

Medina Park Commission Meeting Minutes
February 18, 2015
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The Park Commission of Medina, Minnesota met in regular session on February 18, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at Medina City Hall. Park Commission Chair Steve Lee presided.

1) Call to Order

Commissioners Present: Steve Lee, Madeleine Linck, Lori Meehan, Dino DesLauriers and Robin Reid
Commissioners Absent: Nate Pearson and John Jacob
Also Present: City Council member Lorie Cousineau, Public Works Director Steve Scherer and Assistant to City Administrator Jodi Gallup

2) Additions to the Agenda: None.

3) Approval of Minutes:

• **January 21, 2015 Meeting**

A motion was made by Reid and seconded by Meehan to approve the minutes from January 21, 2015 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

4) Public Comments (on items not on the agenda): None.

5) City Council Update

Lorie Cousineau gave the Park Commission a brief update on City Council actions since the last time the Park Commission met.

6) Eagle Scout Project – Hamel Legion Park

Griffin Schneider stated that all the costs have been covered; noting that the flag pole and signs will be donated. He specified that the concrete would not cost more than \$3,500.

Schneider presented a new drawing for the concrete stating that the fences would be brought in to allow for additional concrete slabs poured for spectators to sit with lawn chairs.

DesLauriers stated that while meeting with them, they had agreed to only pour the three concrete slabs for the bleachers and did not like that the plan had changed again to include the additional side concrete slabs. He noted that the city is trying to clean the park up and does not want too much concrete. He also noted that he thought it was a good idea to move the fence up to improve the sightlines.

Discussion took place on the options for pouring concrete slabs. There was a general consensus that the three slabs for the bleachers should be poured along with the small

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triangle pieces between the slabs to have one continuous piece of concrete, but the additional side slabs should not be poured.

The Park Commission discussed the updated language and design of the dugout signs. It was recommended the signs should be blue and white to match the existing signage in the park. There was a general consensus that these signs were a good idea and direction was given to DesLauriers to work with Schneider to finalize the language on the signs. Reid offered to help proof read the final signs.

Meehan questioned if the concrete would cost less than \$3,500 without the side slabs. It was confirmed that it would cost less.

It was noted that the name of the park is Hamel Legion Park, not Hamel Memorial Park as written on the proposed dugout signs.

The Park Commission summarized their recommendations as follows:

1. Pour three concrete pads for the bleachers with the triangles filled in, but not the additional side slabs.
2. Moving the fence is a good idea to help sightlines.
3. The maintenance/dugout signs are a good idea and DesLauriers will work with Schneider to finalize language
4. The flag pole will be replaced, but remain in the same location.
5. The monument will be moved to the approved location.

A motion was made by Linck and seconded by Meehan to recommend approval of the Eagle Scout project with the items noted above. Motion passed unanimously.

7) Three Rivers Park District Presentation on Regional Trail Master Plan

Three Rivers Park District Planner Ann Rexine presented their Regional Trail Master Plan to the Park Commission. She stated that the proposed 17 mile regional trail is broken down into nine segments and will connect from Baker Park Reserve to Carver Park Reserve. She noted that three of the segments are existing and the remaining segments are part of a long range plan.

Rexine gave a little background on the history of this plan. She stated that the plan started as a Minnetrista project to create a north/south connection. About two to three years ago, Minnetrista turned the project over to Three Rivers Park District to take a look at it from a regional level. Three Rivers Park District agreed to take the plan through the process to get approval from the Metropolitan Council.

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Rexine noted that the Park Commission had asked about the funding sources of this project. She referenced the funding section of the master plan stating that the entire project including land acquisition will cost approximately \$10.7 million. She stated that Three Rivers Park District does not have all this money budgeted and anticipates receiving federal funds for segments of the project. She stated that they have had success in the past receiving federal funds. She noted that they will also seek local, state and county grant opportunities. If the Metropolitan Council accepts this plan into their system, they will contribute up to 75% of the cost for some of the land acquisitions.

