

Medina Park Commission Special Meeting Minutes
August 19, 2009
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The Park Commission of Medina, Minnesota met in special session on August 19, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. at the Hamel Community Building. Park Commission Vice Chair Ben Benson presided.

1) Call to Order

Commissioners present: Ben Benson, Bill Waytas, Chris Hilberg, Janet White and Paul Jaeb (6:40 p.m.)

Commissioners absent: Madeleine Linck and Ann Thies

Also present: Steve Scherer, Jodi Gallup, Carolyn Smith, and Landscape Architect Consultant Jeff McDowell

2) Hamel Legion Park Master Plan Open House

Benson welcomed everyone to the open house and explained that the Park Commission sought to create a master plan of Hamel Legion Park to better determine what types of trees and landscaping to use and where to place donations such as trees, benches, and tables in the park in the future. He reminded everyone that this plan would not all happen right away, but would be implemented over time as funds were available or items were donated.

McDowell explained that he had previously met with a sub-committee of the Park Commission to discuss various areas of the park and to get their ideas on paper. From there he consulted other Landscape Architects in his office and put together a draft plan.

McDowell explained in detail various areas of the draft plan and received a number of comments back from the audience.

McDowell stated that he wanted the city to think of this park as an arboretum with many types of trees.

McDowell suggested small “human scale” trees such as Ironwood and Sienna Glen Maple trees be planted in dense pockets around the parking lot by the ball fields. This would allow players and spectators to find shade in between games.

Discussion occurred on whether to plant Blue Spruce trees to screen the batting eye (ball field backboard). There was a concern that it would take 20 plus years for the trees to be tall enough to block the sun. It was determined that a sunscreen would be placed on the fence until the trees were tall enough.

The plan showed a dense hedge of Blackhills Spruce along the west side of the four-plex to separate the open field from the four-plex. There was concern from members of the Athletic Association that there needed to be an opening in the dense hedge to allow a path for the T-ball players in the open field to get to the center of the four-plex where the concession building would be located.

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McDowell suggested either installing an architectural element such as an awning or planting Pagoda Dogwood to provide shade to the south side of the Hamel Community Building. There was some concern that Pagoda Dogwood is a wetland tree and it would not withstand the hot sun on the south side of the building. McDowell stated that he picked the Pagoda Dogwood because it is a hearty and ornamental tree that will provide shade to the building.

McDowell explained that he had picked Snow Drift Crab Apple trees to be planted along the trail because they are a nice ornament tree that are airy feeling so people will still be able to enjoy the open space in the park. The trees also flower which provides beauty to the park. There was a general consensus from the audience that they did not want trees that bare fruit in the park. People were concerned with kids eating the fruit, attracting wasps, and figuring out who would be responsible for cleaning up the fallen fruit.

McDowell explained his design at the entrance of the park off Mill Drive. He talked about making a layering effect by planting shrubs around the monument entrance sign, planting small ornamental trees behind the shrubs, and planting larger trees behind the smaller trees.

McDowell talked about planting a row of trees to create a nice future focal point looking into the park from the pavilion and back doors on the backside of the Hamel Community building. The focal point could be anything from a stone to a piece of art at the end of the trail.

Discussion occurred on creating a north woods feel by the skating rink by planting Northwood Red Maple trees. Scherer was concerned with the leaves falling really late in the fall/winter onto the ice. Waytas stated that sometime there is a strong northwest wind and wondered if there was a tree that could be planted to block the wind. McDowell suggested planting coniferous trees such as a White Pine.

There was some concern about snow melting off the top of the sledding hill too fast, and it was asked if a tree could be planted to block the heat of the sun on the top of the hill. Discussion occurred and it was decided that the tree would not survive because of the wind burn and that it would be too hard to water a tree on top of the hill.

Discussion occurred on the need for more parking by the ball fields. It was suggested that some of the proposed pockets of shaded trees be turned into small parking areas. It was determined that it would be too hard to get vehicles in and out of those small pocket areas. Smith stated that the City Council is already looking into acquiring more land in Uptown Hamel for municipal parking.

The last fifteen minutes of the open house were spent mingling and reviewing the plans up close.

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3) Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Jodi Gallup.