

Minutes of the  
Edina Park Board  
April 14, 2009  
Edina City Hall, Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Joseph Hulbert, Jeff Sorem, Ray O'Connell, Todd Fronek, Ben Pobuda, Randy Meyer, Jennifer Kenney, Bill Lough, Keeya Steel, Dan Peterson

MEMBERS ABSENT: Rob Presthus

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

**I. APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 10, 2009 PARK BOARD MINUTES**

Dan Peterson MOVED TO APPROVE THE MARCH 10, 2009 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Jeff Sorem SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

**II. NEW BUSINESS**

A. Election of Officers – John Keprios opened up the floor for nominations for Chair of the Park Board. Joseph Hulbert MOVED TO NOMINATE TODD FRONEK. Ray O'Connell SECONDED THE MOTION. Randy Meyer MOVED TO CLOSE NOMINATIONS. Bill Lough SECONDED THE MOTION. Mr. Keprios announced that Todd Fronek has been voted as Chair of the Park Board.

John Keprios opened the floor for Vice Chair of the Park Board. Todd Fronek MOVED TO NOMINATE JEFF SOREM. Ray O'Connell SECONDED THE MOTION. Joseph Hulbert MOVED TO CLOSE NOMINATIONS. Dan Peterson SECONDED THE MOTION. Mr. Keprios announced that Jeff Sorem has been voted as the Vice-Chair of the Park Board.

B. 2010 MGA State Junior Championship at Braemar Golf Course – John Valliere, Braemar Golf Course Manager, asked the Park Board to approve his request to host the MGA State Junior Championship Golf event in 2010 and waive greens fees. Mr. Valliere gave a presentation to the Park Board.

Mr. Hulbert asked when the event would take place to which Mr. Valliere replied it would probably be August 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Fronek asked how many golfers are expected for this event to which Mr. Valliere replied there would be 160 golfers.

Mr. Fronek asked Mr. Valliere if it's common practice for the golf course to waive fees. Mr. Valliere explained yes, it is common especially when it involves young people. He added that this is something that other courses do as well.

Dan Peterson MOVED TO APPROVE THE REQUEST FOR BRAEMAR GOLF COURSE TO HOST THE 2010 MGA STATE JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP GOLF

EVENT AND WAIVE GREEN FEES. Randy Meyer SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

- C. YEA Corp Proposal for Chowen Park – Mary Helen Franze, Founder and Executive Director of YEA Corp., (Young Enterprising Agents) informed the Park Board that they are very excited about the opportunity to possibly have a community garden at Chowen Park. She pointed out that the youth went around to all of the neighbors with a petition to sign. Ms. Franze explained that YEA Corp is offering a really wonderful entrepreneurial experience in addition to the learning from the garden. She stated that the youth would have an opportunity to sell their produce at the Mill City Farmer’s Market where YEA has a stall. Therefore, they would be putting together a business plan in addition to the garden plan. The following youth gave their testimony:

Wyatt Lauer, 5913 Chowen Ave. So., stated that they received 100% enthusiastic support from all of the neighbors they spoke to. Becca Dauth, 5720 Chowen Ave. So., commented that this is going to be a great opportunity to learn organic gardening, financial skills and community building. JP Franze, 5717 Chowen Ave. So., informed the Park Board that one of the elderly neighbors he spoke with was most concerned about the care and protection of the garden but he assured him that all of us will lead these efforts and he was pleased to sign the petition. Arin Arpinar, 5637 Chowen Ave. So., indicated that they discovered that the neighbor who lives across the street from Chowen Park is a master gardener and has offered to help them as an expert on gardening. Ella Klase Anderson, 5604 Chowen Ave. So., indicated that one of the neighbors was so generous and excited that they gave them a check for materials to help them succeed.

Ms. Franze explained in a little more detail about YEA Corp.

Mr. Peterson asked if they are planning on putting some sort of a fence because of the deer and rabbits. Ms. Franze replied they are definitely in the process of imagining how they are going to retain the garden around all kinds of things.

Mr. Meyer asked if there is a written policy on repurposing parklands and how to treat this. He noted that he thinks it’s a fabulous idea but he questions if they are going to be overwhelmed by everyone who has a corner plot thinking they can plant their garden there. He stated that he thinks they need to structure this in a way that makes sense for the community overall. Mr. Meyer commented that by understanding the history of this maybe it will help figure out how best to move forward. Mr. Keprios responded that there is no policy that tells them what they should and shouldn’t do in this case. He added that he thinks they are writing policy as they go on a case by case basis.

