

**City of Cottage Grove  
Parks, Recreation & Natural Resources Commission  
September 11, 2006**

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Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources Commission was duly held at Cottage Grove City Hall, 7516 – 80th Street South, Cottage Grove, Minnesota, on the 11th day of September, 2006.

Chair Davy called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Bob Davy, Bill Haluzak, Keith Kleinsasser, Paul Poncin, Sheri Yaritz

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Ryan Simmers

**OTHERS PRESENT:** John M. Burbank, Senior Planner  
Zac Dockter, Ice Arena/Park & Recreation Manager

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Agenda approved as presented.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Burbank explained that due to changing the way the minutes are recorded, the minutes have not been completed yet. The review has been postponed to the October meeting.

**OPEN FORUM**

None.

**OLD BUSINESS/PRESENTATIONS**

**A. Prairie Restoration Response**

Dockter updated that Commission on the Prairie Restoration Project in the Cottage Grove Trailway Corridor. He referenced a letter he sent on August 18 to the neighboring residents of that corridor explaining the progress to date on the project. He displayed a photograph taken on August 15 showing the plantings. He explained that management of crab grass is done by cutting them down, but over time the prairie grasses and flowers will establish themselves and become the dominant species. He noted that during the first year or two, it is expected that there will be lot of weeds. He also included an e-mail from Paul Bachenstead, Bonestroo Engineering, who is a certified naturalist. Bachenstead did an independent review of the area and reported that the native seedling density is good to very good. Davy asked if the development around the pond by Renewal by Anderson and would that have a similar look to this. Dockter responded yes.

**B. Highlands Community Park Improvements**

Dockter referenced a letter he sent to the residents adjacent to Highlands Park regarding improvements to the stormwater pond and the open space in the area. Dockter updated the

Commission on the progress to date on the project. He stated that most of the work should be completed by the fall.

**C. Donation Policies**

Dockter reported that the City Council asked that the Commission look at creating a program or policy for accepting donations for parks. He outlined the draft policy he created for acceptance of donations to parks, public facilities, and recreational programs and asked for comments from the Commission. Poncin asked if for donated trees a natural stone monument could be placed by the tree rather than a bronze marker in the ground. Dockter responded that could be looked at, noting that he kept the policy semi-informal so each donation could be looked at on a case-by-case basis. Poncin asked if an amendment could be added to #1 to say a natural type of monument might be acceptable on a case-by-case basis, so that people know that a tree had been donated in someone's memory. Dockter stated that the goal was to keep the park system looking natural and not turn them into graveyards. It was the consensus of the Commission that having a policy in place for donations would be helpful. Dockter also stated that Council wants to have a map estimating how many memorial benches and other items the City would accept.

Poncin made a motion to present to the Council the policy for park donations and memorials as written. Haluzak seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. 2006 Park and Open Space Projects**

Dockter presented to the Commission a list of projects with completion dates. He highlighted a few of the projects including improvements at Woodridge Park, Oakwood Park, Meadowgrass Park, West Draw Park, Lamar Park, and Hidden Valley Pond; staking of the Pine Tree Valley trail system; the Cottage Grove Trailway Corridor prairie restoration project; installation of rock signs at nine neighborhood parks; and the addition of bleacher pads. Davy asked when the trail along Pine Tree Valley Park would be paved. Dockter responded by the end of October.

**B. Parkside Improvement Plans**

Burbank explained the improvements that are being proposed for the Parkside area that the city would like to fund with money from HUD. Some of the improvements could include adding playground equipment, enhancement to surface water management ponds in the area, and improvements to the adjacent Oakwood Park.

**C. Tree Trust Initiatives**

Dockter explained that the Tree Trust works with at-risk and mentally disabled kids by having them work on projects in parks that also teaches new skills for the workforce. The city teamed up with them this year for a couple projects, including repairing and adding to the boardwalk at North Ideal Pond and constructing bocce ball courts at Lamar Park.

**D. Prevention Minnesota – Active Community Planning**

Burbank stated that Blue Cross Blue Shield Minnesota has funds available from the tobacco settlement for projects related to community health. Specifically they have an RFP out for local and regional governments to integrate active living principles into communities. The grants range from \$5,000 to \$75,000 and one of the criteria to receive this funding is commu-

nity support prior to application. The City is planning to apply for a funding to finish our trailway plan.

Motion by Kleinsasser, seconded by Yaritz, to apply for funding to finish the city's trails plan through the Prevention Minnesota Active Community Planning Grants program. Motion passed unanimously.

**E. National Park Foundation – Grants**

Burbank explained that the National Park Foundation has a grant program that focuses along the Mississippi River and the backwaters. The City has several projects that we could coordinate to include with the application such as the land purchase on Grey Cloud Island, fishing opportunities, and a future boat launch. This grant program also requires community support.

Motion by Haluzak, seconded by Yaritz to recommend to the City Council that the City apply for the National Park Foundation Grants for 2007. Motion passed unanimously.

**PLANS AND AMENDMENTS**

**A. Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park Plan Amendment**

Burbank stated that Washington County is starting the master planning process for Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park. The Board has contracted with Brower & Associates to do the consulting work, which should be completed by May 2007. They are currently in the process of setting up a Technical Advisory Task Force for that board. A Parks Commission member may need to serve on this task force.

**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**

Burbank reported that Cedarhurst Point, which would be the first multi-family development in the East Ravine planning area, would have some common open space, both public and private, as well as the first phase of the Military Road railway corridor. The Walden Woods project, which would be located north of 65th Street, would have railway connections to the Hadley Avenue corridor through the Silverwood development and another into the Timber Ridge 6th subdivision. Both projects would require cash dedication from the developers with any land dedication credits being subtracted from that. There is a proposed lot split creating five and three-acre parcels from an eight-acre lot that would trigger park dedication. South Point Ridge is a proposed mixed-use subdivision that would be located west of Kohls and Tutor Time that includes senior housing and office buildings and would provide some trail

links to the Camels Hump area as well as the new open space that the City would be acquiring through the Everwood and Oak Cove subdivisions. This development would also generate a cash dedication for the park trust fund.

**F. Historic Preservation**

No comments.

**G. Council Agendas**

No comments.

**H. Monday News**

No comments.

**I. CGAA**

No comments.

**PARK PLANNING/MANAGEMENT EDUCATION MATERIALS**

No comments.

**COMMISSION COMMENTS**

No comments.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

No comments.

**STAFF COMMENTS**

Burbank stated that a park development workshop would be held to work on a master park plan and near-term goals for our parks. The workshop would include park maintenance planners, administrators, and finance people who are all involved in the development of our parks. The acquisition of some property on Grey Cloud Island is going to the City Council on September 20. He reported that our consulting engineer is doing some design work on Camels Hump, which will be coordinated with the public improvements for Oak Cove. The design process for the Pine Tree Valley Park trailhead and stormwater improvements just north of 80th Street is starting. The Presbyterian Homes project will soon be presented to the City Council. This project includes more green space in the area, surface water management ponds, trail connections to Hamlet Park, and some park dedication contributions. He then reported that there is currently a vacancy on the Commission for which the City is taking applications.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Poncin, seconded by Kleinsasser to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.