

Medina Park Commission Meeting Minutes

July 21, 2010

Medina City Hall

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The Park Commission of Medina, Minnesota met in regular session on July 21, 2010 at 7:02 p.m. in the Medina City Hall. Park Commission Chair Ben Benson presided.

1) **Call to Order**

Commissioners present: Ben Benson, Madeleine Linck, Janet White, Chris Hilberg, Paul Jaeb, and Ann Thies (arrived 7:25 p.m.)

Commissioners absent: Bill Waytas

Also present: Assistant to City Administrator Jodi Gallup, Public Works Superintendent Steve Scherer and City Council member Carolyn Smith

2) **Additions to the Agenda:**

- **Last Bash Softball Tournament Fee:** Discuss during staff report.

A motion was made by Linck and seconded by White to approve the addition to the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

3) **Approval of the Minutes**

- **June 16, 2010 Regular Meeting Minutes**

- Page 4, eleventh paragraph: Hilberg stated that it was his impression that if the city left the current sign it would be legal....

A motion was made by Linck and seconded by White to approve the minutes, with the noted correction. Motion passed unanimously.

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

5) **City Council Update:**

Carolyn Smith updated the Park Commission that since the last time the Park Commission met, the City Council:

- Held a work session and discussed adding a new category to the storm water utility charges.
- Discussed the Ag Preserve policy.
- Discussed implementing the Green Steps City Program; plan to have a representative from a different Green Steps City speak to the City Council.
- Recognized three young women who supported and promoted organics in Medina.
- Discussed Elm Creek's plan to reforest the banks of the creek.
- Approved the RR-UR Zoning District Ordinance.
- Plan to approve on the next meeting consent agenda the Timing of Growth and Development to be Served by City Utilities Zoning Ordinance.
- Heard a presentation by Steve Scherer on the City's well head protection plan.

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- Scheduled a 5 p.m. budget meeting on August 17th.

6) **Lennar “The Enclave of Medina” at 3212 Hunter Drive Land-Use Application; Park Dedication Discussion**

Gallup gave a presentation to the Park Commission on Lennar’s land-use application, including the proposed site plan and the applicant’s request for a comprehensive plan amendment.

Gallup advised the Park Commission that the applicant’s proposed site plan would be going back to the Planning Commission in August and most likely the plan would change. The Park Commission should focus on determining what the City should take in park dedication dollars, trail easements, land for open space, or a combination.

Gallup stated that the applicant has proposed 134 single family lots and 41 townhomes. The subdivision includes a community park, community building, and potentially a tot lot. The applicant has requested a Comprehensive Plan amendment to allow development 250 feet further to the south than shown in the Comp Plan. The applicant currently proposes to establish an undeveloped conservation area in the wooded area in the eastern portion of the lot which includes the same amount of upland area that they are requesting to shift to the south. This area is proposed to be protected without any consideration for park dedication, as an exchange for allowing development further to the south.

Gallup gave an overview on the options for park dedication. The City’s park dedication ordinance allows the City to require up to 10% of the buildable land to be dedicated for parks and trails, which would be 7.605 acres for this site. The cash-in-lieu amount can be 8% of the average market value of the property, which would be \$751,360. The City can also take a combination of land and cash.

The Park Commission reviewed their Active Study Area map and noted that there was a circle to the southwest of the proposed development. There was a general consensus not to pursue an active park on this site because it is in between two existing active parks (Hamel Legion Park and Hunter Lions Park).

The Park Commission reviewed their Trail Plan and noted that the plan identifies a high priority trail along Hunter Drive (between Medina Road and Hamel Road) and a moderately-high priority east-west trail through the proposed site to connect Hunter Lions Park to Hamel Legion Park.

It was noted that the Trail Plan stated that the east-west trail through the site should be built contingent on development. It was also noted that it should be essential to build this trail with this development.

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Gallup reported that the applicant has proposed both of the trails identified on the Trail Plan. The applicant's plan shows a trail on the east side of Hunter Drive from Elm Creek Drive to Hamel Road. Additionally, the applicant has shown an east-west trail through the development which provided a link between Hamel Legion Park and Hunter Lions Park.

The Park Commission discussed the location of the trails in the development. There was a general consensus that the east-west trail should be along the north side of the street by the wetlands as long as it did not impact the wetlands too much.

Linck added that any vegetation between the wetland and the trail should not be mowed to maintain a buffer.

There was also a general consensus that the trail should be along the street without a boulevard between the street and the trail to minimize the amount of front yard the residents who live along the trail would lose. The Public Works staff also recommends this option to allow for easier maintenance, especially snow removal.

The Park Commission discussed the width of the two trails. There was a general consensus that the width of the trail along Hunter should be 10 feet because the existing trail along Hunter is also 10 feet wide.

Staff recommended that the east-west trail through the development should be 8 feet wide. It was noted that no other trails in the city are 8 feet wide. The narrowest existing trails in Medina are 9 feet wide.

White questioned if the east-west trail through the development connecting the two parks would have enough presence so that people would feel comfortable walking through this neighborhood.

The Park Commission discussed having a sign on Hunter Drive directing people to the trail. The sign could read something like "Hamel Legion Park ½ mile along trail →".