Mr. Fronek pointed out that Mr. Keprios has proposed that we send notices out to the neighborhood to request their input and place the item on the next Park Board meeting. Mr. Fronek asked Ms. Franze if that will affect her growing season to which she replied typically nothing is started until after Mother’s Day so it shouldn’t be a problem.

Mr. Fronck asked Mr. Keprios to give more of an overview on what he knows about community gardens. Mr. Keprios pointed out this is not a community garden but it is for a special interest group with a wonderful cause. He explained that by definition a community garden is a parcel of land that is publicly owned which then becomes privatized by turning it into various plots that residents can lease to grow their own private vegetable or flower garden. He commented that it's common in several communities that are fully developed, however we have looked into it in the past were not successful at identifying a location that was acceptable to neighboring residents.

Mr. Keprios indicated that some of the concerns he had were restroom facilities for the kids but it seems like most of them live within one block of the park. Secondly he is concerned about the water but that has been taken care of through a donation from a neighbor so that means public facilities will not be used. Mr. Keprios stated that one item that has not been discussed is should there be rent for this and that would be the Park Board's decision. He indicated that his recommendation would be to notify the neighborhood to at least get a feel for what's the level of support. He commented that it seems like Ms. Franze already has some support especially from the folks who are closest to the park and would be the most affected by it. Mr. Keprios noted that his recommendation would be to put the details of the plan together on what they think the residents will want to know and place it on the agenda for next month's meeting and invite people to come in and give their views before the Park Board makes their ruling.

Mr. O'Connell stated that because of a pretty tight timeline he would like to see them get started before the next Park Board meeting. He noted that they could start with the contingency that they send out the mailing. However, with 27 signatures so far in the favor of it he has a good feeling it will be approved.

Mr. Sorem stated that he can certainly appreciate Mr. O'Connell's comments on the time sensitivity but he would feel more comfortable with staff notifying the residents and letting them have a chance to come before the Park Board and therefore would be in favor of waiting.

Mr. Peterson noted that he would be very happy to go ahead tonight and do it.

Ms. Steel noted Ms. Franze mentioned selling the produce possibly at the Mill City Farmers Market and asked if that is something the students decide or is there a concrete plan. Ms. Franze replied that the students are in the decision making process of that. She commented they are interested in selling but they are also exploring the opportunity of having something to offer the neighbors. Ms. Steel asked where they see the profits going. Ms. Franze replied that every project has a payback, like a tax if you will, where they teach a variety of ways to contribute to such as a charity. She added that there is a 5% minimum back to the organization to grow more projects, however it's very nominal in terms of profit and nobody pockets any money.

Mr. Lough indicated that he thinks their May 12<sup>th</sup> Park Board meeting would be timely for a planting. Therefore to go through the process of the mailing and to allow Ms. Franze to supplement the written material he would be in favor of approving the mailing now and readdress the final issue on May 12<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Kenney stated that she agrees with Mr. Lough; she thinks the timing is such that it allows them to postpone the decision until the May 12<sup>th</sup> meeting and still not interfere with the short Minnesota growing season.

Mr. Meyer stated that he also thinks it makes sense to notify the neighbors so that they aren't making changes without having them understand what's going on and to give them a chance to provide their input. He added that he thinks they need to put some structure around so that if other groups would like to do a similar project it will be in a consistent manner that works.

Mr. Hulbert stated that he thinks it would be a good idea to notify all of the neighbors.

Mr. Fronek stated that he agrees and thinks this sounds like a great idea and partnership as well as it sounds like everyone is in support of it. Mr. Fronek asked Mr. Keprios to talk a little bit about the use of this particular land and to also talk a little bit about the process, he's not sure if this is something that needs to be approved by the City Council. Mr. Keprios replied that they may not need to bring it to the City Council and that if the Park Board feels strongly they can charge forward with the proposed plan. Secondly, if the Park Board decides they would like to go ahead and notify the neighbors just to be sure we are on the same page and that way they may need to make some adjustments after next month's Park Board meeting.

Mr. Fronek MOVED TO ACCEPT STAFF RECOMMENDATION WHICH IS TO MAIL NOTICES TO THE 109 HOUSEHOLDS THAT ARE WITHIN 500 FEET OF THE PARK AND REQUEST THEIR INPUT IN WRITING AND INFORM THEM THAT THE ITEM WILL BE ON THE MAY 12<sup>TH</sup> PARK BOARD AGENDA. Jeff Sorem SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Keprios noted that he will send out the notices and it will be on the May 12<sup>th</sup> Park Board Agenda.

### **III. OLD BUSINESS**

- A. Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail Update – Jonathan Vlaming, Three Rivers Park District – Mr. Vlaming, Planning Manager for Three Rivers Park District, gave the Park Board a power point presentation on the results from the previous open houses, the process used to date, and the upcoming steps in the process.

