



City of Ann Arbor

301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
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Meeting Minutes Park Advisory Commission

Tuesday, February 28, 2012

4:00 PM

City Hall, 301 E. Huron Street

CALL TO ORDER

Chair J. Grand called the meeting to order at 4:09 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Colin Smith called the roll.

Staff Present:

C. Smith, J. Straw, M. Warba, A. Kuras; 4

Present: 10 - David Barrett, Timothy Berla, Chair Julie Berson Grand, John McCoy Lawter, Gwen Nystuen, Samuel Offen, Mike Anglin, Christopher Taylor, Karen Levin, and Tim Doyle

Absent: 1 - Douglas Chapman

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Nystuen, seconded by Levin, that the Agenda be Approved as presented. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY - (3 Minutes per Speaker)

George Gaston, spoke about the need to preserve and protect the City's parkland for the present and the future. He praised the City's work done with the Argo Dam Race saying that it will be a great asset to generations to come.

Rita Mitchell, spoke about the principle of protecting parks for park usage, as voted by the citizens in the 2008 election.

A APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A-1 **12-0284** January 24, 2012 Park Advisory Commission Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Doyle, seconded by Lawter, that the Minutes be Approved by the Commission and forwarded to the City Council. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

PUBLIC HEARINGS

B **UNFINISHED BUSINESS****B-1** **12-0285** Update on LSNC Circulation Master Plan and Raptor Path

Amy Kuras, from the Parks and Recreation Department, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the updates on the Leslie Science and Nature Center Circulation Plan and Raptor Path.

G. Nystuen mentioned that she would like to see as much impervious surfaces as possible on the paths as well as for the parking lot.

A. Kuras said that they were looking at newly designed materials, for the paths, that might be available from a local source. She reiterated that they would use impervious surfaces wherever it made sense.

G. Nystuen asked if educational signage would be added to the site as part of these improvements.

A. Kuras said that staff would be including signage in their Master Plan, which would be separate from this project.

G. Nystuen asked if the hill would be leveled off somewhat.

A. Kuras responded that they will be separating off the service drive from the pedestrian path, which will still leave an area for drop-offs and pick-ups as part of the service drive.

G. Nystuen said the project looks very good.

S. Offen thanked A. Kuras for all her hard work on the proposed renovation project. He said as a member of the LSNC Board he wanted to express his appreciation for her efforts.

A. Kuras said that in the future they are hoping to apply for grants for this type of project since they would be a perfect fit for State grants.

Received and Filed**B-2** **12-0286** Quarterly Financial Update

Colin Smith, Manager of Parks and Recreation Services, reviewed the Quarterly Financial Update Report with the Commission.

S. Offen asked about the Argo Livery budget.

C. Smith responded, the delay in the construction of the whitewater feature so that the remediation can take place for DTE, means they won't be available this coming summer and revenue will be lower than planned.

J. Lawter asked about listed General Fund subsidies.

D. Barrett asked about the savings at the golf courses.

C. Smith responded that they were as a result of the weather, noting that with

inclement weather they send staff home. He added that the amount of saved expenditures from not staffing a facility for a day isn't enough to cover the lost revenue from a facility not being operational.

D. Barrett asked if the Fuller Road Soccer Fields expenses could be broken down for clarity.

C. Smith said he could.

D. Barrett asked for clarification on the Vet's Fitness Center, noting that the other facilities didn't list a separate line item for a similar space. He asked if the room is utilized.

C. Smith explained that at the Vet's Park they have a room dedicated to fitness equipment [which has had its own line item in the budget] and historically they have tried to allocate a percentage of costs to staffing needs of maintaining the room with equipment. He agreed that it would make more sense to have it rolled into the main line item, as with the other facilities.

C. Smith said they are looking into different options for the best use of the space.

T. Berla asked if patrons pay for using the fitness room.

C. Smith said, yes.

K. Levin commented that people might not be aware that the Vet's facility has such a fitness room.

Matt Warba, Interim Manager of Field Operations, reviewed the operating revenue and expenses with the Commission.

