

PARKS & TRAILS COMMISSION MINUTES
January 26, 2015

Chair Kalkofen called the regular meeting of the Baxter Parks and Trails Commission to order at 4:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Jim Kalkofen, Commissioner Mari Holderness, Ken Hasskamp, Gail Brecht and Council Liaison Quinn Nystrom.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Lori Thramer

STAFF PRESENT: Community Development (CD) Director Josh Doty

OTHERS PRESENT: Steve Barrows

Chair Kalkofen welcomed Council Liaison Nystrom to the Parks and Trails Commission. He asked her to tell the Commission about herself. Council Liaison Nystrom gave her educational and professional background. She informed the Commission that she grew up ice skating at LT Park. Council Liaison Nystrom stated that she is excited to serve on City Council and the Parks Commission.

Approval of the Minutes

Commissioner Brecht noted that she is on an advisory board and not the County board as indicated in the minutes.

MOTION by Commissioner Brecht, seconded by Commissioner Holderness to approve the regular meeting minutes of November 24, 2014 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Jewelwood Park Update

CD Director Doty stated that the Council discussed this park at a council workshop. He said that the City Council would like to see the comprehensive plan move forward before Jewelwood Park is decided. He stated that the City Council was interested to know how the Commission would rank projects within each priority list of the implementation plan. CD Director Doty stated that the City Council did not say no to Jewelwood park, but that they wanted to be able to review the Parks Plan first.

Comprehensive Plan Update

Parks Plan Updates

CD Director Doty noted that the majority of the updates were small and then explained a few of the more substantive items. On page 4 was the addition of the boat landing column. On page 5 was the correction of the trail name for Fitquest and the correct name is Cragun's Nature Learning Trail. The Commission had discussion about the wording of the Cragun's trail and in the end decided to leave it as is. CD Director Doty noted that eventually this trail will need to be looked at to get all parties involved in the future. Commissioner Brecht agreed that a meeting should take place to see how to manage the trail system. It was decided to place Fitquest in parenthesis behind the correct name. He also noted that Riverview is now paved and may not be considered passive. Commissioner Brecht stated that it is a destination park and should remain passive even if it is paved. After the Commission reviewed the meaning of passive trails, it was decided to remove Riverview from the passive category.

CD Director Doty stated that on page 10 there was the addition of a column regarding the pavilions and evaluating the structures. Staff has done an evaluation of the OK pavilions with a structural engineer and just received the report today. The report will be provided at the next meeting once staff has had time to review it more thoroughly. CD Director Doty stated that glancing at the report, there were some areas of the pavilions that needed to be reviewed and repairs might be needed. However, we also need to consider if the repairs would be ongoing, then it may not be cost effective to make repairs. Staff will need to recommend which repairs should be made if any and present that to the Commission at their next meeting. Chair Kalkofen asked if it was only the OK pavilions that had been reviewed. The city reviewed two Pavilions at OK park and one at LT park. Chair Kalkofen asked if an estimate would be given going forward. CD Director Doty stated that once staff looks at the repairs or replacement costs, this information would eventually come to the Commission. CD Director Doty turned to page 13, the Parks and Trails system map, he indicated the change needed for the Paul Bunyan Trail. He also noted the changes to the legend to make it more accurate. CD Director Doty stated the snowmobile clubs asked that the snowmobile routes are noted on the trail map. He further explained the locations of the current snowmobile routes. Chair Kalkofen asked what the Paul Bunyan State Trail Safety Re-Route Options was on the legend. CD Director Doty stated the Glory Road crossing is dangerous and so the plan identifies three potential safety re-routes for the trail. Having this in the plan is important should funding become available. Chair Kalkofen asked how this could affect development in those areas. CD Director Doty stated that if a developer came in and presented a project, at that time staff would recognize that area as a potential safety re-route location and try to work with property owners. Commissioner Holderness asked if all of the lots sold by the boat landing on Whipple. CD Director Doty stated that the lot next to the boat landing sold and a house would be built there. There is one or two other lots but the idea was to blend a potential park with the boat landing so it no-longer makes sense.

