



PARKS and RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes of July 9, 2014

Central Hillside Center
12 E 4th St



1. Call to Order

Commissioner Hall called the meeting to order at 5:05

2. Roll Call

PRESENT: Commissioners Torch, Welles, Viken, Hall, Albright, Schraepfer, Crosby, Braun
NOT PRESENT: Holak

3. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Torch motioned for approval of June 11 meeting minutes; second by Commissioner Wells; approved.

4. Introduction

Jim Shoberg, Parks and Recreation Project Coordinator

Mr. Shoberg shared that he has joined Parks and Recreation after working as a landscape architect in Minnesota and Wisconsin over the past ten years. His role within the Parks Division will be the Project Coordinator.

5. Presentations

A. Hartley Mini-Master Plan – Kathy Bergen and Tom O'Rourke (action requested)

Staff member, Ms. Bergen, made a presentation providing an overview of the Park, the Master Plan, and the process used to complete the Master Plan. She noted the Master Plan was posted publicly and revisions have been made based on previous input from Hartley Nature Center (HNC), neighbors, and other user groups. Six meetings and three public meetings were held in order to shape the Master Plan.

Cost estimates are being prepared for the phasing of the Master Plan but are not available currently.

The following statements were made from partner organizations after the presentation:

- Tom O'Rourke, Executive Director of Hartley Nature Center (HNC), spoke in favor of the current Master Plan while noting the natural tension between accessibility of the Park for a broader audience versus a desire to preserve an authentic natural experience with minimal human impact/contact. Mr. O'Rourke expressed a desire for the City to monitor impacts of phased development and management by studying level of usage by various populations and studying how the development and management impact user experiences.
- Other groups, including the Superior Hiking Trail, COGGS, and the Izaak Walton League, were not present but shared letters of support for the current Master Plan.



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Commissioners shared questions they had:

- Commissioner Hall asked if we had a record of impairments that impacted Tischer Creek. Jim Filby Williams responded by stating that the DNR counts populations and that water a half mile above and below the dam were absent of trout due to water temperatures. Commissioner Welles followed up that question by asking for information on trout populations beyond the half-mile limit.
- Commissioner Hall asked about the extent of the study of the creek/pond. Mr. Filby Williams replied that the DNR has expressed interest in helping to secure funding in order to complete a feasibility study that considers all aspects impacting the pond, creek and their animal populations. Mr. O'Rourke also noted historical and cultural aesthetics of the dam are likely to be considered. A feasibility study would be completed by an independent consultant, not the DNR.
- Commissioner Welles expressed a concern about including a feasibility study within the Master Plan and, if it is included, stated he would like the results of the study to be brought before the Parks Commission for approval. Mr. Welles also requested the trail around the pond not be developed until a feasibility study is completed in order to understand the impact. Mr. Filby Williams responded the trail around the pond would be taken on as part of any potential creek/pond restoration.
- Commissioner Viken asked about how any changes to the stream/pond might impact inflow/outflow of water. Ms. Bergen noted that language could be added to ensure that any feasibility study accounts for ecological/hydrological factors.
- Commissioner Viken asked about site lines both from and of the additional property from the School District. Mr. O'Rourke stated that Hartley Nature Center staff and City staff have begun considering those factors and have been conducting meetings between School District/City/HNC.
- Commissioner Hall pointed out that page 12 of the Master Plan notes that development might be possible on the new School District property and suggested adding additional language stating the City's preferred usage for the land.
- Commissioner Welles asked about the surface of the Old Hartley Road trail, specifically regarding the current plan suggesting crushed stone for a portion and pavers on another portion. Mr. Filby Williams stated that the Old Hartley Road could be different surfaces (including a boardwalk) but that the connection between Old Hartley Road and Hartley Nature Center might be a different surface if that surface can meet all design requirements.
- Commissioner Welles noted that on page 64 there is a trail that would have connected to Snowflake which was later removed from the plan. That error will be corrected on the final Plan.
- Commissioner Torch asked for clarification from the City about how they would implement projects with a "nature based lens". Mr. Filby Williams shared that specific language has been developed, in partnership with HNC, which states that a primary purpose of the Park is to be a nature based experience.
- Commissioner Torch shared concerns about adding more trails if maintenance funding/staffing is not available. Parks staff, Judy Gibbs, stated that the trail addition will be minimal; however, the point is worth considering within the context of future discussions of the cross-country ski trails' master plan. Mr. Torch suggested possibly delaying the development of the Rock Knob Trail until phase two to allow consideration of the impacts of



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improvements to Old Hartley Road.

- Dwight Morrison from Wheels on Trails noted that the Rock Knob Trail was a welcome addition because it would further expand accessibility. He noted that access to trails has been limited by lack of maintenance.
- Commissioner Braun asked if it is an option to vote on phase one of the Master Plan and wait to vote on phase two until after a feasibility study on the pond/stream has been completed. Ms. Bergen recommended not splitting it up because it would require a substantial rewrite of the Plan to allow it to be cleanly split in two.

Commissioner Welles made a motion to approve the attached resolution in support of the Hartley Park Master Plan; seconded by Commissioner Braun; motion passed unanimously.

B. Proposed Dog Park at Observation Park – Results of June 24th Public Meeting (action requested)

Ms. Bergen provided a summary of the June 24th public meeting, which was also attended by Commissioner Hall. Notes from that meeting are attached to these minutes.

Commissioner Hall shared concerns about the small size of the park, noting that the current dog park is approximately 4,700 square feet but national recommendations for a dog park are 43,000 square feet. He also noted that signage should be added to help manage interactions between dogs and children in the park. Commissioner Hall shared concerns that the entrance to the small dog area is not as easily accessible due to its placement at the back of the park.

