

Medina Park Commission Meeting Minutes

October 16, 2013

Medina City Hall

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The Park Commission of Medina, Minnesota met in regular session on October 16, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the Medina City Hall. Park Commission Chair Paul Jaeb presided.

1) Call to Order

Commissioners Present: Paul Jaeb, Ellis Olkon, Dino DesLauriers, Madeleine Linck, Ann Thies, and Janet White

Commissioners Absent: Steve Lee

Also Present: Public Works Director Steve Scherer and Assistant to City Administrator Jodi Gallup

- 2) Additions to the Agenda:** Jaeb noted that the August 21, 2013 minutes still needed to be approved because there was not quorum to approve the minutes at the September meeting. He also noted that the September 18th meeting minutes should be changed to meeting notes since an official meeting could not be held without a quorum.

3) Approval of Minutes:

• **August 21, 2013 Regular Meeting**

White asked to have the first line on the 7th paragraph on page two changed to read as follows: “Janet White said she is not against dog parks in general, but wasn’t sure concerning the timeline.”

A motion was made by Thies and seconded by White, to approve the minutes as amended from August 21, 2013. Motion passed unanimously.

Review of Meeting notes from:

• **September 18, 2013**

Olkon requested the following sentences be added to the record on the top of page three, “Olkon pointed out that at the August Park Commission meeting he was directed by the Park Commission to speak to the City Council about including a dog park in the master plan. He also noted that the City Council approved putting a dog park in the plan by a 4-1 vote.”

There was general consensus to add Olkon’s comments to the meeting notes.

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

5) City Council Update

This item was moved to the end of the agenda under staff report.

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6) D. R. Horton – Stage I Plan Review

Gallup presented the applicant's updated Stage I Plan, which included 85 single family homes, a future 56-unit apartment building and 3.55 acres of commercial property. The updated plan also showed 3.25 acres of wooded area, which the applicant is proposing to preserve.

Gallup noted that at the September meeting, the Park Commissioners present discussed the original Stage I plan and did not recommend that the City require park land within the project. The applicant now proposes that the City accept the preserved wooded area into public ownership and that the City provide some credit for park dedication as a result.

It was noted that at the Planning Commission meeting, staff recommended rezoning to R-4 to allow a three-story apartment building under a condition that the land would be preserved without Park Dedication credit. The Planning Commission recommended a two-story apartment with the potential for credit to be considered by the Park Commission.

Gallup showed the site plan and described the property noting that there was a large wetland in the center and 9 acres of wooded land to the west of the wetland. The remaining land is farmed. It was noted that the wooded area includes mainly ash trees in the lower area and the higher area includes more diversity, but a tree inventory had not been complete yet to determine the amount of high quality trees.

The Park Commission discussed the possible park dedication noting that full credit for the wooded area would account for 63.7% of the park dedication, which the Park Commission did not seem interested in acquiring the land as park land. It was noted that the City has previously provided consideration for privately preserved property by not requiring a park dedication fee for the area being preserved, which would reduce the fee by 6.4%.

There was a general consensus of the Park Commission that they would not be interested in taking ownership of the wooded area because it is an isolated area with no public access, the Master Plan does not show the need for a park in this area, and the city would have to maintain the area without necessary access.

John Helmer with D.R. Horton explained the updated concept plan noting it showed a possible trail loop through the wooded area connecting the neighborhood, apartment building and commercial site to the wooded area.

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Linck noted that the wooded area would provide a nice amenity to the residents in this neighborhood, but the City could not adequately maintain it.

Jaeb noted that the city has trouble maintaining its current inventory and acquiring this land does not fit in the current plan. He stated it would be nice to know if the trees were of high quality.

Joe Cavanaugh, Jr. stated that the wetland was truly beautiful and there were a number of big trees in the wooded area, which would provide a nice wild life/nature area for residents.

Thies agreed that it would be a nice amenity, but felt that it did not need public ownership.

White pointed out that the Planning Commission was requiring the applicant to preserve open space and natural features in this plan, so the Park Commission should take that into consideration when determining the Park Dedication Fee. She felt it would only be fair to subtract the preserved space from the land before calculating the Park Dedication Fee, which would reduce the amount by approximately 6.4%.

Helmer stated that the Planning Commission had commented that their plan should be a creative and thoughtful development that preserves open space and natural features. He noted they did not say how much land needed to be preserved. He stated that if the Park Commission was not interested in preserving this land, they might bring something back showing less preservation and incorporate possible townhomes into the plan.

There was a general consensus of the Park Commission that they were interested in preservation and would entertain some type of Park Dedication credit if the trees are of a certain quality, but they are not interested in ownership of the land.

7) The Park at Fields of Medina

Candace Amberg, Senior Landscape Architect for WSB Engineering, presented an updated concept plan for The Park at Fields of Medina based on comments she had received at the last meeting. The updated plan incorporated the design of Concept one, but modified the size of the children's play areas, making a larger area for the elementary aged kids and a smaller area for the pre-school aged kids. The new design also showed additional picnic tables and an overlook seating area by the pond in the south east corner of the park.

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Amberg described the other features of the park such as the trail system, small soccer field, children's hard court, half basketball court, sport court and center pavilion that could accommodate up to 10 to 12 picnic tables.

It was noted that the soccer field was large enough to use for youth soccer and could be a programed field in the future if the Park Commission desired that sort of use.

Scherer questioned if the path from the parking lot to the pavilion should be wide enough to get a vehicle down it.

Jaeb stated that he felt Concept One incorporated what Eric Blank, the retired Park & Recreational Director for the City of Plymouth, had stated people want in parks. He stated the number one thing people want is open space to run around, play Frisbee, throw or kick a ball, etc., which we accommodate with the area for the soccer field. The number two thing people want is trail loops, which this concept does an excellent job incorporating into the plan.

A motion was made by Thies and seconded by Linck to recommend approval of Concept One with the modifications presented by Amberg for The Park at Fields of Medina. Motion passed unanimously.

8) Medina Park Master Plan

Jaeb stated that he would be working with Gallup to update the Park Master Plan and they would meet to discuss where to incorporate the concept of a dog park in the plan.

An email was read from Park Commissioner Steve Lee that could not be present at the meeting stating that he was in support of putting the inclusion of a dog park in our master plan for 2013 and then seeking direction from the city council as to when they would like us to look at a possible site and the timing for the construction of a dog park.

Discussion occurred on the exact direction the Park Commission had received from the City Council in regard to including a dog park in the Master Plan. Gallup read the following motion made at the City Council on September 3, 2013, "Moved Anderson, seconded by Martinson, to direct staff to work with the Park Commission to include the Dog Park Concept into the Medina Park and Trail Master Plan. Motion passed 4-1 (Pederson opposed)".

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Jaeb suggested that the dog park subcommittee meet to come up with the language for the Master Plan. Thies noted that they had already written something that was submitted to the Park Commission at the August meeting.

It was noted that the proposed dog park language would be updated and brought back at the November meeting for further review.

Jaeb stated that he would meet with Gallup to update the entire Master Plan with the comments made by the City Council earlier this year. He noted that the Park Commission should review the Master Plan as a whole at the November meeting.

Thies noted that Tomann Preserve was previously brought up as a possible dog park location, but wanted to make sure the Master Plan addressed that Tomann Preserve is subject to a conservation easement, which governs what can or cannot be done in that park.

9) Staff Report

Scherer stated that the City Council approved a license agreement for access to the private drive that leads into Medina Lake Preserve. Once this agreement is signed by the four property owners along this private drive, it will allow the Public Works crew to use this driveway to access the park to maintain it.

10) Adjourn

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Jodi Gallup.