

**PARKS & TRAILS COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**February 24, 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 Gail Brecht, Mari Holderness, Ken Hasskamp and Council Liaison Jim Klein.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Lori Thrumer

STAFF PRESENT: Community Development (CD) Director Josh Doty and City Administrator Gordon Heitke

OTHERS PRESENT: None

**Approval of the Minutes**

**MOTION** by Commissioner Holderness, seconded by Commissioner Hasskamp to approve the regular meeting minutes of January 27, 2014 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**Discussion of Parks and Trails Component of Comprehensive Plan Update**

CD Director Doty stated that staff would like to take the work this Commission has done to Long Range Planning Commission next month. He asked the Commission to think about anything else that the Commission would like to see included in the comprehensive plan and the priorities for each park and trails.

**Jewelwood Park Land**

CD Director Doty stated that this park is 4.02 acres, there is no wetland and there is city water and sewer available. Chair Kalkofen asked if the Commission has driven by this park, the Commission indicated that they have. The Commission noted how wooded the park land is and the number of homes around this park land. Chair Kalkofen also noted that there is not a park or playground in this area. Chair Kalkofen asked each Commissioner for their opinion. All Commissioners agreed it should be a small park with park benches and a playground however the majority of the trees need to stay as much as possible.

CD Director Doty explained how a trail could link to Clearwater Rd. if the larger property to the west develops.

Council Liaison Klein stated that the residents in that area need to be involved in what is going to be installed in that park. The Commission agreed that a public hearing would be held after the Commission decided if this park is a priority.

**Fitquest Trail**

CD Director Doty stated there are two different maps of this area. The first one is showing the property boundaries that are both in Baxter and outside of the City limits. CD Director Doty stated that a few of the property owners were contacted, however staff does not have an update yet. Baxter does maintain the chip trails on the City side.

Commissioner Brecht stated that she has walked that area and enjoys when she travels finding a

natural trail near a hotel that gives a person a chance to get out and walk a close trail. She felt that it should be maintained. Commissioner Hasskamp and Holderness stated that they are unfamiliar with this trail. Commissioner Hasskamp stated that he has concern that the trails are not known about or signage is not present for people to know the location of the trails.

Chair Kalkofen asked that trail and park signage be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

The Commission discussed the possibility of annexation of the area that includes the trail section. CD Director Doty stated that is a bigger discussion and would need to be taken to the City Council for consideration. The Commission asked CD Director Doty to continue to research what the intent is with the other land owners and maintenance costs for the trail.

### **Memorywood to Whipple Beach Trail**

CD Director Doty updated the Commission regarding the county piece of land; he spoke to the County to see if they are agreeable to placing a trail on county land linking it to the park. There is a 5 step process with the county. The process is completing an application, staff review, public comment period (30 day period), a special parks advisory board meeting and then on to the County Board for approval. There is forest management on this land and the location of the trail will be critical to possibly receiving approval. On the map provided in the packet, CD Director Doty sketched a trail possibility along the property line and then a trail along an existing logging trail. In speaking with county staff it was indicated that a paved trail might be a tougher sell to their board if proposed through the middle of the forest. CD Director Doty stated that currently there is a piece of land for sale that would/could give access for the trail. He stated that being that the county hasn't seen the proposed trail that purchasing the land might be premature. He asked the Commission is interested in a chip trail verses a paved trail.

CD Director Doty stated that if the paved trail is the only option than maybe the Commission should consider a loop on Cedar Scenic to Clearwater Rd.

Chair Kalkofen stated there is a chip trail going down to the Mississippi River and there is one at Fitquest too. Commissioner Brecht liked the idea of the loop on Cedar Scenic Rd. She stated a lot of people walk the Clearwater Rd. and Cedar Scenic is a narrow road, a trail would get people off the road and onto the trail. Commissioner Holderness agreed that looped trails are good for those who want to know the distance of the loop.

Commissioner Brecht stated that she is on the Crow Wing County Parks Board and the process is not complicated and the majority of the applications they receive do get approved or sent back for slight modifications. She thought the idea of walking through the woods was a better option. Chair Kalkofen asked if just an easement would be needed on the land that is currently for sale. CD Director Doty stated that there are a few different options for the trail, permission from property owner for an easement or the City could purchase the land and grant an easement on the property and then re-sell the lot or keep it as a buffer for the trail.

