

Medina Park Commission Meeting Minutes

April 18, 2012

Medina City Hall

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The Park Commission of Medina, Minnesota met in regular session on April 18, 2012 at 7:03 p.m. in the Medina City Hall. Park Commission Chair Paul Jaeb presided.

1) Call to Order

Commissioners Present: Paul Jaeb, Madeleine Linck, Ben Benson, Jean Beaupre and Ann Thies

Commissioners Absent: Bill Waytas

Also Present: City Council Liaison Melissa Martinson, Planner Dusty Finke, Public Works Superintendent Steve Scherer and Assistant to City Administrator Jodi Gallup

2) Additions to the Agenda: None.

3) Approval of Minutes:

• **March 21 2012**

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

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

5) Independence Beach Boat Launch

The Lake Independence Citizen Association (LICA) President Mike McLaughlin addressed the Park Commission summarizing LICA's concerns that were discussed at the March Park Commission meeting about the spread of aquatic invasive species into Lake Independence through the boat launch in Lakeshore Park. The Park Commission had requested that LICA bring back a recommendation so LICA conducted a survey to hear what the rest of the neighborhood thought regarding either closing the landing or installing a gate. As a result of the survey, a petition went around the neighborhood to keep the boat ramp open, which was signed by 88 people.

McLaughlin noted that LICA does not want to close the landing. LICA's formal recommendation is to install an electronic gate at the Medina Lakeshore Park boat landing for Independence Beach residents with access by keycard. Keycards could be obtained only after an individual received Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) prevention training.

McLaughlin stated that he believed the people who signed the petition to keep the boat ramp open, were generally in favor of installing a gate.

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McLaughlin informed the Park Commission that the city was awarded a grant to help with inspections at the boat launch this summer, which the city has committed to pay \$2,139 and LICA has committed to pay \$2,139. If the city could act quickly on installing a gate, both organizations could save money by not needing the inspections.

McLaughlin requested that if a gate is installed that the city considers adding a foot path around the gate so kids can get to the water. He also requested that in a future budget that the city considers replacing the dock with an actual fishing pier.

A question was raised if the gate would be temporary to keep people from using the landing while Baker Park's ramp was closed this summer because wouldn't the threat be over once people could use Baker Park again?

McLaughlin noted that the main threat was AIS. He would like the city to spend a few thousand to install a gate to save millions in cleanup costs later on.

Linck questioned LICA's recommendation to allow keycards to only Independence Beach residents. She stated that this is a public city park and it should be available to all Medina residents. There was a general consensus from the Park Commission regarding that statement.

Beaupre noted that she deals with keycard access where she works, which takes a lot of administration, especially because it seems to break down once a month. She noted that the heaviest use would be on weekends, when city staff would not be available to address the issues.

Beaupre questioned if LICA was still considering the option of having a watering station to clean boats before entering the lake.

Thies questioned if LICA was comfortable with the gate as a deterrent to keep out AIS.

McLaughlin stated he worries about the people that go to Baker Park and notice that there is a long line waiting for inspections to get in the water, so they head over to Lakeshore Park and put their boat in so they do not have to wait. He feels that the gate would prevent these people from getting in the water without having an inspection at Baker Park.

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Pat Wulff, 2865 Lakeshore Avenue, with LICA noted that Baker Park is planning on installing a gate this summer.

Joe Malchow, 3087 Lakeshore Avenue, noted that he has witnessed people launching boats from the YMCA camp.

Mike August, 3052 Lakeshore Avenue, questioned if there is evidence of zebra mussels in the lake today. He also questioned if a study had been done anywhere that a gate was an effective deterrent. His last question was if there was anything else on the table as a possible deterrent.

McLaughlin noted that to date there is no evidence of zebra mussels in Lake Independence.

Wulff stated that the State of California has strict gating regulations, but the answer to Mr. August's question regarding a study being done that a gate is an effective deterrent was unknown. She did mention that washing stations would be another possible deterrent.

Ron Dahl, 3026 Lakeshore Avenue, asked if anyone had talked to Three Rivers Park District about gating Spurzem Lake and Half Moon Lake.

Linck reminded everyone that the lakes were all connected through the Pioneer watershed. She also noted that both Spurzem Lake and Half Moon Lake were heavily fished.

Sanford Paulsen, 3115 Birch Avenue, questioned what would stop migrating birds from spreading AIS?

Benson noted that the zebra mussels are not in their natural ecosystem and there is nothing that feeds on them to help control the population spread. If birds were feeding on them, we would not have this problem. He noted that man is moving AIS, not birds.

