



City of Blaine
Anoka County, Minnesota
Minutes - Final
Park Advisory Board

10801 Town Square Drive
Blaine, MN 55449

Tuesday, April 28, 2015

7:00 PM

Council Chambers

1. Call To Order

The Blaine Park Advisory Board met in the Council Chambers of City Hall on Tuesday, March 24, 2015.

1. Chair Bird called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: 7 - Chair Bird, Commissioner Lester, Commissioner Pribbernow, Commissioner Das, Commissioner Varian, Commissioner Markle, and Commissioner Walsdorf

2. Roll Call

Staff Present: Nate Monahan, Recreation Manager
Jerome Krieger, Recreation Manager

Present: 7 - Chair Bird, Commissioner Lester, Commissioner Pribbernow, Commissioner Das, Commissioner Varian, Commissioner Markle, and Commissioner Walsdorf

3. Approval of Minutes

3.-1 [MIN 15-14](#) APPROVAL OF MARCH 24, 2015 PARK BOARD MINUTES

Commissioner Varian noted on page 2, item 5.1, 1st paragraph, 11th line remove the word "at" before \$7500.

Moved by Lester, seconded by Varian, that this Minutes be Approved. The Motion was adopted unanimously.

Aye: 7 - Chair Bird, Commissioner Lester, Commissioner Pribbernow, Commissioner Das, Commissioner Varian, Commissioner Markle, and Commissioner Walsdorf

4. Open Forum for Citizen Input

Chair Bird opened the Open Forum at 7:06 p.m.

Ms. Dottie McKinley, 3900 125th Avenue, Blaine. She is the Chair of the NRCB. She invited the Park Board to the BWS Kickoff Event on May 30th at Lakeside Commons Pavilion. She stated there would be tours to East Lake Park and refreshments. She stated May is National Wetland Month. She also invited the Board to Earth Day at Laddie Lake Park on May 2, 2015. She invited the Board to a tour in July of the BWS. More details will come in the future.

Commissioner Varian asked how the tour would be done on May 30th and Ms. McKinley stated people would walk to East Lake Park for a tour.

Chair Bird closed Open Forum at 7:11 p.m.

5. New Business

5.-1 PB 15-17 RECOMMENDATION OF CONCEPT PLAN FOR HARPERS PARK

Recreation Manager Monahan reviewed a neighborhood meeting was conducted in February for residents to select options for the playground and amenities for Harpers Park. Two options for the playground design at Harpers Park were provided for Board review. Option #1 was the overall favorite.

Staff emailed both options to the residents that showed up for the neighborhood meeting and Option #1 was the over whelming favorite. Other amenities the neighborhood was in favor of include: Half Basketball Court, Bike Rack, Shelter, Security Light, Trails, and Irrigation. A park concept was handed out at the meeting from the Consultant Pioneer Engineering for Board and resident review and comment. The following is an updated project schedule provided by Pioneer Engineering for construction of Harpers Park.

April 28: Park Board Recommends Concept Plan to Staff
Mid-May: Project Bidding/Award, Execute Contracts
Mid-June - August: Construction
September: Final Acceptance

Mr. Monahan noted in this park rubber landing will be used instead of woodchips.

Commissioner Walsdorf asked if there is any health risk with the rubber product. Mr. Monahan stated he has not heard anything negative about this product. He noted there are issues with some rubber chips but this is a rubber poured surface. Commissioner Walsdorf asked if reasons were given as to why Option #1 was more popular and Mr. Monahan stated the residents liked the larger space for 2-5 year olds.

Commissioner Das asked if the cost was the same with Option #1 and #2 and Mr. Monahan stated the cost was the same. He asked if the rubber surface is in any area parks and Mr. Monahan stated he will ask the supplier. He is aware Elm Creek Park in Maple Grove has a total rubber surface. Commissioner Das asked what the life cycle is of the

rubber surface and Mr. Monahan stated he will research and report back to the Commission.

Commissioner Varian asked if there is any maintenance to the rubber surface and Mr. Monahan stated every three years another coat is applied. She would be interested to know the life cycle and the cost difference with maintenance of doing woodchips vs. the rubber surface.

Chair Bird asked if trees would be saved as possible and Mr. Monahan stated the consultant was told to save any good trees in the area.