The Park Commission discussed the proposed conservation area. There was a general consensus that the proposed trails in the conservation area were in a good location and should be a wood chip surface.

Staff questioned if the Park Commission would recommend that the city take ownership of the conservation area if it was offered by the developer in exchange for the MUSA Line extension.

A motion was made by Thies and seconded by Linck that given the opportunity to be given a conservation area, the City should own it. Motion passed unanimously.

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Carole Toohey with Lennar questioned if the City would give park dedication credit for the land in the conservation area if the MUSA line is not extended in the final plan.

Hilberg stated that he felt that the park dedication budget was very low and the City needed to consider raising the fund balance for future projects.

Thies stated that she felt the opposite of Hilberg and did not want the City to miss an opportunity to acquire land.

There was a general consensus that the Park Commission did not have enough information to answer Ms. Toohey's question.

The Park Commission requested that the conservation area discussion be brought back to the Park Commission if the final site plan does not include a MUSA line extension in exchange for the conservation area.

A motion was made by Jaeb and seconded by Thies to recommend a 10-foot wide trail with 15-foot wide trail easement on the east side of Hunter Drive; an 8-foot curb side trail going east to west through the development on the north side of the road if possible with a 5-foot easement along the road and a 15-foot easement through the townhome development. Motion passed unanimously.

7) Hunter Lions Park Sign

Scherer stated that he had met with the Hamel Lions at Hunter Lions Park to discuss their proposed sign location for the existing Hunter Lions sign. The Hamel Lions have proposed that their sign be placed on the north side of the park, near the road, between the trail and the infield fence. The sign would be shortened and only one side would face the road.

Jaeb stated that he opposed the Hamel Lions' proposed location next to the road because it would be confusing having two signs on the road and it would clash with the City's new uniform park sign.

Discussion took place on the Park Commission's previous suggestions that the sign be placed in front of the basketball court or on the outfield fence and why the Hamel Lions decided to request a different location.

Hilberg stated that the Park Commissioners should have tact and respect in dealing with the Hamel Lions because they are citizens who have given a lot back to the community.

A motion was made by Jaeb and seconded by White that the old Hunter Lions' signage be placed in one of the previously designated spots by the basketball court or the outfield deep center fence. Motion passed 4-2 (Hilberg and Benson opposed).

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8) Wetland Buffer

Linck stated that she had done some research on wetland buffers and recently purchased “*Lakescaping for Wildlife and Water Quality*” which contains helpful information regarding the best ways to maintain a buffer and the benefits of protecting water quality and wildlife habitat.

Linck stated that the Park Commission needs something to “sell” to Medina residents on the idea of maintaining wetland buffers voluntarily. A few main points to promote to residents could include:

1. Saves you hours a week in lawn care
2. Cuts down nuisance control (geese love cut grass)
3. Save wetland from pollution and algae blooms
4. Gives you healthier water and environment

Linck suggested putting information on the City of Medina’s website and offered to write a short story for an upcoming *Medina Message* newsletter.

Linck also suggested that the Park Commission promote wetland buffers at Medina Celebration Day.

White requested that the Park Commission’s table at Medina Celebration Day only focus on a couple items rather than many different pieces of literature from the various city departments.

9) Staff Report

- a) County Road 116 Trail: Scherer gave an update on the status of the County Road 116 Trail project. The Park Commission scheduled the grand opening event for Saturday, September 25th at 3 p.m.
- b) 2011 Capital Improvement Plan: The Park Commission was given an updated Capital Improvement Plan that was reviewed by staff and the City Council at the June 30th budget work session.
- c) General Items: None.
- d) Last Bash Softball Tournament Fee: Gallup reported that the Minnesota Umpires Association has partnered with the Hamel Lions in the past to host “The Last Bash Women’s Softball Tournament” in Hamel Legion Park the last 8 or 9 years. The Hamel Lions would contract with the City to reserve the fields at no cost, but agreed to give all their proceeds back to the community. The last two years they donated a bench and a picnic table from their proceeds. The Hamel Lions do not want to get involved this year, so the Minnesota Umpires Association has approached the city requesting the use of our fields for this tournament on September 18th and 19th. According to the city fee schedule, the cost for an adult softball tournament is \$250 per field per day; times that by four fields and two days, the total cost would come to \$2,000. No organization has ever paid that much money for a tournament in Medina. The City has had youth organizations book tournaments at the youth rate which is \$60

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per field per day; totaling \$480 for four fields and two days. The organization stated that it would not be possible to pay the \$2,000 fee, but would be willing to pay around \$480 for the tournament. In exchange, the organization has offered to promote the local Medina establishments including the concession stand operations in their registration fliers. The Park Commission agreed that \$2,000 was an expensive fee and recommended that the organization pay the youth tournament pricing for this years event. The Park Commission requested discussing the ball field reservation fees further at a future meeting.

A motion was made by Jaeb and seconded by Hilberg to charge the Minnesota Umpires Association the youth tournament fee for their adult softball tournament in September. Motion passed unanimously.

10) Adjourn

A motion was made by Hilberg, seconded by Jaeb and passed unanimously, to adjourn the meeting.

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

Minutes prepared by Jodi Gallup.