

PARKS & TRAILS COMMISSION MINUTES
September 23, 2013

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, Lori Thramer, Mari Holderness and Council Liaison Jim Klein.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ken Hasskamp

STAFF PRESENT: Public Works Director/City Engineer Trevor Walter, Community Development Director Josh Doty, Assistant City Administrator/City Clerk Kelly Steele.

OTHERS PRESENT: None.

Chair Kalkofen welcomed and introduced CD Director Josh Doty and Assistant Administrator/City Clerk Kelly Steele. Community Development Director Doty gave a brief background of his career as did Assistant City Administrator/City Clerk Steele.

Approval of the Minutes

MOTION by Commissioner Thramer, seconded by Commissioner Brecht to approve the regular meeting minutes of August 23, 2013 noting a few minor typos. Motion carried unanimously.

Riverview Park Access

PW Director Walter stated this item is going to be discussed by the Council workshop on October 2, 2013. Chair Kalkofen asked the difference between a Council meeting and a Council workshop. Council Liaison Klein and PW Director Walter explained that the workshop allows the Council time to review projects however the council does not make any motions or take any official action. If the Council wishes the project is then taken to the Council meeting following the workshop where official action can be taken.

Commissioner Holderness noted that she has again been approached by others about the gate being closed and the signage. She noted that the signage is small and should be enlarged if possible.

2014 Parks and Trails Capital Projects

Park Pavilion Cost Estimates

PW Director Walter gave background on the pavilion grant that was previously submitted by the City to the DNR in 2005. The grant was a 50/50 matching grant, however it was not granted to the City of Baxter. The design submitted for the grant was an attempt to match the restroom facility in architectural features. The Commission discussed the different types of pavilion materials. They discussed the steel roof lasting longer than asphalt shingles and the cost difference of roughly 20% more for steel versus asphalt shingles. Even though a steel roof cost 20% more the life expectancy is almost double that of asphalt shingles. The Commission discussed the different designs and styles included in the packet.

PW Director Walter brought to the Commissions attention that when the grant was applied for there was not a kitchen facility included in the grant. Staff has reviewed the current parks and

has found the OK Park is rented the most being the kitchen facility is available and convenient. LT Park also has a kitchen facility; however it is not set up like OK Park and is not rented as often as OK Park. Having a kitchen in the proposed facility would increase the use a lot more, however it does cost more. It appears that the fridge, counter space and sink get used far more than the range that is in the current facilities. The Commission and PW Director discussed the electrical requirements that would be required for the proposed pavilion with or without a kitchen.

The Commission discussed the size of the proposed pavilion. Commissioner Brecht stated that the Commission should not skimp on the size. The Commission reviewed the current pavilion sizes included in the packet. They discussed the kitchen size and how it would affect the size of the pavilion. Commissioner Holderness stated that she would like to see a bigger pavilion at Whipple Lake Recreational Facility and a smaller pavilion at Berrywood Park.

Commissioner Brecht asked if there would be a cost savings if both pavilions were built at the same time (one at Whipple Lake Recreational Facility and one at Berrywood Park). PW Director Walter explained that the City has seen a discount when similar projects are done at the same time. He explained the cost of mobilization to the Commission and how it affects projects. Chair Kalkofen asked if there were local contractors that would bid on this project. PW Director indicated that there were several that are qualified. The process will need to be defined by the City Administrator and City Council. PW Director explained that this project may be a good candidate for a design build for a local construction firm, but that decision needs to be made by the City Administrator and City Council when they outline the process.

PW Director Walter stated that he had discussed with Parks and Trails Supervisor Rauen the possibility of putting one 20' x 20' pavilion without a kitchen at Berrywood and locating it so an additional 20' x 20' pavilion could be added in the future. The Commission liked the idea of adding a second pavilion at Berrywood in the future if the need arises. They also agreed that Whipple should get the bigger 40' x 40' size pavilion with a kitchen. After further discussion, the Commission agreed that the pavilion at Berrywood should be increased to 26' x 26' with no kitchen.

The Commission asked for a rough estimate of the cost for the two pavilions. PW Director Walter indicated that Berrywood would cost roughly \$45,000.00 for a 26' x 26' pavilion with no kitchen and Whipple would cost roughly \$165,000.00 with a kitchen but without the additional picnic tables and charcoal grills. Commissioner Thramer was concerned about not having a kitchen at Berrywood. Commissioner Thramer questioned where people would place their food. Other Commissioners have seen people bring in folding tables and place food on those portable tables at other parks. Commissioner Thramer felt that the amount of people with all the new apartments near Berrywood Park that the need for a kitchen may be justified.

