

**City of Cottage Grove
Parks, Recreation & Natural Resources Commission
April 10, 2006**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources Commission was duly held at City Hall, 7516 – 80th Street South, Cottage Grove, Minnesota, on the 10th day of April, 2006.

ROLL CALL

Chair Bob Davy called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. There was a discussion regarding vacancies on the Commission.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Davy, Keith Kleinsasser, Bill Haluzak, Paul Poncin,
Ryan Simmers

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Senior Planner John Burbank
Ice Arena/Park & Recreation Manager Zac Dockter
City Council Member Karla Bigham

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Agenda approved as presented.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Poncin to approve the February 13, 2006 minutes as mailed. Seconded by Haluzak.
Motion carried.

OPEN FORUM

None

OLD BUSINESS

A. Hidden Valley Fishing Pond – Phase 1 (Continued)

Tabled.

B. Adopt-A-Park

Dockter requested that the May 8, 2006, meeting be held at Hardwood Park. He asked the Commission members to show up between 6:00 and 6:30 p.m. to clean the park and then commence the meeting at 7:00 p.m. move under the picnic shelter.

C. Arbor Day

Dockter asked for two members to volunteer to man the park informational booth at Arbor Day. Simmers offered to work from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and Poncin offered to work from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Neighborhood Meeting – Pine Tree Valley Trailway Corridor

Dockter presented the plan for the Pine Tree Valley Trailway Corridor, which will connect the Pine Tree Valley Park and the Cottage Grove Trailway Corridor to the north and 80th Street to the south. He stated that the trail will be staked in the next few weeks. At that time, the civil engineers will look at the grades of the proposed site and decide on how to handle any situations that might result from grades that could be too steep. After the trail has been staked, he asked that residents call the Parks and Recreation offices with any concerns. The trail is planned to be excavated in late spring to early summer. Class 5 base will be put down soon after and it is expected that the trail would be paved by the end of August or early September. If funds are not available for paving, the class 5 base will stay and the trail will be paved next spring or summer. In that case, the class 5 would not be put down until late summer or early fall.

Bob Sturm, 7418 Isleton Avenue, mentioned concern of the route along the waterway due to flooding of the area. He also asked that a letter be sent out when the area is staked so the residents can look at the trail location. He also expressed concerns about the class 5 gravel washing out in the areas with steep grades.

Mike Weiss, 8542 – 75th Street South, gave a brief interpretation of the trail history from his living in that neighborhood over the last 21 years. He also stated that he has concerns about slopes at the park access from 75th Street and accumulation of trash. Bigham responded that she would ask that the City staff look into installing trash cans along the trailway. Mike also asked that no class 5 be put on the hill without immediate plans for pavement since the washout would leave all the gravel at the bottom of the hill.

Margaret Underwood, 7417 Inwood Avenue, expressed concerns about trash and parties in the area. She asked if there would be more patrols in the area when the trail was paved and that staff minimize environmental impacts.

Don Hirsch, 8520 – 75th Street South, stated that his primary concern was the park access route from 75th Street. He asked that the trail be kept far enough from his fence that if someone falls off the trail into his fence, he has no liability issues.

Paul Wick, 7538 Isleton Avenue South, generally agreed that the trails will improve the area and are an amenity to the neighborhood. However, he did have concerns that the pond north of 80th Street floods often and he wants to make sure the trail stays to the west so it would not be washed out.

Dockter and Commission members responded to most of the concerns, but the general consensus was that this trail was a critical link in the trail system. There did not appear to be an overwhelming negative response from the residents who spoke other than they just want to voice their concerns with specific aspects of the potential trailway.

Motion to approve the Pine Tree Valley Trail location and construction by Poncin, seconded by Haluzak. Motion carried.

B. Annual Meeting

Burbank explained that at the Annual Meeting a Chair and a Vice Chair must be nominated and appointed. Motion by Haluzak to appoint Davy to the Chair position, seconded by Kleinsasser. Motion carried. Motion by Kleinsasser to appoint Poncin as Vice Chair, seconded by Davy. Motion carried.

