

PARKS & TRAILS COMMISSION MINUTES

August 22, 2016

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Jim Kalkofen, Commissioner Mari Holderness, Melissa Barrick, Ken Hasskamp and Council Liaison Quinn Nystrom

MEMBERS ABSENT: Gail Brecht

STAFF PRESENT: Community Development (CD) Director Josh Doty and Planner Matthew Gindele

OTHERS PRESENT: None

Approval of the Minutes

MOTION by Commissioner Holderness, seconded by Commissioner Hasskamp to approve the regular meeting minutes of July 25, 2016. Motion carried unanimously.

Dog Park and Fitness Equipment

Planner Gindele stated that staff did more research and looked at the site that the Commission is interested in using for the dog park. He reviewed the aerial with the Commission. It is roughly 2 acres, the site map showed the distances from the residential homes around this area. The packet also included the noise/barking dog and dogs running at large ordinance. Planner Gindele explained that staff does receive calls from residents that live next and up to several houses away regarding barking dogs. CD Director Doty added that staff is concerned about the barking dog ordinance, he explained the procedure that the police/animal control officer has to comply with in the ordinance. He wanted to make sure that the park is in a location that will not have an issue with noise. CD Director Doty stated that he strongly encouraged an area that could have a solid wall to control some of the noise.

Commissioner Barrick asked if the noise ordinance is only in effect after 10:00 pm, CD Director Doty stated that there are a few different “triggers” to the noise, one being a continuous barking for 3 minutes, regardless of the time. Commissioner Hasskamp stated that the rules almost stated that a dog is not welcome in Baxter, the regulations are so strict. CD Director Doty stated that people/residents are on both sides of the fence, one person moves in because of the strict regulations and the other does not want it to be so strict.

Planner Gindele stated that the parking lot issue was discussed at the last meeting. Staff has some concern about having residents going back and forth to the parking lot on a busy road that has no controlled intersection for pedestrian crossing. Commissioner Hasskamp stated that there may also be people that park on the road in front of residential homes. The Commission discussed what cost was included and not included in the \$50,000.00 price. Commissioner Hasskamp asked if a public notice would go out to the residents. CD Director Doty stated in this case, it would not be a required notification, however more of an informational meeting like Jewelwood Park.

Commissioner Holderness stated that she thinks that even if there is a different spot chosen, there could still be the same problems. Council Liaison Nystrom stated that the Clearwater Road area and Winkler Park both have wetlands and would be tougher to work with. CD Director Doty stated that he has previously worked with doggie daycares and he has found that a solid 6-8’ fence can keep the dogs from barking by not allowing the dogs to see people, cars and things on the other side of the fence that would normally make a dog bark. He stated that an 8 foot fence would require a variance by ordinance.

Commissioner Barrick asked what if the residents do not pick up after their pets, does that fall on parks

maintenance persons to take on. CD Director Doty stated that is correct, it would fall on the maintenance staff if the visitors were not responsible as well as mowing and garbage pick-up. Chair Kalkofen asked if there were any additional sites that were not close to homes, staff indicated that there is a lot of vacant land in the southern part of Baxter. The southern locations are not built-up, it would be a situation where people would know they are building/moving into a location that has an existing dog park, unlike the current proposed site where people live in the area and there is not a dog park. It was asked what the distance is from the Brainerd dog park to the nearest home. Staff will get a distance for the next meeting.

The Commission held conversation regarding the need for parking and what the regulations are for parking. CD Director Doty stated he will look into the regulations, however he did not think there was a lot of flexibility for the parking standards on public property. He indicated that the road crossing maybe the cheaper way to go. CD Director Doty stated that there are some updates in the works for County Rd. 48 and wondered if there are any possibilities of the crossing being installed at that time.

Planner Gindele moved onto the fitness equipment portion of the memo. He reviewed an estimate received from a company that deals this type of equipment. The estimate contained six different types of equipment, the cost and the installation was included in the price. The site prep was not included and would be an additional cost. Chair Kalkofen asked the Commission and staff which parks they thought would be the best location. The question is, do we place the equipment in a high traffic park or a smaller park that people will go to specifically for the use of the equipment.

Commissioner Holderness stated that she thought that the parents could bring their children and the adults could work out while the children play. The Commission discussed the different parks that would work, especially LT, Berrywood and Southdale as options. CD Director Doty stated that staff could look into the existing parks and bring a few options back to the Commission in the next meeting. Chair Kalkofen asked that staff find out the cost of the prep work for the equipment. Planner Gindele stated that he would also look into the surfacing, as there were a few different types. The Commission and staff had a discussion regarding the type of surfacing, what can be included with the purchase of some equipment and what may not be included.