The Commission discussed the possibility of receiving grant money for the pavilions. PW Director Walter will see if there is any grant programs that would qualify for a picnic pavilion, however he was unaware of any at this time.

MOTION by Commissioner Brecht, seconded by Commissioner Thramer to recommend City Council incorporate in the 2014 Park Dedication Fund Budget a 40' x 40' pavilion with kitchen facilities at Whipple Beach Recreational Facility at a total estimated budget of \$165,000.00 and a 26' x 26' pavilion without a kitchen at Berrywood Park at a total estimated budget of

\$45,000.00. Motion carried unanimously.

Disc Golf

Commissioner Brecht asked PW Director Walter for an update on disc golf. PW Director Walter stated that he and Parks Supervisor Roy Rauen met with Greg (disc golf proposer) on site and walked the 9 disc course. Greg has the course GPS coordinates and is almost ready to put the course on paper. He showed PW Director Walter the proposed course and also verbally updated the information on the St. Mathis course they completed last summer. They received a lot of volunteer hours to complete that course, more than 800 hours of volunteer time plus donated equipment use.

PW Director Walter stated that he has learned that it takes 3 years to complete a course. Commissioner Thramer asked why 3 years to complete a course. PW Director Walter explained that the first year is clearing the land and placing the baskets, the second year is playing and tweaking the basket location and the third year is placing the tee boxes. Currently 75% to 80% of the cost estimate has been completed by Greg and Roy.

Discussion of Parks & Trails Plan Component of Comprehensive Plan Update

The Commission discussed the parks and trails component needs for the Comprehensive Plan. PW Director Walter listed several items that the Commission may want to consider for future parks and trails.

Chair Kalkofen had a copy of the minutes from the last Long Range Planning Commission (LRPC). He read some of the strong and weak points that Baxter has that deal with parks and trails. He brought up that the LRPC will be looking for some planning items from this Parks and Trails Commission.

Other Business

Chair Kalkofen brought up a few maintenance issues he has seen around the City. PW Director noted the issues and will have staff check out the issues.

Commissioner Holderness gave the Commission an update on fitness trail. She stated that they were popular in the 80's and they are now coming back being the economic down turn and people can't afford a membership to fitness clubs. PW Director Walter was also aware of St. Joe's/Essentia Health having a cardio fitness trail discussions in the past, however he was not sure if they ever developed one in the Baxter/Brainerd area.

Chair Kalkofen stated that Council Liaison Klein had a few items that he would like to discuss. Council Liaison Klein stated that the budget is being looked at and he has to bring these items up to the Council. He brought up that there is no money in the 2014 budget for seal coating the trails. He would like to see money set aside yearly to seal coat the trails. Chair Kalkofen asked PW Director Walter what his opinion is of the current condition of the trails. PW Director Walter informed the Commission that currently the oldest trail in Baxter was installed in 1999 (15 years old). PW Director Walter explained the seal coating procedure and to seal coat the current bituminous bike and pedestrian trails is estimated at \$20,000.00. He agreed with Council Liaison Klein that funds should be set aside in the trails maintenance fund for seal coating out of the general fund levy. PW Director Walter explained the difference between the Park Dedication Fund and General Parks and Trails Operating Fund. Chair Kalkofen asked Council Liaison Klein to mention the seal coating for the trails at the Council level on behalf of the commission.

Council Liaison Klein asked if there was an update on the DNR Paul Bunyan Trail Designation Agreement. Commissioner Brecht and PW Director Walter had both heard the DNR is extremely busy. PW Director Walter stated that he is not aware that the DNR has been in contact with the City staff for several months about the agreement.

Council Liaison Klein asked the status of the Nature Trail by the former Reed's building. He stated that if the City is maintaining it than it should be noted by signage.

The Commission also discussed a complete trail connection around Whipple Lake and Memorywood Drive connection that needs to be completed.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for October 28, 2013 at 4:00 p.m.

Adjournment

MOTION by Commissioner Thramer, seconded by Commissioner Holderness to adjourn the meeting at 5:36 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

Chair Jim Kalkofen

Shanna Newman CD Clerk