Commissioner Albright requested that any signage or amenities, such as mutt mitts, be added by the parking lot in addition to the actual dog park area.

Commissioner Viken made a motion of support for the Parks staff to work together with volunteers to develop the dog park. The Commission is not endorsing a specific plan, but rather deferring to City staff and the dog park volunteers to develop details of the dog park plan. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Welles. Motion approved unanimously.

6. Commission Committees

A. Parks and Facilities – meeting date: TBA

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

B. Administrative (E-Board) – meeting date: Thursday, July 17 at noon at Parks office

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

C. Trails and Bikeways – meeting date: TBA

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

* Trail Damage Ordinance – informational or action requested

- Commissioner Albright noted that the Trails and bikeways Committee reviewed the proposed ordinance and sent it back to the City Attorney's office with questions for



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consideration.

- * Relationship of this committee with larger City Task Force
- * Update on Duluth Traverse Trail

D. Recreation Programming (youth and adult) – meeting date: TBA

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

- \$30,319.12 now available for the grant program

- timeline to be confirmed

7. Commissioner & Liaison Reports

None given.

8. New Business

A. New appointment to the Parks Commission approved at the June 23 City Council meeting: Amanda Crosby was appointed to the Commission on Disabilities position.

- The final two vacancies (3rd and 4th District Commissioners) will be appointed at the upcoming City Council meeting.

B. Representative from the Parks Commission for the Lincoln Park Small Area Study Advisory Committee

- The yet to be appointed Commissioner for the 4th District will fill this position. Commissioner Albright will fill in until she is available to start.

C. Master Planning Process for the Zoo and Fairmont Park began June 27

- Commissioner Albright is representing the Parks Commission on the working group. They have met twice already.

D. St Louis River Corridor Visioning Process

9. Old Business

A. Chester Mini-Master Plan

B. Proposed Dog Park at Brighton Beach Park

C. Review of Golf Courses

D. Wade Stadium renovations and Wade/Wheeler Mini-Master Plan

E. Timeframe for plans for new alignment for the Cross City Trail

10. Division Manager's Report

11. Public Comment

12. Adjournment:

Commissioner Albright made a motion to adjourn, Commissioner Torch 2nd, unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

13. Next meeting

E-Board Meetings

Fridays
12 noon - City
Hall

Thursday, July 17
August 22
September 26
October 24
November 21
December 19



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The next meeting will be held 5 pm, Wednesday, August 13, at Central Hillside Center.

MOTION(S)

Commissioner Viken motioned for Parks Staff to work together with volunteers to develop the dog park. The Commission is not endorsing a specific plan, but rather deferring to City staff and the dog park volunteers to develop details of the dog park. Motion seconded by Commissioner Welles. Motion unanimously approved.

Commissioner Welles made a motion to approve the attached resolution in support of the Hartley Park Master Plan; seconded by Commissioner Braun; motion passed unanimously.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

HARTLEY PARK MASTER PLAN RESOLUTION*

RESOLVED,

That the Parks and Recreation Commission approves the Hartley Park Master Plan, as set forth in the June 27, 2014 Draft Plan and accompanying Hartley Park Master Plan Executive Summary, and recommends its submission to the City Council for its consideration and approval, subject to the following conditions:

That no actions be taken regarding the Tischer Creek/Hartley Pond Restoration recommendations, as articulated on page 33 of the Hartley Park Master Plan, until the completion of a feasibility study, and

That after the City receives the results of any study to assess the feasibility of the Tischer Creek/Hartley Pond Restoration recommendations, the results of any such feasibility study be submitted to the Parks and Recreation Commission for its review, and further,

That no commitments be made, or funds expended, on any recommendations regarding Tischer Creek/Hartley Pond Restoration recommendations prior to the feasibility study's review and approval by the Parks and Recreation Commission.

*The City of Duluth Parks and Recreation Commission approved this Resolution on a vote of 7-0, a unanimous vote of all members of the Commission present, at a meeting of the Commission on July 9, 2014.

PUBLIC MEETING:
OBSERVATION DOG PARK
June 24, 2014 at Washington Center

OVERVIEW:

17 attendees

Email comments received:

- This is a kid park – this use would take away from family use. Consideration should be given to kids rights instead of dogs
 - Glad to see progress in neighborhood
 - Strongly supports a dog park
-

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS/IDEAS from meeting attendees

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| Sharla Gardner | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• playground is separate area from dog park• yes, within same park but different usage and at a distance |
| male | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• recognize the value of flat land in City for fields• small flat area (only flat area in neighborhood)• glad proposed dog park is small and retaining the green space for ball park• Playground underutilized• Park not given TLC over years• 40 years of deferred maintenance |
| Susan Hawkinson | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not against dog parks, but against having it near a children's location [playgrounds]• park called decrepit• no programs since 2002(?) – no neighborhood club• concern is dogs being mixed with children• worked on a petition against this location for 9 months• Jungle Boy has helped salvage area (from gangs and loitering)• concerned about safety and losing peacefulness and calmness of park• isn't there other land "over the hill" and away from people to put a dog park? |
| Bill Lynch | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keene Creek Park has a playground and a dog park• new dog park location has to be park land |
| female | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advocate for flat space and multigenerational users |
| male | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• People park |
| female | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dog park users are good dog owners |
| Ed Hall | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8 am is the posted open hour at Keene Creek dog park |

PUBLIC MEETING:
OBSERVATION DOG PARK
June 24, 2014 at Washington Center

Heidi Bringman

- users will increase safety
- statistics say 59% of households have dogs
- multigenerational activities have co-existed in parks

Male

- Water question – future possibility?
- dual-purpose for dog park and other park users
- could be located on the outside of the building
- volunteer fundraising or grant writing for water