Implementation Periodization

CD Director Doty stated that City Council had asked the Commission to prioritize projects within each “short” “mid” and “long” term categories. Chair Kalkofen stated that is a little difficult being there is no knowledge of the cost and that some items are waiting on feasibility studies. In addition, we don’t know what the needs are for repair to existing pavilions. Commissioner Holderness stated that if the pavilions need repair due to safety issues than that needs to be the first priority list. The Commissioners all agreed on the pavilions needing to be a priority. Commissioner Brecht stated that there are other persons/groups that have interests and potential grants for projects that could change the dynamics of a priority list.

The Commission decided that No. 7 on the trails has been approved and should have no color behind it. Commissioner Brecht asked if No. 12 was a safe routes to school grant. CD Director Doty stated yes and that it was the segment that connected Forestview to Mississippi Overlook Park. Councilman Barrows explained that he had asked for ranking of the short term items to understand what is the higher priority. The Commission understood his requested, however noted that priority lists do change. The Commission decided to rate the top 10 short list items.

Commissioner Holderness stated that a few priorities were the sand blowing at Whipple Beach, Jewelwood Park and safety issues should come first. Commissioner Brecht agreed that the safety items such as OK park pavilions needed to take first priority. The Commission agreed. Commissioner Brecht asked how the trails are inspected. CD Director Doty stated that the Parks Department is always looking at the trails and citizens also call in items if they see something.

The Commission reviewed the existing park improvements list. The Commission agreed that the pavilions were top priority. It was decided that at OK park the trails and practice field would be moved to “mid” and evaluating park accessibility and a joint powers agreement were moved to “ongoing”. Chair Kalkofen asked that the word “safety” be added behind the tennis courts. The Commission asked that a meeting with the joint powers gets set-up prior to the end of the year.

The Commission moved onto LT park and moved the ice skating rink to “mid” and asked that “safety” is added behind evaluate pavilion. Commissioner Brecht asked about the safety of the pavilion. CD Director Doty indicated that there may be some bracing issues and that there are major issues with one portion of the roof. However, overall this pavilion seemed to be in good shape. The trail portion was removed as it was believed to be completed.

The Commission moved onto Whipple and noted that the ADA observation area was in the 2015 budget. The accessible playground was moved to “ongoing”. Commissioner Hasskamp asked about disc golf. Commissioner Holderness would like to see the disc golf incorporated for the 20-30 year old residents. CD Director Doty stated that the Commission had previously decided that disc golf was not a priority at this time. The Commission asked if they could see a cost analysis of the LED lighting project.

The Commission decided to move evaluate park accessibility for Southdale and Berrywood to “ongoing”.

The Commission looked at the new/expansion list and decided that Jewelwood park needed to remain priority. Mississippi Overlook park they removed signage and moved the parking lot and access improvement to “ongoing”.

The Commission looked at the trails and moved the 371 crossing to “on going”. CD Director Doty informed the Commission that there is a feasibility study on several of the pedestrian studies. Commissioner Brecht stated that the feasibility study should be short term and depending on the cost determine if it remains a priority. Commissioner Hasskamp asked if the DNR has said anything about the Paul Bunyan re-route. CD Director Doty stated that there has not been any specific conversation to plan a re-route but that it would be a joint project if we did plan a re-route. They determined that No. 8, 9, 10 on the trail list should be moved to “ongoing” and No. 12 to “long” and the Jewelwood trail remain a priority.

Private Memorial Dedications

CD Director Doty noted that due to the time, and that there is the next meeting coming in that this item would be put on the next agenda. Chair Kalkofen asked that staff determine the two programs the work best for Baxter. CD Director Doty stated that since there are so many options, staff wanted the Commission to see what other communities are doing prior to recommending a program. However, he also said he understood and agreed to come back to the next meeting with a recommendation.

Approved Meeting Dates for 2015/Next Meeting

Meeting dates will be discussed at the February meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for February 23, 2015 at 4:00 p.m.

Other Business

None

Adjournment

MOTION by Commissioner Holderness, seconded by Commissioner Hasskamp to adjourn the meeting at 5:45p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

Chair Jim Kalkofen

Shanna Newman CD Clerk