



PARKS and RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes of December 10, 2014

Central Hillside Center
12 E 4th St



1. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Viken called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Commissioners Dodge, Braun, Viken, Albright, Holak, Crosby, Torch

NOT PRESENT: Commissioners Hall, Welles, Schmidt, Schraepfer

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Torch motioned for approval of the November 5, 2014, meeting minutes; second by Commissioner Holak.

4. PRESENTATIONS

A. Equestrian Trails In Magney Snively (Presented by Mr. Jim Filby Williams, Director of Public Administration)

- 1) The resolution before the Commission does two things:
 - a) It expresses City Council's desire to have Administration fulfill its commitment to sustainable equestrian trails.
 - b) It directs Administration to implement recommendations of working group.
- 2) Councilor Fosle, who represents the district encompassing Magney, is sponsoring the resolution.
- 3) Questions from Commissioners:
 - a) Commissioner Braun asked how the July 1st deadline was chosen.
 - Mr. Filby Williams responded it was the earliest date Administration felt confident trails would be capable of being reviewed and a subsequent report written.
 - b) Commissioner Holak commended the stakeholders for working together to develop a plan that allows trails built for XC skiing to be tailored to meet the needs of additional users.
 - c) Commissioner Albright asked if the report will include economic impact and costs, or just ecological.
 - Mr. Filby Williams stated the report would contain ecologic impact, a needs assessment for making trails sustainable, and costs of building trails.
 - d) Commissioner Albright asked about signage of the trails until the report is released and work has begun.
 - Mr. Filby Williams noted the three goals "assess, improve and then designate". Until the report and any subsequent improvements are made, the trail will remain closed.
 - e) City Councilor Larson asked for clarification concerning signage that currently indicates no equestrian use. Will the signs be removed or will they remain?
 - Mr. Filby Williams said signs would remain.

- f) City Councilor Larson asked if the City would be incurring additional costs out of line with other trails.
 - Mr. Filby Williams noted studies for other user groups have been paid for by the City.
 - Mr. Filby Williams also noted, generally, the City pays no more than \$50,000 for a single project out of the Parks Fund.
 - g) Commissioner Torch asked about the process and timeline for identifying the expert.
 - Mr. Filby Williams stated the City and DAHTA previously worked with a trail designer who would bring experience and expertise to the project.
 - h) Commissioner Albright asked if the trail redevelopment will broaden access to include other user groups such as mountain biking.
 - Mr. Filby Williams shared COGGS is not requesting access and Administration has no plans to open the trail to additional users beyond equestrians.
 - i) Mr. Filby Williams noted several equestrian trail developments are happening concurrently and the order of their development is not set.
- 4) PUBLIC SPEAKERS
- a) Judy Hubbart
 - Thanked Mr. Filby Williams and the City for their work and for the City's concern with ecological sensitivity.
 - The DAHTA has studies showing equestrian use does not cause disproportionate erosion or the establishment of invasive species.
 - Requested the resolution be modified to ease DAHTA's ability to apply for grants.
 - (i) Mr. Filby Williams shared concerns about the impact of designating the trails as equestrian use before they are open. This could create an issue about clarity of appropriate use.
 - (ii) Commissioner Holak noted it would be possible to apply for grants without the designation of the trail as an equestrian trail if they acquire a statement from the City on the commitment to developing an equestrian trail.
 - (iii) Mr. Filby Williams noted the success of COGGS in fundraising despite their trails not being officially designated yet.
 - b) Loren Jouppi
 - She has moved back to the area specifically to be near equestrian trails. She spoke about the need for continual opportunities to engage horses, unlike other activities that can be "set aside". She encouraged the stakeholders to work quickly to reopen trails.
 - c) Tammy Daniels
 - Asked the Parks and Recreation Commission to amend the resolution to designate the trail as equestrian before making improvements.
 - (i) Commissioner Viken asked if City Councilor Fosle would be able to amend the resolution at the Council meeting.
 - 1. Councilor Larson responded that the change could be made by the Council. She noted that the existing resolution has been developed with a breadth of stakeholder input and that the amendment is brought forward by just one of the group.

- d) Lisa Nicholas
 - Encouraged Commissioners to pass the resolution with the proposed amendment
 - e) Zach Golkowski
 - Shared that he works for MN Power, managing recreational trails at Boulder Lake. He noted the ski trails can coexist with horse trails without significant impact.
 - f) Jerry Brost
 - Suggested a change to the resolution in order to designate the trail for equestrian use before it is reopened.
 - g) Candy Barbo
 - Shared she and her husband have organized an annual large group ride that required her to sign a liability agreement for damage to the trails. She stated that in the years of the event, they were never charged for any damage.
 - h) Jane Ecklund
 - Shared information from Professor Gower at the University of Wisconsin on the extent and impact of horse ridership for the local economy.
 - i) Luke Peterson
 - Suggested that there is not adequate legal authority to close the trail and that they should be considered open by virtue of precedent.
 - j) Ed Barbo
 - Expressed confidence in the momentum that has taken hold to reopen the trail.
- 5) Commissioner Albright made a motion to support the resolution in its current form and recommend that the City Council support the resolution. *"The Parks Commission endorses the Resolution of Support brought forward by the City Council as it is currently written for a Magney Snively trail study to evaluate the suitability for equestrian use"*.
- a) Commissioner Holak seconded the resolution of support for the resolution.
 - b) Brought to a vote, Passed 6-1 with Commissioner Braun voting against.

