

PARKS & TRAILS COMMISSION MINUTES
January 27, 2014

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, Commissioners Lori Thramer, Mari Holderness, Ken Hasskamp and Council Liaison Jim Klein.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Gail Brecht

STAFF PRESENT: Community Development (CD) Director Josh Doty

OTHERS PRESENT: None

Approval of the Minutes

MOTION by Commissioner Hasskamp, seconded by Commissioner Thramer to approve the regular meeting minutes of December 16, 2013 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion of Parks and Trails Component of Comprehensive Plan Update

Goals

Chair Kalkofen directed the Commission to page 6 of the comprehensive plan goals and policies. He asked if anyone had any questions on any of the pages prior to page 6, Item 9 (Continue to provide for the park, recreation, trail and open space needs of the Baxter community). The Commission had no comments and Commissioner Hasskamp indicated that he agreed the update has been well written.

Commissioner Hasskamp stated that he would like to see “safety” applied somewhere to the goals regarding trails for non-motorized use/transportation. CD Director Doty suggested under Number 3-C add “require safe sidewalks and/or trails in new development and redevelopment projects”. The Commission agreed with the change.

Council Liaison Klein asked how Policies 1-B was brought into the plan. CD Director Doty and Chair Kalkofen explained the conversations that Long Range Planning Commission had had with Stantec and the current working relationship with the school district.

Commissioner Holderness asked about the potential to change the plan in the future if there is a goal that doesn’t work in the future. CD Director Doty stated that there is flexibility with the verbiage, Chair Kalkofen agreed.

CD Director Doty thanked the Commission for their hard work on the comprehensive plan. The Commission agreed that the verbiage is very well written.

Live Mapping

CD Director Doty noted that at the past meetings some areas that were discussed, he had an update for the senior development being built on Excelsior Dr. He provided a drawing showing a trail connection from that development to the Paul Bunyan Trail. The Commission discussed the connection, what type of trail it would be and that the developer is paying for the trail.

CD Director Doty spoke of the Mississippi Overlook Park and the possibility of a southwest park. The question to the Commission is do they want to expand or create a new park. Council Liaison Klein asked if it was a possibility to purchase some of the Potlatch land. CD Director Doty stated that staff could contact landowners; but at this point, our goal is to plan what the city wants first. Chair Kalkofen gave the newer Commissioners background on the logging and trails that were previously approved in the Mississippi Overlook Park. The Commission decided that any additional land that could be purchased on the Mississippi River should be the priority over another usable park with swing sets etc.

The Commission discussed the possible need to acquire additional easements for trails in the future. CD Director Doty informed the Commission that the Nordic Ski Club is interested in a trail from the school down to the Mississippi Overlook Park. The Commission discussed how that trail could be created and the potential conflict between skiing and hiking trails. The Commission discussed the Barrett and Potlatch property as potential access points. CD Director Doty asked the Commission what is more important access or more river frontage. The Commission agreed that improving access and securing additional river property should both be goals.

CD Director Doty moved the Commission to the north part of Baxter, to the FitQuest area. The trails are already mapped out and City boundary is noted. Council Liaison Klein suggested that the city annex the property and put a golf disk course there. The Commission discussed marking the trail and putting flyers out to businesses in the area to promote use of the current trail. Chair Kalkofen asked staff to reach out to other property owners regarding the trail to see what their intentions are for the trail. CD Director Doty will follow-up with the property owners for an update at the next meeting.

The Commission discussed the Jewelwood Drive park. Chair Kalkofen stated that a park in southwest Baxter would be similar to the size of Jewelwood as a community/residential park. Chair Kalkofen suggested that the Jewelwood park be placed on the agenda for the next meeting. Council Liaison Klein stated that if a community meeting were to be held the people from that area would show up and tell the Commission what they would like to see in that park.

CD Director Doty informed the Commission that the Whipple Beach trail connection is challenging being the right-of-way is no longer owned by the City and the county would have to get involved in the trail connection. There is no current easement, the city would have to purchase land or an easement from a private property owner and then get county approval to place trails on their land. Commissioner Hasskamp would like to explore the idea with the county. Council Liaison Klein does not think it would get used very much. CD Director Doty stated that he will contact the county to see if it is a possibility.

Chair Kalkofen stated that he had driven over to the former golf course area. CD Director Doty showed a map of the area and the location of the Paul Bunyan Trail and potential trail areas. They found that there were several areas that trails can be placed throughout the property that would connect nicely to the existing roads and businesses.

Former water treatment plant site for a park was determined to be lower on the list as there are parks within close proximity.

Parks Master Plan

CD Director Doty explained that the existing parks plan should be adopted with the comprehensive plan. He asked if the Commission is comfortable with the current parks plan being placed in the comprehensive plan. The consensus was to place the plans in the comprehensive plan. Chair Kalkofen asked that a review of each park to be placed on the agenda for next month.

City Council Actions**Approved Inclusion of Trail in Woida Street Project**

CD Director Doty informed the Commission that the Council did include the trail with the street project.

Approved Purchase of Pavilions

CD Director Doty informed the Commission that the Council did approve the purchase of the pavilions for Whipple and Berrywood Park. Chair Kalkofen asked if the Commission would be involved in the design or the building. CD Director Doty stated that the City Council approved a steel, single pitch roof with concealed fasteners and rock corners. This is going to be a state contract. Chair Kalkofen asked what a state contract is. It was explained that the state contract is where anyone can bid on the project, it is the more economical choice. Chair Kalkofen asked if there was going to be additional outlets and permanent picnic tables as the Commission had discussed in previous meeting. CD Director Doty stated that staff will report back at the next meeting.

Chair Kalkofen asked that staff look into purchasing the lot to the south of Berrywood Park as a buffer zone to the park. CD Director Doty would have to bring the land purchase to the Council to see if there is any interest in the land purchase. Commissioner Hasskamp asked what the importance of the land purchase would be. Chair Kalkofen stated that the pavilion is going to take up a portion of the park, having the extra land would allow a buffer from and would give the park some extra space to grow. CD Director Doty will report back at the next meeting.

Other Business**2014 Meeting Dates**

CD Director Doty asked for a motion to accept the meeting dates for 2014, it was inadvertently missed at the last meeting.

MOTION by Commissioner Thramer, seconded by Commissioner Holderness to approve the 2014 meeting dates. Motion carried unanimously.

City Property along 371 Corridor

CD Director Doty noted that this property had been discussed at the last meeting. Staff found the deed for the property and it is included in the packet. This was former MnDot property that they determined was not needed for right of way. The deed does state that it is only to be park property. If the land is not going to be a park than it would go back to the state. CD Director Doty noted that there is no other park in the area and there is no access. With the comprehensive plan being updated this area needs to be considered park land or open space. Chair Kalkofen stated that an easement might be worthy of looking to for the future.

Council Liaison Klein asked for information on the strip of land on College Rd. CD Director Doty indicated that it is currently labeled green space. The majority of the Commission agreed

to keep it green space.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for February 24, 2014 at 4:00 p.m.

Adjournment

MOTION by Commissioner Thramer, seconded by Commissioner Hasskamp to adjourn the meeting at 5:47 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

Chair Jim Kalkofen

Shanna Newman CD Clerk