Draft 5 Year CIP

CD Director Doty stated the changes that were moved into different time frames requested by the Commission and the addition of the 2017 requests, the dog park and fitness equipment. CD Director Doty stated that the funding out there with grants is unknown and that is why there are question marks next to the wind erosion project at Whipple Beach. He asked Commissioner Barrick if she would be willing to assist with the grant research. Commissioner Barrick informed the Commission of a few of the grants that she was aware of and the amounts varied as well. Commissioner Barrick asked when the CIP needed to be approved. CD Director Doty stated that he kept it on the agenda so items could be worked out and timeframes determined. He indicated that City Council is going to approve the capital improvement plan soon and approval should take place eventually. He stated that as soon as the Commission is ready to approve the plan it will go forward to the City Council. Chair Kalkofen asked if all of the 2016 money has been spent. CD Director Doty indicated that only Item "C" and "D" have not been completed at this point. The Commission discussed the cost of the park benches/picnic tables and garbage/recycling containers and would like to see staff bring the actual costs to a meeting. Council Liaison Nystrom asked if the memorial benches could be used in place of some of the planned park benches to reduce cost of the benches to the City. Staff indicated that is possible but not reliable as the memorial benches are donated by citizens and are placed in locations chosen by the donor. The Commission suggested placing another article in the next city newsletter to boost interest in the memorial bench program; they suggested including an actual picture of a bench in a current location in the next newsletter.

Chair Kalkofen asked if there were any development projects in the works for 2017. CD Director Doty stated that into 2017 there should be some money coming in late this year, early 2017. The Commission agreed it was

a good year to not have a lot of big projects. The Commission agreed that the last couple of years have been full of big projects and 2017 would be a nice break to work on a few smaller projects.

The Commission moved onto the 2018 project and CD Director Doty explained the grant possibilities with the Oakwood Drive and Safe Routes to School grants and the opportunity to work with the school district and the City of Brainerd. Staff explained how the safe routes to school ranking and importance of specific areas is determined.

Commissioner Barrick asked if some money should be placed in the CIP for 2017 in case the land across from City Hall is given to the City for a park. She further added that she has spoken to several people that would like to keep that lake on the “private” side versus having another potential Whipple Beach. CD Director Doty stated that he hadn’t heard any of those comments but was glad it was brought to staff’s attention. Chair Kalkofen stated that a person he knows teaches kayaking and thought it would be a great location to teach children. CD Director Doty stated that he had received a call about Community Ed teaching paddle boarding somewhere and maybe both of those activities could take place in this location or at Whipple Beach.

Commissioner Barrick asked if something should be put in place in the future for access to the Paul Bunyan Trail in Baxter. Currently people are parking on the street to gain access. CD Director Doty stated that the DNR has held conversation with the city regarding that location and currently there is not money slated for a land purchase in that area. He indicated that it is a concern that people are parking on a city street and should that area start to get built out with homes, it could be a problem. He further stated that it is the gateway to the City and it could be improved but a funding source would be difficult.

Chair Kalkofen asked that staff notify the appropriate persons that the poison ivy on the trail near Paris Rd. is getting very thick and there are a lot of children that play in the area.

Rotary Centennial Project

CD Director Doty stated that the Commission’s wishes for the Whipple Beach perimeter trail project was taken to the Council level. The Council was a little bit concerned being they felt the Rotary would want to tie their name/stamp to the project and wasn’t sure a trail would provide enough exposure. The Council suggested the 4th ball field at OK park was an option or the Whipple Beach handicap playground equipment or the LT pavilion. Council Liaison Nystrom mentioned the pedestrian bridge over 371, however she added that at this point no one knows who is going to pay for the study and the Rotary was not giving a budgeted amount for the centennial project, that made the bridge a little hard to offer as the project is going to have a very large price tag. Commissioner Holderness agreed with the ball field idea. Council Liaison Nystrom stated that she was stopped and asked about a pickle ball court. CD Director Doty stated that they are not limited to one application; the City is allowed to submit more than one. Chair Kalkofen noted that if the Rotary wants high visibility they may not pick something in the park, rather they may want something along or on 371. CD Director Doty stated that visibility could be seen too as the Cal Ripken tournament where people come from all over to play/cheer on teams.

Oakwood Trail Update

CD Director Doty stated that staff had a meeting today with the Camp regarding the trail. They reviewed the revised trail and staff felt that this meeting went better and are possibly closer to a letter of support. One of the Camp’s concerns is high visibility from the proposed trail crossing location to the Camp’s new low ropes team building course. Staff is looking to see if the crossing can be moved a little more north. The other concern was the ball field fences and having to possibly relocate them back further. CD Director Doty stated that he agreed with the concern and that the Camp does not want to have to pay for the fences to be relocated. CD Director Doty stated that they are getting closer to compromise.

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Other Business

None

The next scheduled meeting is September 26, 2016 at 4:00 pm.

Adjournment

MOTION by Commissioner Hasskamp, seconded by Commissioner Holderness to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

Chair Jim Kalkofen

Shanna Newman, CD Administrative Assistant