Mr. O'Connell asked if the money is in hand to which Mr. Vlaming replied no, not for the entire trail. He explained that the Park District does an annual capital improvement program and at this point they have money in hand for the one segment in western Edina as well as there is money to do the trail improvement immediately

east of York. Mr. Vlaming noted that for the rest of the segments as soon as they know the route then they can put together a multi year CIP. He pointed out that this is a big project that will probably take several years to complete.

Jed Hepworth, 5509 Valley Lane, indicated that he lives across the creek from Heights Park and is a long time Edina resident. He noted that he would like to personally invite each Park Board member to walk a segment of Nine Mile Creek this Saturday. He indicated that Saturday is Earth Day and there are going to be a lot of people picking up garbage and cleaning up. He stated that it's really easy to talk about doing things in the abstract but when you walk along the creek and you see the impact it really is a different vision.

Jim Hildebrand, 6808 Brook Drive, informed the Park Board that he recently came across a study from September 2007 titled "City of Edina Comprehensive Bicycle Transportation Plan" and it's approximately 115 pages. He noted that it's very well done and was put together by the City of Edina Independent Consultant, City Council, Bike Edina Task Force, the City of Edina Engineer and Planning Departments. The study addressed approving local and regional destination safety routes for all including sizing of the trail and where it would be busy and not busy. He noted that bicycling for community health provided recommended routes and detailed analysis that included detailed recommendations for planning, operating and maintenance. Mr. Hildebrand pointed out that Mr. Vlaming recommended that the city appoint a task force composed of citizens to evaluate the routes that they've suggested. Therefore, what concerns him is that Mr. Vlaming is asking the City Council to assign a task force to select from routes that the "TRPD" has already chosen. Therefore he is eliminating many possibilities identified in the City of Edina Comprehensive Bicycle Transportation Plan. Mr. Hildebrand stated that justification in the selection process to the City of Edina and its citizens so taking that into account he thinks it's fair to ask that we look at any criteria for additional trails that hadn't been added by our own Edina Task Force and that these criteria should be made public after discussion and then put the plan that's already been put together by the City of Edina as a base and then see if there are any additional trails that should be added using the criteria just mentioned. Following that determination he guesses they would then toss it up to the City Council the pluses and minuses of each trail and let them decide. He feels we should use the study that the City of Edina has done and paid for and print it up in great detail with lots of illustrations of possible routes and go from there in their evaluation process rather than taking something that they are being given that's sort of predetermined, narrowed it down to one or two choices now and then being asked to make a choice from that.

Pete McCarthy, 6801 Brook Drive, indicated that one of the things he saw in Mr. Vlaming's last presentation is there was a suggestion of one or two people per segment to be on the task force and now he sees that it's listed as just one. He stated that he really thinks that the people should have a voice and that there really should be two people per segment instead of one. Mr. McCarthy stated that another thing is this seems to be driven by the Three Rivers Park District to get this bike path through Edina to connect to everything and not even knowing that there was a plan already given by the City of Edina. He asked is there going to be a non-biased assessment

done by the City of Edina that's not given by the Three Rivers Park District. Lastly, he noted that he feels it's a shame that we can't connect this bike path because he thinks everyone is in favor of the bike path, it's just a matter of where it's going to be located.

Mike Wolff, 5300 West 70<sup>th</sup> St., noted that he just wanted to share a couple of statistics that he would like the Park Board to think about before making a recommendation to the City Council about where the trail should go. Mr. Wolff pointed out if the trail runs through a wetland or along 9 Mile Creek it will emit approximately 2.4 million pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> into the air and it will continue to be CO<sub>2</sub> emitter. He commented that it will be detrimental to the environment for as long as it's there. Mr. Wolff's second statistic is from the Bike Advocate that indicates that a person is 2.6 times more likely to suffer injury or death on a designated trail (such as the one being discussed) versus a trail that's on a road.

Charles Madden, 6524 Creek Drive, pointed out that he just read an article in the newspaper where the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency stated that 234 cities (mostly in the metro area) have been ordered to control storm water run-off to help reduce pollution. He stated that most of the trail in Edina runs through wetlands and these are sponges for rain water and snow runoff and asks what would be stopping that.