Mr. Monahan showed a drawing of the concept plan, which indicated trees and sodded area. He noted there would be a sidewalk surrounding the park area.

Commissioner Das asked if the park was designed for a specific age group and Mr. Monahan stated playgrounds are typically designed for age 12 and under. Older children would use the basketball court.

Commissioner Walsdorf asked if there would only be one light and Mr. Monahan stated there is generally only one light installed to help prevent vandalism.

Commissioner Markle asked where the open space would be on the drawing. Mr. Monahan indicated the wetland area on the concept plan. Mr. Monahan stated there will not be a huge open area. The South end of the park has some open area.

Mr. Chris Bolt, 3039 129th Lane, just moved into his home in March. He is happy with the layout. He is in favor of the equipment selected for the young children. He is happy to see a basketball court. He asked if some hills could be added for sledding. He is glad to hear trees would be kept where possible.

Chair Bird stated this concept seems like a good fit for the neighborhood.

Commissioner Markle asked if there could be elevation changes made to the plan or is it not viable with saving the trees. Mr. Monahan stated there is neither a spot nor money to do any elevation changes.

Motion by Commissioner Markle to recommend to staff playground option #1 and approval of the final concept plan for developing Harpers Park. Motion seconded by Commissioner Das. Motion approved.

Aye: 7 - Chair Bird, Commissioner Lester, Commissioner Pribbernow, Commissioner Das, Commissioner Varian, Commissioner Markle, and Commissioner Walsdorf

5.-2 [PB 15-18](#)

UPDATE ON PHASE 1 OF WETLAND SANCTUARY PROJECT

Recreation Manager Monahan reviewed the first phase of the project will be a parking lot/trailhead on the east side of the BWS off Lexington Ave., directly across from the Lexington Athletic Complex. This phase will also include construction of a trail that will extend from the trailhead to the west and connect with the existing trail loop at East Lakes Park. Cost of this phase is estimated at \$765,000. Work will begin this summer/fall timeframe.

Since the late 1990's the city of Blaine has made a commitment to purchasing and preserving open space areas within the city borders. Efforts have resulted in 13 areas totaling over 800 acres to be officially designated as Open Space. In 2008, the City implemented an Open Space Management Plan designed to control invasive plant species in the open spaces, promote restoration of native plant species and develop public use and appreciation of these significant areas. To date, management projects have been successful with the exception of two areas where projects have not been started. One is a landlocked area that is waiting for development to make access feasible and the other is an area named Site 7 in the management plan. The NRCB has recommended a name change, which has been approved by Council. This site is now officially known as the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary (BWS).

BWS is approximately 500 acres in size and contains a mix of wetlands and uplands that are home to a diverse inventory of wildlife and native plant species, some of which are endangered or threatened. The location is north of 109th Ave. and west of Lexington Ave. in east Blaine. It is bordered on the north and east by Anoka County Ditch 53-62, on the west by residential development and extends south to 109th Avenue.

BWS has been envisioned as a potential destination for nature lovers and an example of pre-development Anoka Sand Plain ecosystem. Beginning with control of invasive species, the project would restore the native diversity of plants and plant communities and add amenities such as trails and bird watching stations. The project would also include the construction of a nature center, providing interpretative services and educational programs.

The project process began in January of this year with a request for proposal for conceptual design services circulated to qualified contractors. The City Council awarded a contract to Stantec, Inc. at the March 20 council meeting.

Stantec has included Jason Husveth (Critical Connections Ecological Services) as part of their team for this project. Jason has completed numerous restoration projects in Blaine and is currently working on the wetland banking project located in the center of BWS. A conceptual design will be complete by mid-summer this year and will be unveiled for public viewing. Bids for final design will go out in late fall 2014 with construction expected to begin in 2015. Trail heads/parking areas and some trails will be in the initial phase with succeeding phases to include the various amenities, vegetation restoration and the nature center. Completion of the entire project is estimated for 2019-2020.

Funding for the project will be entirely from the Open Space and Trails Fund, which is funded solely by Park Dedication Fees. The total project cost is estimated to be between \$950,000 and \$1 Million. No General Fund tax dollars will be used for this project.

