

Medina Park Commission Meeting Minutes

March 21, 2012

Medina City Hall

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The Park Commission of Medina, Minnesota met in regular session on March 21, 2012 at 7:05 p.m. in the Medina City Hall. Park Commission Chair Paul Jaeb presided.

1) Call to Order

Commissioners Present: Paul Jaeb, Madeleine Linck, Bill Waytas, Ben Benson and Jean Beaupre

Commissioners Absent: Ann Thies

Also Present: City Council Liaison Melissa Martinson, Planner Dusty Finke, Public Works Superintendent Steve Scherer and Assistant to Public Works and Planning Linda Lane

2) Additions to the Agenda: Linck requested and there was a general consensus to add Tomann Park as a discussion item.

3) Approval of Minutes:

• **February 15, 2012**

A motion was made by Linck and seconded by Waytas to approve the minutes with no changes. Motion passed unanimously.

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

5) City Council Update:

Council Member Martinson updated the Park Commission on recent City Council actions.

6) Independence Beach Boat Launch

The Lake Independence Citizen Association (LICA) President Mike McLaughlin spoke to the Park Commission about LICA's concerns in regards to the spread of zebra mussels and aquatic invasive species in Lake Independence. The organization is requesting that the City of Medina consider closing the boat launch at Lakeshore Park and have boats use Baker Park launch, which will be controlled on a regular basis. The other suggestion was to place a gate in the launch area, while holding inspections at another remote site, or padlock to control whoever comes and goes.

McLaughlin also felt that Lakeshore Park would be a lot safer for the kids that use it if there was not a boat launch that had trailers backing into the area where the kids would be swimming and playing along the shoreline. One of the concerns also was the possibly that there may be more people trying to use the Lakeshore Park boat launch as Baker Park gets more aggressive with inspections and with the gating of the public launch when

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inspectors are not there this summer. Baker Park will also be closing their launch during construction. McLaughlin felt that if Medina chose to keep the launch open, there needs to be more signage stating that it is for residents by permit only.

Jaeb asked what McLaughlin would like the Park Commission to do and he said that he would like discussion on the possibility of moving forward – possibly with the 50/50 grant available for inspections – Sat and Sun 12 hours through Labor Day. Benson felt we should get the public involved if we do move to make this kind of decision. Scherer wondered with the amount of people that live around the lake if there would be the possibility of volunteers for inspections.

There was brief discussion concerning what is being done for control and detection of the zebra mussel. Jaeb felt we should make sure to get information concerning the invasive species and the damage they can cause out to the residents every way possible and to make sure people recognize, through signage, that the parking and inevitably the launch is for Medina residents only.

Waytas was wondering if the LICA could put together a list of things that could be done to curtail the problem i.e. a hose available to wash down boats. Jaeb asked McLaughlin to come back to the April Park Commission meeting with options that could be discussed and then a recommendation could be made at that time. A suggestion was made to make sure information concerning the invasive species gets into the *Medina Message* newsletter, since that goes to all families living in Medina.

7) Park & Trail Master Plan

In order to facilitate the process of completing a Park & Trail Master Plan for the City, Bill Waytas invited Eric Blank, a retired Park & Recreational Director for the City of Plymouth, to give a presentation to the Park Commission on what steps to take when planning for a park. Jaeb introduced Blank and brought him up to speed concerning what information the Park Commission would like addressed. He said the Park Commission members had prepared some questions for him and he could answer accordingly.

Jaeb:

Can you give us insight on how parks are trending? Kids are doing more things outside their neighborhood parks.

Where do you see community parks going? Blank mentioned the athletic associations are scheduling twice as many organized sports and are keeping the kids very busy and playing longer on the fields. Kids ages 10-12 are playing 3-4 times a week. With health

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consciousness growing, communities are trying to get kids more plugged into outdoor playing, rather than inside playing on hand-held electronics.

What is being used to attract the kids? Blank said it is some unusual things like a skateboard park (same cost as for a playground) ages 8-15, or until they start driving a vehicle, as well as disc golf which has gotten very popular and is used predominantly by high school age and young adults. These other options don't replace the mainstream playground, but the niche is there for other activities also.

As the City looks at neighborhood parks, what doesn't work? Blank said the neighborhood parks should be a walk-to destination (six block radius). Fields for organized athletics should not be considered for neighborhood parks because then you start bringing in a lot of outside traffic; instead smaller open spaces to throw around a frisbee and play catch should be considered. They should be very low key, low maintenance (only about two acres to mow otherwise kept natural) and very attractive. Encompass near wetland to have something to view and it will make the park feel larger. String a paved trail around the marsh and bring back through the park. He also mentioned that jungle gyms are a mainstay for neighborhood parks.

Benson asked what kinds of parks get considered for ice rinks. Blank said the City of Plymouth whittled theirs down from 33 to 11, and will be taking it down to 6 in the near future. They are instead increasing the structural quality by making them concrete, with steel frame boards so the kids can use them in the summer months for skateboarding or roller blading. He also stated that each park with a hockey rink also has a pleasure rink next to it.

Beaupre asked if we should be focusing mostly on the parks and not how they relate to each other for connection purposes. Blank said they were doing surveys for quite a few years – asking the public what they wanted more of – it was trails at one time, but now it is more open space. Blank also said that when the City planned the trails, it was decided that they should connect to everything – schools, shopping, parks, etc. so they could make a loop.