S. Offen asked if they anticipate planting more trees this year.

M. Warba responded, yes.

D. Barrett asked if there had been any savings from the lack of snow removing this fiscal year.

M. Warba said he believed there would be, if the City isn't hit by possible future storms.

C. Smith reviewed the Budget Impact Sheets with the Commission. He noted that over the past there have been savings in the park operations, mainly due to budgeted but unfilled vacancies. He said staff is suggesting that they return to a 14-day mowing cycle, which he believes will be doable and good news for everyone.

D. Barrett asked if they could expect more maintenance costs on the new ball fields being constructed, since money is being expended to fix them up and they will need to be maintained.

M. Warba said that he believed there wasn't anything that would preclude such maintenance costs to come out of the General Fund. He said if improvements need to be done to maintain the infrastructure of the City, funds could be used from the General Fund to assure that the investments made in the facilities are preserved.

S. Offen asked about proposed park enforcement staff and ramifications of their

enforcement power. He also asked if they would be park staff.

C. Smith responded that details are still being works out and that they will provide more information to the Commission in the future. He said enforcement staff would be park employees.

M. Warba said the intent of enforcement staff would be educational; to be stewards of the system.

C. Smith added that they currently have a staff person that meets and greets facility/shelter renters on site, providing a pro-active customer service. He said staff is also able to notify them of issues that need to be addressed before they become notified by a citizen.

J. Lawter asked if the program would start before the end of this fiscal year.

C. Smith said, yes.

T. Doyle asked if enforcement staff would be uniformed, suggesting that they wear something more official than current staff uniforms, maybe like a cap.

C. Smith responded enforcement staff would wear park identifiable uniforms.

Received and Filed

C NEW BUSINESS

C-1 12-0287

Resolution to Recommend Allowing DTE to Plant 23 Trees in Riverside Park to Satisfy the Conflicting Land Use Buffer Section of Chapter 62 of the City Code

C. Smith gave an overview of the resolution, explaining the proposal, noting that the area would look a lot better with the added landscape buffer as well as the community benefit of a new substation. He said there will be no change to the property lines.

Scott Trowbridge, DTE Energy was present to respond to questions from the Commission.

S. Offen asked what currently is on the proposed DTE substation site.

S. Trowbridge responded that it is a paved area with storage trailers and other equipment.

S. Offen asked if DTE had considered other areas on the parcel where the substation could be located where it wouldn't be up to the lot line. He said he would like to see people follow the zoning laws and make sure they are able to build within the limitations and able to install the screening, while he also wants the City to be a good neighbor.

S. Trowbridge said that due to them being up to the edge of the floodplain they are limited, noting that the further south they go, towards the Huron River, the more mitigation would be involved. He added that there is also a lot of underground conduit on the site that has been prebuilt and will help facilitate the construction on the proposed substation.

S. Offen asked about maintenance of the proposed trees and requested that the industry standard for warranties be applied to the proposed trees, in the case they

might need to be replaced.

S. Trowbridge and staff responded that they believed the standard warranty was one (1) year.

C. Smith added that he is in agreement with S. Offen in that whenever possible, the zoning code should be followed; however, after much planning with the City's Planning Dept they realized that this is an area where such a proposal could be acceptable. He explained that the proposal will move forward to the City's Zoning Board of Appeals with the recommendation of PAC, and will ultimately end up going before the City Planning Commission for a final approval.

C. Taylor asked if there will be a vertical or noise element to the substation.

S. Trowbridge responded that currently there is a very tall cell tower on site, that is over 100 ft tall, and DTE's proposed equipment will all be 16 ft or less in height. He said the vertical element would include raising the grade approx four (4) ft from the current grade due to the floodplain issue. He said noise levels could possible include hearing a hum when at the fence line.

