

**City of Cottage Grove
Parks, Recreation & Natural Resources Commission
August 13, 2007**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources Commission was duly held at Highlands Park, 6975 Iden Ave. So. Cottage Grove, Minnesota, on the 13th day of August, 2007.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Davy called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Davy, Ryan Simmers, Paul Poncin, Ashley Thurber, Sheri Yaritz, Keith Kleinsasser

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bill Schumal, Krystal McCalvy, Councilmember Myron Bailey

OTHERS PRESENT: John M. Burbank, Senior Planner

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion to approve by Simmers, seconded by Poncin. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A motion was made by Poncin and seconded by Yaritz to approve the June, 2007 minutes.

OPEN FORUM

None.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Pine Tree Valley Park:

Burbank gave an update on the trailhead improvements. Davy pointed out how nice Pine Tree Valley Park is looking. The Commission agreed.

B. Hidden Valley Pond:

Burbank stated that the capital improvement plan includes a fishing pier for the south pond at Hidden Valley, noting that the Commission reviewed the issue of the pond not holding water due to it never silting in as planned. Burbank further stated that as part of the Everwood Residential subdivision, Custom One Homes donated to the city clay material to line the pond. The donated materials covered 80 to 90 percent of the needed lining, which will help the pond hold water.

Davy asked if they closed the connection to the north pond. Burbank replied that there is a culvert and eventually the waters will equalize and serve as one. Davy pointed out that a significant amount of water is needed to equalize the ponds. Burbank reported that sumac and other low maintenance plants were installed this year, the trailway is being staked, and the fishing pier will be installed on the south side of the pond soon.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Werner Electric Hamlet Park Land Acquisition:

Burbank stated that Werner Electric is looking to relocate south of the Hamlet Park area. He explained if that transaction is approved, the city would acquire 30 additional acres of park land in Hamlet Park in accordance with the revised Hamlet Park Master Plan approved by the Council. Burbank stated further that the City will also be deeding back 1.5 acres from the last Hamlet Park land acquisition to the current property owners. Davy asked if there will be room for soccer fields. Burbank answered no, adding that the park will have a great trailway system and many other opportunities for the community. Motion to recommend acquisitions to City Council made by Poncin, seconded by Yaritz. Motion approved.

B. McHattie Farms – Preliminary Plat:

Burbank reported that McHattie Farms has applied for a zoning amendment to change the zoning of land along Jamaica Avenue. He stated that the proposed development is substantially consistent with the East Ravine Master Plan. Notable features include the green space that runs along Jamaica Avenue, trailway corridors, ponding, and heavy landscaping. Under the current plan, maintenance of larger buffer areas would be the responsibility of the private homeowners associations. There would be public trailway easements in the buffer areas. Storm water ponds would be in public ownership as well as sidewalks, trails, and other passive open space improvements and landscaping.

Davy asked if approximately five acres would be green space. Burbank said yes. Davy asked how many homes are in the development. Burbank answered that there would be 155 homes. He added that there will be parkland dedications and credits. Davy asked that which area would have ball fields. Burbank responded that the watershed area provides an opportunity for fields. Yaritz asked what kind of park will be in this development. Burbank stated that it is a passive park. Poncin asked if there would be landscaping around the ponding area. Burbank replied that there is a 15-year maintenance requirement in a rain garden landscape, so it cannot be relied upon for a total storm water management plan, but that it will not be an active part of this design. Poncin asked if there will be vehicle traffic on Military Road. Burbank stated that the current plan is to convert the road into a historic trailway corridor and eventually the only vehicle traffic will be police and maintenance staff. Poncin made a motion to recommend approval of the preliminary plat to the City Council. Simmers seconded. Motion passed.

C. Cottage Grove Trail way Corridor Plan – 2007 Prairie Restoration Update

Burbank referenced the comments included in the memo from Parks Manager Zac Dockter. Davy pointed out that the project is looking very nice. He stated further, that in spite of the doubts of area residents, it has filled in beautifully.

D. Public Art Program:

Burbank stated that at the June meeting there was a request that the Commission look into public art programs. Burbank added that he researched what other communities are doing in this area and is looking for suggestions on funding and if there would be community approval. Davy suggested phasing this program into the community slowly. He believes the Commission should stay focused on current plans. Davy stated that adding art to the community is essential; however, the art that is chosen needs to be recognized and placed in the right spot. Burbank added that as he researched this issue, he found great community involvement. The general consensus of the Commission was to continue researching the program over the course of the next year.

PRESENTATIONS:

A. Hamlet Park North Master plan – Final Approved Concept:

Burbank presented the final version of Hamlet Park North Master Plan. He pointed out the pond improvements and park dedications, noting that the City is working with Brauer and Associates on a construction drawing for installation in 2008. Davy pointed out that a fountain in this plan had changed to a pond. Burbank stated that there will be a water feature on the corner. Poncin asked if there will be power to this area. Burbank stated that there will be power running along Hadley Avenue. There will be no lighting along the trails, only along the roadway. Poncin expressed concern that the path would not have enough light and that it may be more cost effective to add it now. Burbank pointed out the light system in relation to the trails and added that running conduits would not be an issue. The Commission concurred with the Council's final approved master plan.

B. Ice Arena

Burbank presented the latest drawings on the ice arena. He pointed out the features on the proposal. Yaritz asked if the new arena will be handicap accessible. Burbank said yes.

REPORTS

A. Golf Division

None.

B. Ice Arena Division

None.

C. Parks Division

None.

D. Recreation Division

None.

E. Planning Commission

None.

F. Historical Preservation

None.

G. Council Agendas

None.

H. CGAA

Davy stated that there is a huge recreational soccer program and the CGAA is coming to the next Commission meeting to discuss options for next year.

Park Planning/ Management Education Materials

A. Geocaching Article

Burbank referenced the newspaper article on geocaching, an activity that has been previously discussed by the Commission and is gaining in popularity.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

Kleinsasser asked if there are plans for a trail from Cottage Grove Elementary to Hinton Avenue. Burbank stated that as the area develops, there will be trails on 65th Street, Hinton Avenue, and throughout the development. Davy stated that there were some grading issues on 65th Street.

Davy expressed his sympathy to the family of Bill Haluzak and pointed out his great contributions to the Commission.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

None

STAFF COMMENTS

Burbank reported out that the Atkinson Cemetery project has started. He also stated that the historic preservation playing cards are for sale at City Hall for \$5. The profit from these cards will be donated to the elementary schools.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Davy, seconded by Yaritz. Motion passed, and the meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.