City Council member Liz Weir spoke to the Park Commission about the threat of zebra mussels in our lakes and the damage they cause. She explained that zebra mussels filter the water to remove plankton that would otherwise provide food for fish and other aquatic life, which decreases fish supply in the lake. She showed a number of slides where zebra mussels have formed dense colonies on rocks, metal, plastic, concrete, pipes, ropes, boats, motors and practically any other submerged object.

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Richard Larson, 3167 Lakeshore Avenue, stated that they had a defined problem, with a solution that is not perfect. He stated that action was needed and timing was of the essence.

Weir stated that she would like to do some research on if birds could spread AIS.

Benson reiterated that he believed man was moving AIS and not birds because birds do not feed on AIS.

Linck questioned what action homeowners on Lake Minnetonka are taking since their lake is already infected by AIS.

Jaeb agreed that timing was of the essence, but stated thoughtful research needed to be done before a decision could be made. If a gate were to be installed, items that need to be considered include placement, who pays, how much, who mans, and how is it funded?

McLaughlin stated that if a gate were installed, LICA would be willing to pay for 50% of the cost up to \$7,500. He also stated that he checked with the DNR and this landing is owned by the City of Medina and the DNR has no jurisdiction over it so the city can do what they want with it.

There was a general consensus by the Park Commission that the ability to access the gate would be a problem and a locked gate with keycard access would be expensive to maintain.

Brian Etzel, 2942 Lakeshore Avenue, suggested that keys be given out with the parking permits.

Scherer suggested updating the permit process to require a permit to launch a boat. Then when people came into City Hall to get their permit, they would be given information regarding AIS.

A few people in attendance commented that if only a permit was required, it would not stop people from breaking the law by launching their boat without a permit.

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A motion was made by Thies and seconded by Linck to schedule a special meeting on May 2, 2012 at 7 p.m. at City Hall to continue this discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

6) City Council Update:

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

7) Park & Trail Master Plan

Jaeb reported that he had met with staff and came up with three types of parks (community park, neighborhood park, and environmental nature area) to simplify the plan.

Thies gave an update on her discussions with the city of Ramsey.

Finke stated that the Commission may wish to discuss if the City should establish a goal that residents in the developing area will be within a certain distance of a park. Many communities including Plymouth, according to Mr. Blank set a goal that residents have a park within ½ mile. For the sake of discussion, staff identified locations of future parks that would almost meet this goal. A map was presented to the Commission identifying four future parks in the developing area of the City and highlighted the area within ½ mile in blue and 1 mile in purple. Existing private parks in existing communities help close the gaps for existing residents.

There was a general consensus of the Park Commission to endorse the half mile standard as an objective, but not a hard rule. The Park Commission also stated a neighborhood park should generally have open play area, play equipment, trail/walking path around it, no permanent restrooms and no emphasis on parking.

Jaeb stated that he would like to start writing a rough draft of the master plan based on discussions over the past few months and bring back a draft for the Park Commission to review in June.

8) Ball Field Dugout Covers

Scherer reported that at the August 17, 2011, Park Commission meeting the Commission discussed the installation of protective covers over the backstops at the Hamel Legion ball fields. He stated that baseballs from the opposite fields hitting players in the dugouts have been an issue. The Hamel Athletic Club was present and agreed to install the fabric

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covers if the City made the modifications necessary to the framing. The Park Commission agreed this was a good idea, but no formal motion was taken at that time. On April 17th the City Council approved paying for the framing contingent on the Park Commission's approval. Staff recommended spending \$2,740.00 of Park Dedication funds to complete the project.

A motion was made by Thies and seconded by Benson to spend \$2,740 of Park Dedication Funds for framing for the ball field dugouts. Motion passed unanimously.

9) Staff Report

- a.) Park Tour Schedule – Gallup reported that the spring park tour is scheduled for May 16th at 5:30 p.m. The tentative agenda is: 1. Fields of Medina; 2. Lakeshore; 3. Walnut; 4. Maple; 5. Hamel Legion Park/Lennar natural area.
- b.) Willow Trail – Scherer updated the Park Commission on the progress with the proposed trail on Willow Drive. He questioned the Park Commission if it would be okay to stop the trail at Keller Road instead of bringing it all the way to Morningside Road. It was suggested to have Phase I be Keller Road to County Road 6 and Phase II be Morningside Road to Keller Road.
- c.) Other – Linck commented that she noticed a pile of brush in the back nature area in Hunter Lions Park. Linck also stated that she met with Terry Tomann at Tomann Preserve to talk about the plan.

10) Adjourn

A motion was made by Thies, seconded by Linck, and passed unanimously, to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Jodi Gallup.