C. Taylor asked about park usage near the proposed substation, noting that there is a field hockey field nearby.

C. Smith said that the field hockey usage wouldn't be negatively impacted, adding that there currently are trees separating the field from the DTE site. He said he liked the idea of having a 15 ft landscape buffer between the park and a substation.

T. Doyle asked if DTE had an alternative plan or sites for the substation if the City denied their request.

S. Trowbridge said it would have to be a decision made by DTE, and if they couldn't expand it would mean energy load issues such that they will have to make decisions on whether they can serve new developments in the area. He reiterated that this site has existing underground circuit cabling that can bring the source of power into the substation easily making it the most economically feasible at this time.

J. Lawter asked about the layout of the trees.

S. Trowbridge said that he believes there would be seven (7) existing trees that would stay, and the trees would go back away from the property line with a protective fence above a retaining wall.

G. Nystuen asked if the new parking being installed would impact this proposal, and if additional trees would be added to the parking lot.

C. Smith responded that the parking is far enough west that it wouldn't be impacted.

A. Kuras said that they have requested additional trees be added to the parking lot, with the hope that DTE could provide them, and are currently awaiting a response from DTE on this request.

T. Doyle asked if the possible run-off from the grade increase has been reviewed since it could flood the new tree plantings.

S. Trowbridge said that they are proposing a stone surface for the site, whereas the current site is paved, and there will be a detention pond with a silt basin, on the south

border of the site, that will capture the storm water.

C. Smith read the resolution.

RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND ALLOWING DTE TO PLANT 23 TREES AT RIVERSIDE PARK TO SATISFY THE CONFLICTING LAND USE BUFFER SECTION OF CHAPTER 62 OF THE CITY CODE

Whereas, DTE needs to construct the Buckler Substation at their Ann Arbor Service Center site to meet community energy demands;

Whereas, Buckler substation abuts Riverside Park;

Whereas, DTE intends to request a variance from this requirement from the ZBA;

Whereas, the 15 foot proposed buffer zone currently serves a similar purpose;

Whereas, DTE will plant 23 trees of type and quality identified by the City Forester and landscape the 15 foot buffer to City specifications;

Whereas, Parks staff have reviewed the proposed plans and are supportive of them;

RESOLVED, That the Park Advisory Commission recommend allowing DTE to plant 23 trees at Riverside Park to satisfy the conflicting land use buffer section of Chapter 62 of the City Code.

Motion made by Doyle, seconded by Levin, to approve the Resolution That the Park Advisory Commission recommend allowing DTE to plant 23 trees at Riverside Park to satisfy the conflicting land use buffer section of Chapter 62 of the City Code.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

T. Doyle suggested renaming the resolution to state 'a minimum of 23 trees or 30 trees', which could satisfy the request for additional trees in the park.

S. Trowbridge said he didn't see that particular issue as being a problem; however, he hadn't discussed the issue with his company yet.

The Commission accepted the friendly amendment to the motion.

S. Offen asked if the use of the trees in other areas of the park would undermine the intent of the conflicting land use buffer zoning code.

J. Lawter said he supported the proposal and asked if the code required 23 trees, given the language that one tree per 15 ft was required.

The Commission agreed that since City staff had reviewed the plans and the City Forester would be allowed to determine the type of trees, they felt it would be in the City's best interest.

C. Smith suggested adding a 'Whereas Clause' stating, "Whereas parking lot improvements are planned for Riverside Park for the 2012 season and would benefit from additional landscaping," followed by a Resolved clause stating, " that PAC also recommends that DTE provide an additional ten (10) trees for landscaping purposes for the parking lot".

The Commission accepted the suggested language as a friendly amendment to the

motion.

A motion was made by Doyle, seconded by Levin, that the Resolution be Amended to include the additional language: "Whereas parking lot improvements are planned for Riverside Park for the 2012 season and would benefit from additional landscaping, and Be it a Resolved that the Parks Advisory Commission also recommends that DTE provide an additional ten (10) trees for landscaping purposes for the parking lot". On a voice vote, the vote was as follows with the Chair declared the motion carried.

