

Medina Park Commission Meeting Minutes

August 19, 2020

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The Park Commission of Medina, Minnesota met in regular session on August 19, 2020 at 7:00 p.m., which was held virtually pursuant Minn. Stat. Sec. 13D.021. Park Commission Chair Ann Thies presided.

1) Call to Order

Commissioners Present: Ann Thies, Steve Lee, John Jacob, Terry Sharp, Troy Hutchinson

Commissioners Absent: Mary Morrison, Angela Bernhardt

Also Present: Public Works Director Steve Scherer, Assistant City Administrator Jodi Gallup, Planning Director Dusty Finke

2) Additions to the Agenda:

- Jacob requested a follow-up discussion to the proposed Diamond Lake Regional Trail locations within Medina.
- Sharp requested a discussion on creating a liaison to Three Rivers Park District

A motion was made by Lee and seconded by Jacob to add these items to the agenda under "Staff Report, General Items".

A roll call vote was taken:

Park Commissioner Ann Thies - aye

Park Commissioner Terry Sharp - aye

Park Commissioner Steve Lee - aye

Park Commissioner John Jacob – aye

Park Commissioner Troy Hutchinson – aye

Motion passed unanimously.

3) Approval of the Minutes from:

July 15, 2020 Meeting

- Page 3 – Diamond Lake Regional Trail – add: “Thies noted the western most proposed trail would negatively impact open and natural areas, and we already have a regional trail along County Road 19 on the western side of the city.”

A motion was made by Thies and seconded by Sharp to approve the minutes from July 15, 2020 as amended.

A roll call vote was taken:

Park Commissioner Ann Thies - aye

Park Commissioner Terry Sharp - aye

Park Commissioner Steve Lee - aye

Park Commissioner John Jacob – aye

Park Commissioner Troy Hutchinson – aye

Motion passed unanimously.

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

5) City Council Update

Public Works Director Steve Scherer provided an update on recent City Council actions.

6) Ditter Properties 2032-2052 Holy Name Drive Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Rezoning, Preliminary Plat, Interim Use Permit – Park Dedication Review

Finke provided a brief staff report for the Ditter Properties' land use requests to allow subdivision of four parcels into five lots at 2032-2052 Holy Name Drive. He noted the park and trail plan does not identify any need for future park land or trails in this area. He stated that the Park Commission had reviewed this request in April 2018 and there was a consensus to recommend cash-in-lieu of land dedication.

Jim Ditter, the applicant, confirmed that the Park Commission had previously recommended cash in-lieu of land dedication.

Tom Ditter, the applicant, confirmed that nothing in the plan had changed since the last review.

Jacob stated that his point of view remains the same as the last time the Park Commission reviewed this request, which is to recommend cash-in-lieu of land dedication.

Hutchinson questioned how the cash-in lieu of land dedication value was calculated.

Finke explained that per the Park Dedication ordinance the cash-in-lieu amount is equal to 8% of the pre-developed market value with a minimum of \$3,500 and a maximum of \$8,000 per new lot. Since one new lot is being created and that new lot will sell for over \$100,000, the park dedication amount would max out at \$8,000.

A motion was made by Jacob and seconded by Sharp to recommend park dedication cash-in-lieu of land dedication.

A roll call vote was taken:

Park Commissioner Ann Thies - aye

Park Commissioner Terry Sharp - aye

Park Commissioner Steve Lee - aye

Park Commissioner John Jacob – aye

Park Commissioner Troy Hutchinson – aye

Motion passed unanimously.

7) Hunter Lions Park Concept Plans

Landscape Architect Shaunna Newton with WSB presented three concept plans for Hunter Lions Park. She stated that these concept plans have been designed to optimize

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the functionality, safety, and recreational enjoyment at Hunter Lions Park. She noted that the concept plans have addressed creating a recreational Little League Field with optimal orientation, improved the playground area, opened up views, so the playground was not hidden behind courts, created space for two tennis courts, controlled invasives, reduced mosquitos, and created an inviting path to get people back to the prairie area.

Newton explained how each design incorporated event pods to slowly move people back to the nature area. Newton described the various design differences in each concept plan. She stated that the overall goal is to provide a safe and functional design.

Jacob thanked Newton for her excellent work in reimagining the space. He stated that the subcommittee had met earlier in the day to review the concept plans and recommended concept plan two. He noted that they liked the expanded play area next to the baseball seating, preferred this design's ballfield orientation with the batter in the southwest corner, and liked the tennis court location in the northeast corner.

Jacob commented that the tennis courts could potentially fit one tennis and two pickleball courts. He questioned if the baseball outfield fence could be removeable/flexible to be able to use the open field for other sports after the baseball season.

Lee concurred with Jacob's comments and added that he liked the location of the tennis courts in the north, because it provides a natural extension if land to north becomes available to add more tennis courts.

Lee stated that the park improvements would likely be phased due to expenses. He suggested building the tennis courts and baseball field as phase one; noting that the existing playground area remain intact until it was expanded as part of the phase two improvements.

Thies agreed that she preferred concept two, but suggested adding seating to the prairie area, using the nature pod from concept three, and putting the exercise pod in the open area.

Sharp stated that he liked concept two as well with the tennis court to the north, so it does not block the playground area. He also stated he preferred the nature pod from concept three.

Hutchinson stated that the concept plans were well thought out. He liked that the play area was near the baseball seating.

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Jacob suggested including the Hamel Lions Club in future park design discussions prior to seeking resident feedback.