B. Equestrian Trails in Mission Creek

- 1) Mr. Filby Williams read the City Council resolution, sponsored by Councilor Fosle
- 2) Commissioner Holak asked about the mix of new and existing trails and what type of property would be involved.
 - 2.3 miles, half on an existing trail alignment
- 3) Commissioner Torch made a motion stating, *"The Parks Commission supports resolution 14-0629R calling for the City to continue to work with DAHTA and the DNR to secure funding and permits for the Jay Cooke Connector trail for equestrian use."*
 - a) Commissioner Albright seconded.
 - b) Brought to a vote and passed 6-1 with Commissioner Dodge voting against

C. Stormwater Treatment By Trout Streams

- 1) Greg Stoewer with the City Engineering Department discussed the need to create stormwater treatment ponds in order to comply with MPCA requirements in response to the Grand Avenue reconstruction project.
 - a) There are two different ponds that would be built, one along Kingsbury Creek and the

other by Knowlton Creek.

- 2) Commissioner Braun made a motion of support for the resolution as it was brought forward.

Whereas Grand Avenue is having expanded sidewalks, resulting in MPCA-required storm water treatment, and;

Whereas proposed storm water treatment Ponds 1 and 2 are in park land.

Therefore, the Parks and Recreation Commission recommends granting temporary construction easement for MnDOT and permanent storm sewer easement for City of Duluth according to Exhibit A, Pond 1- Storm Water Treatment.

Therefore, the Parks and Recreation Commission recommends granting temporary construction easement for MnDOT and permanent storm sewer easement for City of Duluth according to Exhibit A, Pond 2- Storm Water Treatment.

- a) Second was made by Commissioner Albright.
- b) Brought to a vote and passed unanimously.

5. COMMISSION COMMITTEES

A. Parks And Facilities – meeting date: December 3, 2014

Chair - Joel Braun – Jon Welles, Ed Hall, Michael Schraepfer, [Dale Sellner]

Commissioner Braun shared the notes from the meeting held to discuss conditions of tennis courts throughout the City and identified prioritization of improvements to be made.

Ms. Kathy Bergen, Manager, City Parks and Recreation, noted the City is not financially able to maintain the full portfolio of courts and so the consideration of reducing the number of courts is with the thought that it will allow increased investment in the limited remaining courts.

B. Administrative (E-Board) – meeting date: December 19, 2014

Chair – Ed Hall – Eric Viken, Tom Albright, [Kathy Bergen]

No update.

C. Trails And Bikeways – meeting date: TBA

Chair – Tom Albright - Eric Viken, Andy Holak, [Judy Gibbs], [Art Johnston]

No update.

D. Recreation Programming (youth and adult) – meeting date: December 16, 2014

Chair - Jon Welles – Andy Holak, Erik Torch [Pamela Page]

The Committee is meeting to discuss the application process for the 2015 Chester Creek Concerts.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Nomination Committee: Commissioner Hall recommended that Commissioners Braun and Viken serve since their terms are expiring.
- B. 2015 Meeting Dates and Locations: Meetings will continue to be the 2nd Wednesday except for the annual meeting in April, which will be on April 1st, and November, which will be November 4th to avoid Veterans Day on November 11th.
- C. Annual Meeting Planning Committee: Commissioner Torch said he would be willing to serve.
- D. Central Hillside Park Mini Master Plan: tabled, the plan has been received from the consultant and will be brought forward for Commission approval at a later date.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- A. Dennette Lynch shared concerns about a City proposal to extend the Lakewalk through Brighton Beach area. Her concerns will be considered by the Trails Committee.
 - 1. She also raised concerns about the amount of money being spent for limited user group trails when cheaper recreation facilities, such as dog parks, can be built appealing to a broader segment of the population.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Albright made a motion to adjourn, Commissioner Torch 2nd, unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held 5 pm, Wednesday, January 14, 2015, at Central Hillside Center.

MOTION(S)

1. *The Parks Commission endorses the Resolution of Support brought forward by the City Council, as it is currently written, for a Magney Snively trail study to evaluate suitability for equestrian use.*

Commissioner Albright motioned, Commissioner Holak seconded. Passed 6-1, Commissioner Braun voted against.

2. *The Parks Commission supports resolution 14-0629R calling for the City to continue to work with DAHTA and the DNR to secure funding and permits for the Jay Cooke Connector trail for equestrian use.*

Commissioner Torch motioned, Commissioner Albright seconded. Passed 6-1, Commissioner Dodge voting against.

3. *Whereas Grand Avenue is having expanded sidewalks, resulting in MPCA-required storm water*

treatment, and;

Whereas proposed storm water treatment Ponds 1 and 2 are in park land.

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Therefore, the Parks and Recreation Commission recommends granting temporary construction easement for MnDOT and permanent storm sewer easement for City of Duluth according to Exhibit A, Pond 2- Storm Water Treatment.

Commissioner Braun made a motion of support for the resolution as it was brought forward, Commissioner Albright seconded. Passed unanimously.