Chair Kalkofen asked if there is a requirement for trails in the neighborhoods. Paved trails have a specific size and chip trails should be close. CD Director Doty responded that he would have to look into that question to see if there is an actual requirement.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Hasskamp, seconded by Commissioner Brecht to direct staff to investigate and apply for a wood chip trail on the County owned land bordering Oakwood Dr. to

the County using the 5 step process for approval. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Live Mapping**

CD Director Doty would like some additional feedback on the southeast corner of Baxter. If an additional park is wanted or an eastern park is wanted or needed. It was decided that the east area is not of high priority.

Commissioner Brecht stated that the Nordic Ski Club wanting to expand down towards Mississippi Overlook park is a great idea. CD Director Doty stated that they submitted a formal letter regarding this trail. Commissioner Brecht stated that there trails are very well maintained and are wide enough to be groomed.

CD Director Doty stated that the Commissions top two goals for the area was to preserve riverfront property and improve access to the park. A third goal could be making the trail connection between the park and Forestview.

The Commission discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the Lord of Life and the Potlatch property. Chair Kalkofen asked that CD Director Doty contact both owners to see what each owner could potentially sell the property for. CD Director Doty stated there is a lot to think about when purchasing land and maintaining/developing the land.

CD Director Doty asked if the former water treatment plant should be considered open space instead of a park. The Commission agreed being there is a park across the street that this land is not needed as a park. It's use should be considered open space, as the most use it gets is with snowmobilers using it to access the trail.

Chair Kalkofen asked if the Riverview Park map showing the trails is going to be done this year. CD Director Doty indicated that the trail were scheduled to be done this year.

Commissioner Brecht asked for further information on who will be using the soccer fields at Forestview since Brainerd put artificial turf down and that is now going to be the priority soccer field.

### **Parks Master Plan**

CD Director Doty stated that the master park plan maps are included just for an additional review prior to placing them in the comprehensive plan. He asked if there were any comments on the approved plans or if these were OK to go into the comprehensive plan. Chair Kalkofen asked if the Parks Department forwards any reports on to staff for items that need to be replaced, repaired or in need of updating. CD Director Doty stated that what the plans show is what is approved. Looking at what is needed in the future is different.

### **Other Business**

#### **Park Pavilion Update**

CD Director Doty walked through the two different pavilion packages with the Commission. Staff is currently preparing for the construction of the pavilions. Council approval included the two color medal roofs that will be lower maintenance, the column colors and stone work match the existing facility. The Commission reviewed the kitchen facility layout at Whipple and was informed of the number of outlets that was requested at the previous meeting. The total was 24 outlets for crock pots and roasters. Commissioner Brecht asked about the exterior lighting. CD

Director Doty stated that there are interior and exterior lights.

CD Director Doty stated that the Berrywood pavilion is a little simpler without the kitchen; the outlets are within the stone columns. The lighting is the same as the Whipple pavilion.

Chair Kalkofen asked if the land purchase next to the park for a buffer had been looked into. CD Director Doty stated that it has not been brought forward to the Council level at this point.

CD Director Doty reviewed the site plan for both pavilions noting the sidewalks, planters and grill areas.

CD Director Doty stated that there were 3 public bids that have contracts with the state. Staff picked St. Croix Recreation Fun Playground Inc. due to past experience and the knowledge of their work. Council Liaison Klein asked what the pricing was, CD Director Doty stated that Public Works Director Walter handled the bids. Staff is anticipating the pavilions being completed by the end of June 2014 with a final completion date of August 2, 2014.

### **Paul Bunyan Trail Update**

City Administrator Heitke joined the meeting. He reported he had met with the DNR and discussed a joint powers agreement which would allow for existing city trails to be used as part of the Paul Bunyan Trail system to connect the new Crow Wing State Park segment to the existing Paul Bunyan Trail in Baxter. The DNR will provide signage and will make any improvements necessary to serve their purposes and meet their standards. The DNR is not expecting to spend much on the city trails as this is probably a temporary situation as they look at opportunities for a permanent multi-use trail for walkers, bikers and snowmobiles. Administrator Heitke stated that Commission should identify the desire for a permanent connecting trail when preparing a trails plan for the comprehensive plan.

He also reported a local snowmobile club inquired about the GRE power-line corridor being designated and maintained as a snowmobile trail. CD Director Doty stated it is currently on the parks future trail list.

### **Next Meeting**

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

### **Adjournment**

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

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

---

Chair Jim Kalkofen

---

Shanna Newman CD Clerk