

Medina Park Commission Meeting Minutes  
November 20, 2019  
Medina City Hall  
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The Park Commission of Medina, Minnesota met in regular session on November 20, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. at Medina City Hall. Park Commission Vice Ann Thies presided.

**1) Call to Order**

Commissioners Present: Ann Thies, John Jacob, Terry Sharp, Mary Morrison,  
Elizabeth Weir, Jeff Rumsey  
Commissioners Absent: Steve Lee  
Also Present: Public Works Director Steve Scherer, Assistant City  
Administrator Jodi Gallup

**2) Additions to the Agenda:** None

**3) Approval of the Minutes from:**

October 16, 2019 Regular Meeting

- Page 4, line 6, ... still incorporate heavy tree screening on the east side to screen from the Bridgewater neighborhood.

*A motion was made by Weir and seconded by Sharp to approve the minutes from October 16, 2019 as amended. Motion passed unanimously.*

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

**5) City Council Update**

Scherer provided an update to the Park Commission on recent City Council actions.

**6) Jan Har, LLP (Adam's Pest Control) – Rezoning, Preliminary Plat, Site Plan Review – 04-118-23-21-0001 and 04-118-23-24-0001 – North of Hwy 55, West of Willow Drive – Park Dedication Review**

Gallup provided an overview presentation of the applicant's request to rezone from rural business holding to business, preliminary plat for two lots, site plan review, and conditional use permit to build a 43,000 square foot office building with a bar/restaurant and a 13,000 square foot shop/warehouse/vehicle storage on a site north of Highway 55 and west of Willow Drive. The plan also includes a lot to the north for future development. It was noted that Graphic Packaging is directly to the east of this site and Medina Mini Storage is to the west of this site.

Gallup stated that the applicant proposes to construct a road connection to this site from Willow Drive. She noted that staff and the applicant have been working on obtaining the right-of-way from the property owner to the east. The applicant proposes a temporary right-in to the site off Highway 55 for the first three years. Gallup stated that review of this application is contingent upon access to Willow Drive. If the road to Willow is not

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constructed, further analysis will need to be done regarding access and improvements from Highway 55.

Gallup stated that the park dedication ordinance allows 10% of buildable land, which would total 2.4 acres, or 8% of pre-developed market value as cash-in-lieu, which would be approximately \$60,000, or a combination of land and cash. She noted that the park and trail plan does not identify any parks or trails in this area.

Gallup stated that she walked the site with Scherer and Finke earlier that day and observed good quality basswood forest on the north site. The north site is not being developed at this time, but it is proposed to be future development. Gallup noted that the future landowner would not be back before the Park Commission when this site develops, so now would be the opportunity if the Park Commission wanted to preserve the woods.

Gallup stated that the applicant proposes to preserve the wetland area, which would generally be protected by existing regulations. The applicant also proposes to purchase three bike repair stations to be placed at active parks/trails in the Medina. These bike repair stations are valued at approximately \$750 to \$1,500 each.

Gallup requested the Park Commission have a discussion regarding preserving the wooded area. She noted that there will likely be challenges for construction in this area due to the tree preservation ordinance, setbacks, and slope. She noted that the city has provided credit for covenants to preservation areas in the past. She also noted a potential to use the city's tree replacement fund to protect the wooded area instead of the park dedication fund.

Gallup stated that staff's recommendation would be for the Park Commission to recommend that staff discuss an appropriate credit for the preservation of the wooded area with the property owner, with the remainder of park dedication being provided as cash-in-lieu of land dedication.

The Park Commission discussed how to calculate giving the applicant a tree credit.

Thies noted the city should not give a full credit to preserve the trees if the woods are not publicly owned.

Weir stated that it would not be good to clear cut the woods on the slope.

Todd Leyse, the applicant, described the property and his love for the wetlands on this site. He noted that there is an eagle's nest on the property near Highway 55. He proposes

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to leave the eagle's nest alone and potentially build a trail head or parking stalls near it, so people can pull over off Highway 55 to view the eagle's nest. He also stated that he would encourage the future builder on the north lot to build a trail to the woods. He believed most of the woods would be preserved, but he did not want to tie a future developer's hands by requiring that all the woods be preserved.