Rexine stated that it is the intent of Three Rivers Park District to seek resolutions of support from the communities in this regional trail plan to strengthen their application to the Metropolitan Council and to help with future grant applications.

Discussion took place on the impact of each trail segment on private property, which will be better determined at the time of engineering. The Park Commission also discussed how private property would be acquired to complete some of the segments. Rexine assured the commission that private property would only be acquired from willing land owners.

Discussion took place on the location of trails along the right-of-way. Rexine noted that trails would be planned off road as much as possible and if they are within the right-of-way, a separation would be created from the vehicular traffic.

A draft resolution of support was read aloud.

A motion was made by Meehan and seconded by Linck to recommend to the City Council to approve the resolution of support for the Three Rivers Park District Regional Trail Master Plan. Motion passed unanimously.

8) Property Resources Development Corporation – PUD Concept Plan for a Conservation Design subdivision of 42 lots on 170 gross acres located east of Homestead Trail and west of Deerhill Road – Park Dedication Discussion

Gallup presented the staff report for Property Resources Development Corporation, which has applied for a PUD Concept Plan for a Conservation Design subdivision of 42 lots on 170 gross acres located east of Homestead Trail and west of Deerhill Road. She noted that approximately 40 acres of the site is buildable property and the applicant is proposing to conserve 33% of it. She stated that 50 acres is unbuildable wetlands and buffers, which will also be conserved.

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Gallup noted that under the Conservation Design subdivision the code permits flexibility and potential density bonuses up to two times the density in order to preserve ecological resources, wildlife corridors, scenic views, and rural character. She noted that the subject site has a large wetland/tamarack swamp on the north end of the site with the remaining property as tilled farmland. The large wetland is identified as moderate quality in the Minnesota Land Cover Classification System (MLCCS) and the property is identified as a priority area in the Open Space Report.

Gallup noted that the plan identifies two trail corridors. One corridor runs east to west from the end of Deerhill Road to the western boundary. The other corridor goes north from the east-west trail to the edge of the wetland.

Gallup stated that the Park and Trail Master Plan identifies three turf trail corridors. One corridor from Willow to Homestead approximately along Deerhill. The second corridor along the southern edge of the tamarack swamp and the third corridor along the northern edge of the tamarack swamp.

Gallup noted that for park dedication purposes, the city can require 10% of the buildable land, 8% market value or a combination. If the city took the full 10% of the buildable land it would be approximately 13.22 acres. If the city took the full cash fee it would be estimated at \$336,000. If a combination, the city only deducts trail easements outside of the right-of-way. No credit would be given for pedestrian ways in the right-of-way which act as sidewalks.

Gallup listed the following items for discussion:

- Confirm an interest in a trail north of the wetland, because it wasn't shown on the applicants plan.
- Determine the type of trails. The master plan calls for turf, but discuss any interest in a multi-use paved trail between Willow Drive and Baker Park Reserve.
- Trail locations are proposed immediately adjacent to streets. Is there any interest to have trails in the conservation areas?
- Concern over ability to build a trail along Deerhill. Is there an alternative eastern connection?
- No park proposed by applicant, but property is in the half mile radius of Medina Morningside Park. Is there a need for an internal park or a connection to Medina Morningside Park?

Jennifer Haskamp introduced herself as the Planning Consultant here on behalf of the developer and property owner. She noted that they had come up with the existing plan by

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first looking at the areas on their property that needed to be conserved such as the wetlands, steep slopes and vistas to the tamarack swamp. She stated that they affectionately call the one acre lookout point to the tamarack swamp “the island”, noting that this area has quite spectacular views.

Haskamp stated that it was the land owner’s intent to also show a trail easement on the northeast corner of the site to be able to enjoy the view of the tamarack swamp from the north.