Under a separate project, the NRCB is initiating a second wetland banking project. The site is located at the north end of BWS and adjacent to the current wetland banking project. Two contractors submitted bids with the award going to Jason Husveth (CCES). The purpose of this project is to create additional wetland credits that will be banked and sold to generate revenue for the Open Space fund.

This additional revenue is necessary to maintain the improvements made to the open spaces in connection with the Open Space Management Plan. State Statute does not allow the use of Park Dedication fees for maintenance. Open Space improvements are reaching the point where future work would be considered maintenance. Having the revenue generated by the sale of wetland credits would mean no General Fund dollars would be used. It is anticipated that approximately 97 acres of credits would be created as a result of this project. At current market rates for an acre of wetland credit, the net revenue potential is about \$4 Million.

The project is currently moving through the permit phase, which could take a year or more. Work on the ground will begin no later than 2016, sooner if possible. Project completion is scheduled for 2020. Credits could be available for sale as soon as 2017.

Update to wetland banking project - 041015: The project has received conceptual approval from all regulatory agencies except the Corps of Engineers. We are working through their process and hope to have the sign off by Nov/Dec of this year (2015). Once that is in hand, work will begin on the restoration process.

Update on BWS - 041015: Bids for final design were received from 4 firms with the award going to Stantec. After review of the concept design final report, the estimated budget for this project is now at \$2.5M. This includes the nature center. The city will be contacting local corporations for contributions and will also seek grants, such as the LCCMR grant, to supplement the open space fund. The fund currently has about \$1M and has been receiving additional park dedication funds. However, with the percent to open space reduced from 35% to 20% for the next few years there is a short fall in achieving the total goal. Revenue from the wetland banking project will not be available for a minimum of 2 years, which is why supplemental sources of revenue are being pursued.

The first phase of the project will be a parking lot/trailhead on the east side of the BWS off Lexington Avenue., directly across from the Lexington Athletic Complex. This phase will also include construction of a trail that will extend from the trailhead to the west and connect with the existing trail loop at East Lakes Park. Cost of this phase is estimated at \$765,000. Work will begin this summer/fall timeframe. The remaining trail segments, a trailhead off 109th Ave. and the nature center will be in succeeding phases over the next 5 to 6 years.

Mr. Monahan showed the Open Space Master Plan of the area.

Mr. Monahan stated the second phase of the project will have an open water feature and indicated the location on the drawing. There will also be a parking lot.

Phase Three will include trails and viewing areas. Phase Four will include more trails and wildlife viewing platforms looking out over the wetlands. Phase Five will include more trails and Phase Six will include the Nature Center.

Commissioner Das asked what the roads were on the drawing and Mr. Monahan indicated those are Lexington and 109th Avenues. He asked how people can cross the street. Mr. Monahan stated there is a challenge for crossing from the Athletic Complex to the BWS. The dream is for the Nature Center to be staffed with naturalists, etc.

Commissioner Walsdorf asked what the cost would be for a pedestrian bridge and Mr. Monahan stated he does not know what the cost would be and this is definitely a concern. Chair Bird stated he would estimate it to be several million dollars. He would guarantee the County would be involved since it is a county road. Mr. Monahan stated he will research costs with Spring Lake Park and Brooklyn Park and their strategies for obtaining grants for the bridges.

Commissioner Markle stated signage will be necessary to get people used to the fact that crossing is dangerous. He asked about the trails and drainage. Mr. Monahan stated the consultant will handle that.

Commissioner Varian asked if State Statute does not allow park dedication funds can be used for maintenance, can it be used for other park items and Mr. Monahan stated that was correct.

Discussed

Manage and Monitor Wetlands at Lexington Athletic Complex

Recreation Manager Jerome Krieger reviewed the City is required to manage and monitor the wetlands at Lexington Athletic Complex for at least a 5 year period. Prairie Restorations will be doing the 5 year managing of the site as part of the bid for the project. Jim Hafner, Storm water Manager, sent out bids for the monitoring portion of the work. We received four bids from the following companies:

Wenck Assoc - \$13,375 (includes pre and post delineation, not included by others)

Kjolhaug Environmental Services - \$11,500 (cost is estimated, could and likely would increase)

Cross River consulting - \$19,520

MN Native Landscapes - \$15,000 (admittedly do not have monitoring experience)

Staff would like to recommend Wenck Associates as the company to go with for the monitoring and would like your recommendation also. The cost of this will not come out of park dedication fees. This will be a budgeted item in park maintenance for the Athletic Complex.

