they continue to progress, a lot of the people who live closest to the parks are seeing the parks as more of a nuisance than a benefit. Therefore, it’s not creating community but rather creating a nuisance which is what recently happened with the hockey rink at Todd Park. Mr. Keprios pointed out that these types of issues are going to continue and worsen as times goes on. He stated that policy-wise they are heading down a road that is allowing the people who live closest to the parks dictate what happens in those parks, which is very unfortunate. Mr. Keprios noted that the reason he brings this up is because in the big picture they are now at a crossroads where they need to think hard and serious about how they want to address this issue in the long-term. They need to look at and decide if they want to find a way to put all of the athletic events into one package and pull them out of the neighborhood parks to help eliminate some of this. He stated that otherwise they need to have the mindset of this is what we are going

to do and we are going to encourage more associations to schedule more during the day because Edina just doesn't have any more land.

Mr. Meyer replied that he thinks there are other things they should do such as planting trees, creating parking lots, etc. where neighbors are going to say they don't want it at their park. He stated that it needs to be made known that these parks are not their backyards but rather a public space for everyone. He noted that they need to create an atmosphere where people will perceive that certain things should be in the parks because they are for everyone.

Mr. Cornejo commented that sometimes people say if something is going to be put in their park then they need to have some type of buffer, however, instead of buffers maybe they can try to create a neighborly transition for the residential use near the parks. They need something that will recognize it but yet not have a 12 ft. high fence, such as the freeways do, to buffer the noise. They need to remind the neighborhoods that it's not their property, it is public property.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that it's their duty to make things adaptable to change and adjust to the needs. For e.g., tennis is not what it used to be and maybe they need to look at converting some of the tennis courts to skate parks. Ms. Presthus suggested that somewhere they add a statement about being adaptable to change.

Ms. Presthus asked Mr. Keprios that he highlight any changes that are made on the next draft of the comprehensive plan.

IV. REVIEW OF PROPOSED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN –

Mr. Keprios reviewed with the Park Board the changes they proposed to the Capital Improvement Plan. He informed the Park Board that they did not get any grant money for the Garden Park Master Plan so they are going to have to rely on their own funding. Therefore, he has now added \$90,000 for the Garden Park Pathway Plan.

Linda Presthus MOVED TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN. Ray O'Connell SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. OTHER

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that they only received one bid for the Courtney Fields Maintenance Building. He noted that they budgeted \$190,000 and the bid came in at \$207,000. Therefore, he is recommending that they reject the bids and revisit to try and get more bidders.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.