Haskamp showed that the Trail Plan’s east-west connection is provided by following the right-of-way up and down along the curved road. She noted that the north-south connection is provided in the open space and continues up to the island. She clarified that the trails are being proposed within the right-of-way, but the roads are planned to be narrow which will allow for the trail to be separated from the road by a boulevard.

Haskamp stated that the City’s Comprehensive Plan has a passive park study area shown right where this property is located. She stated that the island is approximately one acre in size and would be a perfect location for a natural park.

Reid observed that the north-south trail connection would run through the back yards of lot 1 and lot 2. She questioned if those future land owners would know about the planned trail? She also questioned if the other future landowners would be aware that horses could be riding through the turf trail in their front yards?

Haskamp described the various conservation areas on the site, noting that the center 40 acres will be undergoing some wetland restoration to help the wetlands better function together. The “D” shaped area to the south of the curved road would have low plantings and is envisioned as a communal area for neighborhood gatherings. She noted that the next step in the process would be to create a land stewardship plan, noting that they have initiated conversations with the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District.

Scherer stated that there is a need to connect Medina Morningside to Baker Park Reserve and to get the school kids from this development down to the Willow Drive Trail, but the people using these trail connections will want asphalt not turf.

Lee stated that he would like to see a trail connection from the cul-de-sac in Medina Morningside to the trails in this plan, with the trails running north and then west through the conservation areas. He noted that as a Park Commission, they have been trying to create off road trails.

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Scherer noted that the city is constrained on Deerhill Road as they are limited to statutory use of the road. He also noted that the lots on Deerhill are small and will not subdivide in the future.

Haskamp stated that the land owner and developer are opposed to paved trails through the conservation areas to preserve the character of these areas.

Haskamp suggested that the trail connection from Morningside should head straight west through the side yards of lots 39 and 40 and connect to the road instead of going straight north through the conservation area.

Meehan asked what the anticipated demographics of the people that will live in this subdivision. She questioned if it would be families and Orono school kids? She asked Haskamp if she saw a benefit to connect this subdivision with Medina Morningside to access the park?

Haskamp stated that there absolutely was a benefit to connect this subdivision to the park. She was not sure of the exact demographics of the neighborhood, but imaged there would be families living there with the close proximately to Orono Schools. She stated that they are currently in the process of doing a market study to determine the demographics and what types of amenities should be included in the subdivision, such as a community pool or tot lot. She noted that this subdivision is different than the typical subdivision because the lots are one to one and a half acres in size and are all positioned to be able to enjoy more acreage of protected space. She envisioned that some of the property owners may be empty nesters looking to downsize from a ten acre parcel. These people will have the feeling of a five acre parcel without having to maintain five acres because of the way the lots will be positioned.

The Park Commission came to a general consensus and provided the following comments to the applicant:

- Would like to see a trail connection to Medina Morningside.
- Would like to see turf trails and some bike connection/paved trail from east to west.

9) 2015 Goals Review

Lee suggested that each member adopt or lead a team on one or more of the goals for 2015. The members each adopted the goals below:

- Friends of the Park Program – Linck & Meehan
- Park & Trail Master Plan – Lee & Reid

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- Signage at Lakeshore Park – Reid & Gallup
- The Park at Fields of Medina – DesLauriers & Pearson
- Planned Park Improvements – Each member will adopt a park at the next meeting.
- Sign at Holy Name Park – Jacob
- Medina Road Trail – Scherer
- Baseball Maintenance Plan – DesLauriers, Gallup & Scherer

10) Staff Report

- Scherer stated that the City Council had approved the plans and specifications and authorized staff to go out for bid for the concrete and site work at the Park at Fields of Medina.
- Scherer reported that Lennar will be planting over 170 trees in Hamel Legion Park this summer, which will largely complete the park's landscape plan. He noted that some of the varieties of trees would be different than shown in the plan based on recommendations from our landscape architect at WSB.

11) Adjourn

A motion was made by DesLauriers, seconded by Reid and passed unanimously, to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Jodi Gallup.