Ryan Wilson with the Hamel Athletic Club (HAC) stated that concept two is the optimal baseball orientation. He stated that if this field was built, HAC would put the older Little League kids on this field to make this park their own.

Scherer stated that he would reach out to the Hamel Lions Club to get their feedback. He also mentioned that this baseball field would be built for the Hamel Athletic Club's use, so he would anticipate that HAC would partner on the baseball improvement costs.

Thies asked WSB to update the concept two plan showing a full basketball court and bench seating in the prairie area.

Lee asked that the event pods figures in concepts two and three be shown in the updated concept two design.

Thies questioned if the trail leading to the nature area should be closer to the creek to enjoy the newly opened views.

Andy Servi with HAC asked that the timing of the park construct began after the baseball season, which ends around the 4th of July, so it does not interfere with their playing schedule.

Scherer questioned if HAC would need irrigation for a grassed infield. Servi confirmed that irrigation would be necessary.

Servi also stated that HAC would prefer a permanent outfield fence but would be willing to work with the city on installing a temporary/flexible fence to maximize the play area in the park during non-baseball season.

Gallup questioned if WSB would be putting together cost estimates for each design element, so the Park Commission can determine what improvements or alternatives are feasible with the available funding.

Newton stated that she had put together some high-level cost estimates with all improvements totaling \$700,000 to \$1,000,000.

The Park Commission requested that WSB update the concept two plan as discussed at this meeting, showing cost estimates for each improvement along with alternatives.

8) Hamel Athletic Club – Field Improvement Request

Servi provided an update to the Park Commission on the 2020 baseball season and discussed the recent improvements HAC has made to the fields. He stated that HAC's goal is to upgrade the experience for all those who choose to play Hamel baseball by improving the quality of the facilities and increasing field capacity. To that end, HAC is proposing to fund 100% of the following improvements and asks for the city's approval:

- Convert Quad 1 to a Little League Field, by adding grass to the infield, creating a 46-foot mound, and adding a fence at 200 feet.
- Create eight mini-teeball/coach pitch fields (four per Little League Field) to the space between the old 300-foot fences and new 200-foot fences on Quad 1 and Quad 4.
- Add ag-lime to each mini-field with a six foot radius around home plate, 30 inch base paths, four foot radius quarter circle around each base, leave existing grass infield with no mound.
- Reconvert Quad 3 to an intermediate size field by adding six feet of grass to the 1st-2nd and 2nd-3rd base paths, move mound back to 52 feet, and use existing 75-foot base pegs.

Scherer questioned where the additional people will park their vehicles? He suggested if we move the fences in at Quad 1 and Quad 2, we could turn the additional space into parking instead of creating eight mini-teeball fields.

Wilson stated that the total cost for converting the eight mini-teeball fields is \$2,000, and the family donating the money understand there is a risk that the fields might turn into additional parking in future years. HAC would be happy to get a few years out of this area than none at all, as it is a small investment.

Scherer stated that the additional fencing and rows of fields would create additional maintenance such as weeding. HAC confirmed that they hire a maintenance person that could help weed the new fields.

Jacob suggested that the city and HAC conduct a parking study to determine the actual parking need in the park. It was noted that the new parking lot at the Paul Fortin Field is underutilized.

It was suggested that HAC reach out to the Church of St. Anne's to see if they could utilize their additional parking on non-church nights.

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A motion was made by Lee and seconded by Thies to recommend approving the field improvement plans to the City Council with a condition for HAC to work with staff on parking needs and stormwater concerns.

A roll call vote was taken:

Park Commissioner Ann Thies - aye

Park Commissioner Terry Sharp - aye

Park Commissioner Steve Lee - aye

Park Commissioner John Jacob – aye

Park Commissioner Troy Hutchinson – nay

Motion passed 4-1.

9) Staff Report

- General Items:

- Diamond Lake Regional Trail – Jacob stated that he asked to revisit the Diamond Lake Regional Trail discussion, because several his neighbors have concerns with the easterly proposed trail route that runs past his neighborhood. He stated that bikers and runners already use the road instead of the existing trail along Hunter. Jacob is concerned with the additional motorized and unmotorized traffic along Hunter Drive and Medina Road. This creates a serious safety concern. Jacob would prefer a trail option to the west. Thies stated that they had preferred the eastern option to pick up more residents that live near it. She also stated that the other two options would more negatively impact nature areas and the city already has a north/south trail on the western edge of the city. Lee believed the issue residents had with the proposed trail was the “Not in My Backyard (NIMBY)” syndrome. He believed that once the trail was constructed, the people that originally opposed it would be the biggest users of the trail. He stated that the option in the center of Medina would run into wetland issues.
- Three Rivers Park District Liaison – Sharp suggested creating a liaison position between the City of Medina and Three Rivers Park District. He said that when he served on the Maple Grove Park Board, they had a liaison to Three Rivers Park District, because the Elm Creek Park Reserve Bordered much of Maple Grove. Similarly, in Medina, Baker Park Reserve is a large portion and great amenity to the City of Medina. Sharp volunteered to serve in this capacity unless someone else was interested in the role. The Park Commissioners thanked Commissioner Sharp for his idea and for volunteering to be the liaison.

10) Adjourn

A motion was made by Thies, seconded by Lee, to adjourn the meeting.

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A roll call vote was taken:

Park Commissioner Ann Thies - aye

Park Commissioner Terry Sharp - aye

Park Commissioner Steve Lee - aye

Park Commissioner John Jacob – aye

Park Commissioner Troy Hutchinson – aye

Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 p.m. Minutes prepared by Jodi Gallup