Paul Ratelle, 5521 Valley Lane, commented that Mr. Vlaming's presentation stated that there will be paths going over Highway 62 & Highway 100. He noted that during the two previous open houses he had the opportunity to ask the Three Rivers Park District whether it was Mr. Vlaming or any of his associates there were involved in these meetings and what arrangements if any did they foresee in order to create a bridge across both of these freeways. He noted that they all acknowledged that this is a very time consuming process and something that has to be coordinated with other governmental bodies. Mr. Ratelle stated that they will have no assurance that they will ever get the approval to put a bike path across either of these freeways and that if they get the approvals it's going to be very costly. Mr. Ratelle stated that he thinks the Park Board needs to take into consideration as they deliberate through this process and find out how far they really are in deciding whether this is a reality because he thinks there are a number of preliminary steps to take a look at in evaluating where this is going and how feasible it is at the end of the day. Mr. Ratelle pointed out that the Three Rivers Park District has no control over the cost of putting these bridges over these freeways and that they will even get the approvals necessary to accomplish these. He noted that he thinks the Three Rivers District Park owes the City of Edina an explanation about that process and the likelihood that that will get approved.

Jane Weiss, 5704 Duncan Lane, indicated that she lives in the Londonderry townhouse complex and noted that she doesn't believe at any point anyone in the complex along the creek was ever notified that there was going to be something like this happening. She asked when the letter regarding the segment representatives will be sent out and who will it be going to. She also asked if it would be possible to get a list of addresses of the houses along each segment. Mr. Vlaming replied that the regional plan was to contact everybody who is immediately adjacent for any given segment. He apologized to Ms. Weiss if she didn't receive a letter and explained that

sometimes with townhomes, because they use a mapping program, only one letter is sent to a contact for townhome associations and not every home. He stated that in this case they would have to make it a point of pulling up the addresses for each of the townhomes.

#### **IV. UPDATES FROM STAFF**

- A. Pamela Park Task Force – Mr. Keprios gave an update to the Park Board on what is currently going on with the Pamela Park Task Force. He noted that their next meeting will be held on Monday, April 20<sup>th</sup> at City Hall and stated that he would like it to be known that anyone in the Pamela Park neighborhood who wants to serve on this task force are still welcome to.

Mr. Meyer asked if there is a timeline for these projects. Mr. Keprios replied they really don't have a deadline to meet for these projects. He explained that once they get the whole package together they would like to bring it to the Park Board and from there send notices to the neighborhood and inform the community at large to see if they embrace the plan that the task force has come up.

- B. Abbey's Hope Event at Edina Aquatic Center - Mr. MacHolda informed the Park Board that the City of Edina and the Edina Aquatic Center are going to be hosting the "Abbey's Hope Event" on Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 to 8:00 pm. It is being coined the "Spring into Summer Safety Kick Off". He noted that they are working closely with Abigail Taylor's parents, Scott and Katie Taylor and the Abbey Hope Foundation. He explained that hopefully this is going to be an annual event and noted that they are going to limit the event to 1,500 guests and that people will need to register on-line at Abbey's Hope.org. He noted that it will cost \$5.00 per person or \$20.00 per family.

- C. Community Gardens - Mr. Peterson indicated that he would like staff to give some thought to community gardens. Mr. Keprios replied that it is something they've looked at before. He indicated that they previously looked at a number of parks and property owned by the city and came up with a piece of land on the Moore Property right off Grove Street. He indicated that they sent out notices but it didn't fly because the residents in the immediate neighborhood strongly opposed the concept near their homes. Mr. Keprios noted that each Park Board member is assigned a few parks to visit on occasion. Mr. Keprios indicated that he would prefer that each Park Board member visit their assigned parks and come back to the next meeting with recommendations as to whether or not a community gardens would be appropriate in one or more of their assigned parks.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that he has been sitting on a State Wide Health Initiative Committee for the last several months to which they have just finished up their work. He explained that the cities of Edina, Bloomington and Richfield collectively applied for a grant through this initiative, part of which would provide funding to pursue the start of a farmers market here in Edina. One site they are currently thinking about is Centennial Lakes Park for a farmers market. He added that maybe some grant money might help them even look for other sites to have a

community garden. Mr. Keprios stressed again that he is open to having community gardens and would really like to hear input from the Park Board as to where they think it would work and where it would be well received by the neighborhood.

- D. Edina Day of Service - Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that he attended his second meeting of what they call the “Edina Day of Service”. He noted that it’s a new initiative from the Connecting with Kids group and will be held on Saturday, October 24<sup>th</sup>. He explained there is an initiative to try to get every single park with volunteers in it on that particular day and they are looking at the adopt-a-park program to be one of those vehicles to include volunteer activities such as a buckthorn pull with some lilac plantings at Rosland Park. He commented that is just a small snippet of all of the activities that are trying to plan and get volunteers out on that day and added that the Park Board will be hearing a lot more about it.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.