C. Goals and Accomplishments

Burbank reviewed the goals and accomplishments memo that was sent to the City Council and highlighted the accomplishments over the last year. He thanked the Commission for their time and efforts. He also stated that the Parks Commission is a sounding board and a resource for information, noting that there are still goals for the Commission to meet.

D. Park Map Draft Review

Dockter presented a park map that will be available the general public and asked for any comments or suggestions. There was general approval of the map layout and no additional changes or suggestions.

E. Pond Fountain Discussion

Dockter presented some photos and dollar figures for potential installation of fountains in the Hardwood Park and Hidden Valley Park ponds on the north and south sides of 70th Street. Dockter stated that the options are one fountain on one pond with no lights; one fountain on one pond with lights; two fountains with no lights on both ponds; or two fountains, both with lights on both ponds. He asked the Commission for their recommendation. He further asked if funding for the fountains should be pulled out of the Park Dedication Fund, which is typically a development expenditure, or if the fees should be pulled out of the General Fund, which would need to be added to the CIP for 2007 or 2008. The recommendation by the Commission was to install two fountains with lights, which would enhance the features of both pond areas, and include them as a development cost for Hardwood Park and Hidden Valley

Park. The reason for using park trust funds is that Hardwood Park is still currently under development. Hidden Valley Park is more of a passive park, but with the fish stocking program, fishing pier, expansion of trails, the fountains, and the water features, Hidden Valley Park is becoming an active park. Therefore, the Parks Commission would like the Council consider the park under development.

F. Trailway Corridor Benches

Staff presented several options for using rocks or boulders as benches in the trailway corridor to enhance the natural look and features in the area, as opposed to putting up the standard pre-built benches. The Commission asked how users will know it is a bench. Staff responded that the rocks could be put on wood chips or on a slab. There was some debate on how people would know that it is a resting spot. Simmers asked if a plaque could be put on the rocks. Dockter responded all the rocks will have a place for a plaque. There was general approval for using natural rocks and stones as benches in natural areas, particularly along the Cottage Grove Trailway Corridor.

G. Park Dedication Fees

Burbank stated that City staff and City Council will be reviewing the park dedication fees and asked that the Commission members make a recommendation to approve or deny staff's request to increase the fee to \$3,500 per unit. Motion by Poncin, seconded by Simmers to increase the Park Dedication fee to \$3,500 per unit. Motion carried.

H. Lyman Lumber Park Dedication

Burbank briefly reviewed the land dedication versus cash option for the Lyman Lumber project near Hamlet Park. Staff is asking that the land dedication be accepted so that land can be used as park land, but more importantly as a potential parkway between the existing parking lot and the future parking lot at Hamlet Park. Motion by Poncin, seconded by Haluzak to accept the land dedication in lieu of cash. Motion carried.

I. Glengrove 3rd Addition Park Dedication

Staff is requesting that the City accept cash in lieu of land in this development. Motion by Haluzak, seconded by Kleinsasser to accept cash in lieu of land. Motion carried.

REPORTS

A. Golf Division

No comments.

B. Ice Arena Division

No comments.

C. Parks Division

No comments.

D. Recreation Programming Division

No comments.

E. Planning Commission

No comments.

F. Historic Preservation

No comments.

G. Council Agendas

No comments.

H. Monday News

No comments.

I. CGAA

No comments.

PARK PLANNING/MANAGEMENT EDUCATION MATERIALS

Burbank submitted articles from the Metropolitan Council and the County Conservation Task Force for the Commission to review.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

None

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Karla Bigham reported that the City Council approved the Surface Water Management Plan. She also indicated that River Oaks has a lot of specials, including on golf, food, equipment, and clothing. She stated that the Council approved the AUAR for the East Ravine.

STAFF COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Kleinsasser, second by Simmers to adjourn. Motion carried, Meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.