Commissioner Varian asked if there will be a clause in the contract so the City can get out of it after three years. Mr. Krieger said it will not exceed the \$13,375.

Commissioner Markle asked if corrective action was needed could the city's maintenance department handle it or is it more technical that would require an outside firm. Mr. Krieger stated it would be a case by case basis. If we could do it internally, we would.

Commissioner Das asked if they have done similar work at other cities. Mr. Krieger stated we have worked with Wenck in the past and

they have a good reputation. Commissioner Das stated he is concerned they have experience working with the wetland.

Motion by Commissioner Das to recommend Wenck Associates as the company to go with for the monitoring of the Wetlands at Lexington Athletic Complex as presented. Motion seconded by Commissioner Walsdorf. Motion approved unanimously.

Aye: 7 - Chair Bird, Commissioner Lester, Commissioner Pribbernow, Commissioner Das, Commissioner Varian, Commissioner Markle, and Commissioner Walsdorf

5.-3 [PB 15-19](#)

PARK CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

Recreation Manager Monahan provided the following Park Construction Updates:

Lexington Athletic Complex - Mr. Krieger showed a number of photographs indicating status of the Complex. The color of the roof was changed to charcoal grey. He showed pictures of the concession stand, the maintenance garage, stone work, meeting room, outside woodwork, fields which were seeded back in August - September 2014, tennis/pickleball and basketball courts, playground, picnic shelter, upstairs loft,

BBC Field #1 - Mr. Krieger showed photographs of Blaine Baseball Complex Field 1

Aquatore Field #1 - The holes for the poles have been dug. All the poles are up and wiring will be done. The old shed is being torn down behind Aquatore #2.

Commissioner Walsdorf asked who will run the concession stand and Mr. Krieger stated it will be a City run concession stand.

Commissioner Pribbernow asked when the playground can be used. Mr. Krieger stated when enough of the punch list is completed a grand opening will be held in June - July timeframe. The hay bale is made of fiberglass, concrete with a rubber surface. It weighs 3000 pounds.

Commissioner Das stated he is impressed.

Mr. Krieger stated kudos go to the architect on the project.

Informational: no action required

5.-4 [PB 15-20](#)

SOCCER COMPLEX PARK FEATURE

Recreation Manager Monahan reviewed this month's feature park is the Soccer Complex. This is the 63rd park presentation to the Park Board. He asked if the Board would like the park feature presentations

to start over. Chair Bird stated they will discuss at a future date and let Mr. Monahan know.

Commissioner Walsdorf stated he would like to see this continue as he is new on the Park Board.

Mr. Monahan showed a power point presentation of the Soccer Complex along with a narrative. He noted the lights on the fields will need to be replaced within a few years.

Commissioner Varian asked if the Fire and Police Departments are providing services to the airport at no charge. Mr. Monahan stated that was part of the negotiation of the lease of the land for the soccer complex. Commissioner Varian asked if there are any lacrosse fields in Blaine. Mr. Krieger stated Northpoint and Sunnyside are used and Lexington Athletic complex will have some fields.

Commissioner Das asked about the new soccer fields being constructed off 109th and Mr. Monahan stated those 20 additional fields are part of the NSC and will be maintained by the NSC.

Informational: no action required

5.-5 [PB 15-21](#)

Upcoming Events

Recreation Manager Monahan reviewed the following upcoming events:

Earth Day: Saturday, May 2 at Laddie Lake Park - cleanup and tree planting.

Blaine World Fest: Saturday, May 16 at Town Square Park

Blaine Festival donated \$5,000 for Aquatore Playground

March 27 Egg Hunt - there were 1000 kids attending.

Informational: no action required

Adjournment

Commissioner Das motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Varian seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

Chair Bird adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Aye: 7 - Chair Bird, Commissioner Lester, Commissioner Pribbernow, Commissioner Das, Commissioner Varian, Commissioner Markle, and Commissioner Walsdorf