Scherer stated that the woods on the north lot were high quality with Oak, Basswood, Maple, and not much buckthorn because of the dense tree canopy.

Leyse described the proposed bike repair stations that he plans on putting in Medina parks and the benefit it would provide to the community.

The Park Commission reviewed the Park and Trail map and noted that the closest need for a future park is to the east, but it is not in the vicinity of this development.

Weir warned that a trail head or parking stalls too close to the eagle's nest could scare the eagles off. She stated that vehicle traffic and noise on Highway 55 might not scare them off, but actual people near the nest could disturb them.

Weir suggested looking at a preservation credit for the woods in the northeast corner.

Jacob suggested preserving a couple acres of trees and taking the remainder as cash-in-lieu.

Rumsey suggested taking all the funds as cash-in-lieu.

Sharp believed a combination of preservation and cash-in-lieu made sense.

Morrison said she was in favor of preserving as much woods as possible without spending money. She suggested capitalizing on as much land as possible (more than the 2.4 acres) assuming the city did not have to give full credit for park dedication if the land was being preserved, but not publicly owned.

Leyse stated that he may be open to allowing the city to "purchase" additional woods to secure the woods preservation above the park dedication amount.

Scherer suggested to the applicant that a private trail be constructed for the benefit of the employees that will be working at the site.

*A motion was made by Weir and seconded by Jacob to move to recommend that staff discuss appropriate credit for the preservation of the wooded area with the property owner, with the remainder of park dedication to be provided as cash-in-lieu of land dedication. Motion passed unanimously.*

## 7) Staff Report

- Diamond Lake Regional Trail Search Corridor – Gallup stated that staff met with Three Rivers Park District to begin the planning process for the Diamond Lake Regional Trail Search Corridor, which will run through eastern Medina from north to south. The entire regional trail will extend from Diamond Lake near Rogers to Wayzata. Gallup noted that Three Rivers Park District plans on attending the February 19<sup>th</sup> Park Commission meeting to begin planning for the best route. A public engagement event is planned in conjunction with Medina Clean-up Day on April 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Robert G. Mitchell Jr. Designated Beneficiary Fund – Gallup stated that a new fund has been created to help support Medina's parks, trails and wetlands. Medina resident Lucy Mitchell, wife of late Mayor Bob Mitchell, along with her family have established the Robert G. Mitchell, Jr. Fund of the Minneapolis Foundation with an initial gift of \$250,000 to the fund. This fund has been established as a perpetual endowment from which the City of Medina can receive distributions for special projects in support of improvements to the city's parks, trails, and wetlands. The fund cannot be used to support general operations and maintenance of the city's parks, trails, and wetlands. The city is extremely grateful to the Mitchell/Crosby Family for this generous gift, which will provide indispensable funds to improve our parks, trails, and wetlands into the future. The Park Commission requested that staff prepare a thank you letter for the Park Commissioners to sign at their next meeting.
- Park Commissioner Terms Expiring – Elizabeth Weir and Jeff Rumsey's terms will be expiring at the end of 2019. Weir and Rumsey both indicated that they have enjoyed serving on the Park Commission but will not be renewing their terms. Gallup requested that the Park Commission get the word out regarding the two vacant seats. She also noted that it will be published in the December newsletter directing potential applicants to the city website to apply.
- 2020 Budget – Thies reminded the Park Commissioners that the City Council will be adopting the final 2020 budget at their meeting on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. She asked if any Park Commissioners would be willing to attend to show their support for keeping the Municipal Park Funding in the budget.
- General Items – Gallup stated that the Hamel Volunteer Fire Department has requested that the city move the weather siren off their property, so our Public Safety Director had suggested moving it into Hamel Legion Park near the picnic shelters. One idea was to locate it on top of the sledding hill, which the pole could incorporate a light to light up the sledding hill at night. The Park Commission was concerned with the siren going off while kids were on top of the sledding hill. It was suggested that the siren could be moved to Rainwater Nature Area.

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**8) Adjourn**

*A motion was made by Weir, seconded by Morrison and passed unanimously, to adjourn the meeting.*

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m. Minutes prepared by Jodi Gallup