Unanimously passed.

Yeas: 8 - Barrett, RAC Rep. Berla, Chair Berson Grand, Lawter, Nystuen, Offen, Levin, and Doyle

Nays: 0

Absent: 1 - Chapman

C-2 12-0288

Resolution to Approve a Contract with L.C. Construction LLC to Renovate the Restrooms at the Ann Arbor Senior Center

C. Smith gave an overview of the resolution, explaining the proposal and need to meet the Barrier Free Code at the Senior Center facility, noting that the improvements were called for in the last version of the PROS Plan.

The Commission asked for the timeframe of proposed work and if the facility would be closed during the renovations.

C. Smith answered that work was proposed to begin in May 2012 and would take approximately one (1) month, and the facility would be closed during that time, with activities relocated during that month.

C. Smith read the resolution.

RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF A CONTRACT WITH L.C. CONSTRUCTION LLC TO RENOVATE THE RESTROOMS AT THE ANN ARBOR SENIOR CENTER (\$32,000.00)

Whereas, The restrooms at the Ann Arbor Senior Center are in need of renovations to meet the Barrier Free Code and better serve facility patrons,

Whereas, L.C. Construction LLC submitted the lowest responsible bid in response to ITB 4198,

Whereas, L.C. Construction LLC is exempt from Human Rights approval because they only have three employees, and

Whereas, Funding for the project is available in the approved FY2012 Park Maintenance and Capital Improvements Millage;

RESOLVED, That the Park Advisory Commission recommend approval of a contract with L.C. Construction LLC to renovate the Ann Arbor Senior Center Restrooms for \$32,000.00 and authorize a construction contingency of \$3,200.00 (10%) to cover potential contract change orders to be approved by the City Administrator.

Motion made by Doyle, seconded by Berla, to approve the Resolution to

recommend to City Council, That the Park Advisory Commission recommend approval of a contract with L.C. Construction LLC to renovate the Ann Arbor Senior Center Restrooms for \$32,000.00 and authorize a construction contingency of \$3,200.00 (10%) to cover potential contract change orders to be approved by the City Administrator.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

The Commission was glad to see multiple bidders on the proposal.

On a voice vote, the vote was as follows with the Chair declared the motion carried.

Unanimously passed.

Yeas: 8 - Barrett, RAC Rep. Berla, Chair Berson Grand, Lawter, Nystuen, Offen, Levin, and Doyle

Nays: 0

Absent: 1 - Chapman

C-3 12-0289

Resolution to Recommend Approval of a Contract with Fonson, Inc. to Renovate Roads and Parking Lots, Construct Pathways and Improve Stormwater Management at Buhr Park and Cobblestone Farm

Amy Kuras, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the updates on the proposal and the identified needs of Buhr Park, noting that construction would start in the fall 2012 with completion by spring 2013, and the park remaining open during construction.

S. Offen asked if there would be any impact on scheduling of events at Cobblestone Farms during construction.

A. Kuras said they intend to work with the contractor to have alternative parking available, either on the grass or in the other parking lot, while they work on one (1) parking lot at a time.

S. Offen asked about the impact of construction on the timing of the pool season.

C. Smith explained that they hope to have the parking lot, that serves the pool, completed by May, when the pool opens. He said they are aware that it will be a challenge to coordinate the timing of all elements involved. He said on a positive note, there was enough space for alternative parking.

D. Barrett asked if Rec. and Ed. had been informed of the proposals since it could interfere with their scheduling of games in the ballfields.

C. Smith responded, yes.

C. Taylor asked about the advantage to the park users who would use the connection between Essex Street to get to Buhr Park.

A. Kuras explained that currently there is no pedestrian connection from Essex Street to the ice arena or park, and a path system would facilitate non-motorized users to access the facilities without having to cross the lawn, and would also connect to the existing paths.

G. Nystuen asked about the possibility of impervious surfaces for the proposed area

of work.