Waytas asked what Blank's feeling would be concerning the 10-acre park that was being planned for the new development, since the City has a lot of amenities with the various parks already in place. Should we be looking at getting a hockey rink that could be used for skateboarding also? Blank reiterated that organized team sports like hockey would bring traffic into the development, which is why they should never be located in the neighborhood parks.

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Jaeb asked if Plymouth has experimented with bringing in revenue from business. Blank said most of the revenue for parks comes from “adopt a bench” programs, but not from businesses. The City had decided early on that they didn’t want the revenue signage in their parks – they want to keep them attractive. Jaeb felt that because we are so small and the City is super diverse, a survey might not be what will give us the information we need. Blank said surveys really help when you are trying to get information on what people would like to see in their parks.

Linck asked concerning landscaping. Blank said a lot of the planting is done by volunteers. The City purchases flowers in the spring and 120-150 volunteers, along with a master gardener that has a visual plan drawn up, all get together on a designated Saturday to plant the different beds throughout the City and then they are maintained all summer long.

Jaeb asked if the dimension of what is needed in a park would be different with single family and townhomes together in a development – would you still want the same things. Blank said what you need to look at is trend partnerships, technology, smaller and less service, as well as faster and cheaper.

Waytas asked if there was a formula for parks to households. Blank stated that 10 acres to every 1000 people, but for Medina it would possibly be different, since there is already a considerable amount of natural surroundings. Waytas also asked concerning what percentage of the City budget should be for parks and if there is a formula? Blank said there doesn’t have to be a particular formula, just what you need to get the job done. The City of Plymouth’s park budget is 18% of the general budget, but that is very high. Waytas asked if Blank had suggestions to raise money for parks. Blank said there are grants, open space things from DNR, but the large Federal money is mostly gone. There are road and bridge grants where a trail may cross and also local money, such as Hennepin Youth Sports Grants – \$250,000 max and must be a partnership.

Finke stated that since Blank was at Plymouth through their growth process and the City of Medina is just getting started, is the trend still there to have neighborhoods parks as the backbone, and if so, what is the correct area for these parks. Blank reiterated the 6 block area max and having a 10 acre park within a ½ mile of every home, because if you have a bunch of 2-4 acre parks it will take too much maintenance. Blank drew a picture of a pyramid to show the percentage of parks in Plymouth. The large base of the pyramid would be neighborhood parks (10 acres – low maintenance), the next level would be community parks that encompass all drive-to activities (25 acres – high maintenance),

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and finally City parks (various sizes – high maintenance due to buildings, flower gardens, beaches, etc.); one in each ward east, west, north south, with a destination for all the community to use.

Scherer asked about private parks and if the City of Plymouth takes them over when asked. Blank said they have gotten quite a few requests over the years and have given the same answer every time – the City is not willing to take over those small parks, due to the maintenance that would be required and the fact that they usually have a city park nearby anyway. Scherer also asked concerning how the City of Plymouth decides how many parking spots are needed for each playing field and Blank said they figure 40 cars per playing field, figuring approximately 20 players for a game and possible back-to-back games.

Finke asked if the percentage of 10% of the value of the buildable land was still used by Plymouth to figure the park dedication. Blank said it is now a formula based on expected number of residents and the impact to the park system.

Work Session/Discussion: City Planner Finke was in attendance to go over and answer any questions concerning the new map he prepared as a tool to use in the park and trail master plan process. The new map not only shows the City's existing trail plan and park study areas, but also has dots which represent potential new homes based on the current land use map. The new map will give the Park Commission a better idea of where they should be planning future parks, as well as a baseline to start at.

Finke also showed on a park dedication spread sheet how much park dedication money the City could possibly receive in the next 30 years when all the potential sites are built out and how much it would cost to complete all the trails and park projects in the plan. He noted that trails alone would require all of the future park dedication funds, leaving no revenue for parks.

8) Tomann Park

Linck asked Scherer if Tomann is planting more trees. She also asked Scherer if the Public Works Department could remove the large steel 10 ft posts that have dilapidated bird houses attached. She will be putting up new smaller bird houses. Scherer said he would set up a meeting with Mr. Tomann and check to see if he has been planting more trees and to make sure it is according to the plan that was drawn up previously.

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9) Staff Report

- a.) Hamel Athletic Club Request to Paint Dugout – Steve Scherer spoke to the Athletic Club concerning their desire to paint the Hawks Field dugout and put their logo on the inside of the structure. Scherer said he recommended they paint the outside of the structure the same color as the Community Building, and also spoke to them concerning what they had in mind for the inside, and wanted to run it by the Park Commission to see how they felt about it. The Park Commission wants to see what the logo they are talking about looks like, as well as the size. Scherer also mentioned they are offering to cover the dugouts at the four-plex, but he is concerned about the fact that they may be thinking about signage tarps that they can collect money on and he wanted to run it by the Park Commission to see what their thoughts were on that. The Park Commission was against them doing the tarps if they will be covered with signage.

- b.) Irrigation/Storm Pond at Hamel Legion Park – Steve Scherer updated the Park Commission on the stormwater pond that is located on the Northwest end of the park, which will be used for more holding capacity for irrigation. He said the plan is to conserve water resources, protect, and keep secure the well field in Hamel Legion Park. He mentioned that the sliding hill was a concern and addressed that issue with the Park Commission. Scherer showed on a map where the expansion is slated to happen. He stated that many more gallons of capacity for irrigation would be available, thus requiring less pumping.

10) Adjourn

A motion was made by Benson, seconded by Beaupre, and passed unanimously, to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Linda Lane.