A. Kuras responded that they would be able to accomplish the same environmental goals as with impervious pavements through using storm water basins which are more cost effective.

C. Smith added that this is a great example of how the City has preserving their older existing facilities.

C. Smith read the resolution.

RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF A CONTRACT WITH FONSON, INC. TO RENOVATE THE ROADS AND PARKING LOTS, CONSTRUCT PATHWAYS AND IMPROVE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AT BUHR PARK AND COBBLESTONE FARM (\$786,536.00)

Whereas, The roads and parking lots at Buhr Park and Cobblestone Farm are in need of renovation, and the path system through the park is incomplete;

Whereas, the Stormwater Management Plan completed in 2000 included expansion of the Cobblestone parking lot, construction of connector pathways, and additional stormwater management;

Whereas, Fonson, Inc. submitted the lowest responsible bid in response to ITB 4196;

Whereas, Fonson, Inc. received Human Rights approval on January 19, 2012; and

Whereas, Funding for the project is available in the approved FY2012 Park Maintenance and Capital Improvements Millage and the approved FY2012 Park Rehabilitation and Development Millage;

RESOLVED, That the Park Advisory Commission recommend approval of a contract with Fonson, Inc. to renovate the Buhr Park and Cobblestone Farm roads and parking lots, construct connector pathways and provide additional storm water management for \$786,536.00 and authorize a construction contingency of \$78,654.00 (10%) to cover potential contract change orders to be approved by the City Administrator.

A motion was made by Offen, seconded by Lawter, That the Park Advisory Commission recommend to City Council approval of a contract with Fonson, Inc. to renovate the Buhr Park and Cobblestone Farm roads and parking lots, construct connector pathways and provide additional storm water management for \$786,536.00 and authorize a construction contingency of \$78,654.00 (10%) to cover potential contract change orders to be approved by the City Administrator. On a voice vote as follows, the Chair declared the motion carried.

Unanimously passed.

Yeas: 8 - Barrett, RAC Rep. Berla, Chair Berson Grand, Lawter, Nystuen, Offen, Levin, and Doyle

Nays: 0

Absent: 1 - Chapman

D COMMISSION PROPOSED BUSINESS

E REPORTS FROM PARKS AND RECREATION MANAGER

C. Smith gave a brief update on the Argo Dam construction project.

He noted that Huron Hills Golf Course would be open starting next week Monday, March 5, due to the nice weather.

He said staff have begun to meet to discuss the millage renewal efforts and will be presenting background information on the millage to City Council at their March 12th meeting, which will also be presented to PAC at the March meeting.

He informed the Commission that the Farmer's Market Manager, Molly Notarianni will be leaving her position in the end of March for new opportunities.

F REPORTS FROM MANAGER OF FIELD OPERATIONS

None

G REPORT FROM RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION

T. Berla gave a report noting that they had heard from Rec and Ed that they were excited about all the proposed work to be done on the ball field diamonds.

He informed the Commission that School Representative Sara Aeschbach would be retiring this summer and she would be greatly missed.

H REPORTS FROM RELEVANT COMMISSIONS, COMMITTEES, BOARDS AND/OR TASK FORCES

G. Nystuen informed the Commission that the Environmental Commission is working on the sustainability efforts of the City and the forums have been well attended and worthwhile.

J. Grand said that later in the spring the Sustainability Committee would present their completed report to the Commission.

I PUBLIC COMMENTARY - GENERAL (3 Minutes per Speaker)

None

J CLOSED SESSION

None

K TRANSMITTALS

K-1 12-0290 City Council Items Update

Received and Filed

K-2 12-0291 Park Projects Update

Received and Filed

K-3 12-0292 City of Ann Arbor 2008 - 2013 Park Maintenance and Capital Improvements Millage Status

Received and Filed

L ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by RAC Rep. Berla, seconded by Levin, that the meeting be Adjourned at 6:16 p.m. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried unanimously.

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