

PARKS & TRAILS COMMISSION MINUTES
October 27, 2014

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioners Mari Holderness, Lori Thramer, Gail Brecht and Council Liaison Jim Klein.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Chair Jim Kalkofen and Ken Hasskamp

STAFF PRESENT: Community Development (CD) Director Josh Doty

OTHERS PRESENT: None

Approval of the Minutes

Acting Chair Brecht stated that on page 4 of the minutes where it stated that she said the realignment was in the 2016 budget should read "Brecht stated that it may be budgeted in the 2016 Excelsior Road realignment".

It was also noted that the repair to the Whipple Beach Gazebo should actually read "Whipple Beach Restroom".

MOTION by Commissioner Thramer, seconded by Commissioner Holderness to approve the regular meeting minutes of August 25, 2014 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Jewelwood Park Design

CD Director Doty stated at the previous meeting staff was asked to bring phase two plans forward to the Commission. He presented three different phase two options to the Commission. The drawings show a restroom facility, parking lot and trail around the park. The main change to each option is the size of the playground equipment. CD Director Doty stated that the parking lot is a drive lane with 6 parking stalls. Additional maintenance cost with phase one and two are similar. The costs would be roughly \$5,500.00 annually to mow, empty the garbage and general maintenance of the equipment. Acting Chair Brecht asked what type of trail would be installed. CD Director Doty stated that is open for discussion. To maintain ADA accessibility there would need to a paved area to the trail, the Commission agreed. Commissioner Holderness asked about a bench or picnic table for the adults to sit at. CD Director Doty stated that in the original estimates, there was a bench and picnic tables included in phase one. Commissioner Holderness asked if additions could be added to the playground equipment if they find that the equipment was too small for the area. CD Director Doty stated he would have to talk to the supplier, GameTime, to see if that is an option but assumed that this would be possible. The Commission discussed the possibility of this park growing once it is in place and the needs may grow for additional parking. The Commission agreed that Plan C was the favorable option. Acting Chair Brecht asked about the ground cover under the equipment and swings, CD Director Doty stated wood chips are included in the proposed estimate. Council Liaison Klein stated that the City has an abundance of wood chips. CD director Doty stated that the restroom shown on the plan was sized to be similar to the Southdale Park restroom.

CD Director Doty asked if the Commission had any concern about the location of the park equipment, as the plans show the playground on the westerly side of the property. The Commission agreed that it should remain close to the road and further away from the houses on the east side.

CD Director Doty stated that the next step is to take this to the City Council for consideration. If the City Council is in agreement, then we could consider having another meeting with the neighbors. He suggested that this may be brought forward to the City Council with the comprehensive plan update.

The Commission agreed on plan C, phase one.

Whipple Beach Area Trails

CD Director Doty showed the Commission a map with the potential trails around Whipple Beach. The dash lines shows where the city would propose the trails on the county land and surrounding area. CD Director Doty stated that the trail would be on west side of Oakwood Drive. He stated that this map would be submitted to the county for a potential trail approval. The Commission agreed with the map that was presented by staff.

MOTION by Acting Chair Brecht, second by Commissioner Thramer to direct staff to submit a trail application to Crow Wing County for the Oakwood Drive and Cedar Scenic Road proposed paved trail. Motion carried unanimously.

Comprehensive Plan Update

CD Director Doty noted that the packet includes letters that were submitted regarding the parks portion of the comprehensive plan update. He reviewed each letter with the Commission. One letter that did not get in the packet was a letter from Rock Yliniemi requesting the Commission make a decision on purchasing the land next to White Sand boat landing. Mr. Yliniemi's land is listed for sale and currently the listing as a potential park is turning away potential purchasers. The Commission agreed that they would like to keep it on the map but recognized that this is low on their priority list. The Commission had a discussion on Mississippi Overlook Park and the request for utility services from Lord of Life who also has a large property near Mississippi Overlook Park.

CD Director Doty stated that the Long Range Planning Commission may consider their final recommendation of the comprehensive plan at their meeting tonight.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for November 24, 1014 at 4:00 p.m.

Other Business

Acting Chair Brecht informed the Commission that Mr. Jay Sannes who is very involved with the baseball program expressed concern over the nets going over the bleachers, being most of the time a person that is hit with a ball is not watching the game and doesn't see the ball coming towards them. It was suggested to net the area where people are not watching the game. The bleacher covers are estimated at \$25,000.00 and are in the 2015 budget. Staff understands that this would only protect people sitting in the bleachers. However, currently there is no protection. To net the fields would cost closer to \$80,000.00. The posts for the netting are also an issue with where they need to be located (in the middle of the trails). Acting Chair Brecht stated that Mr.

Sannes mentioned that there were people within the baseball organization that were willing to donate, fundraisers and a potential for a grant from the Minnesota Twins. CD Director Doty noted that given the fourth baseball field and concession stand aren't constructed, careful consideration should be made regarding what decisions are made with investing in nets.

Council Liaison Klein asked if there was a joint powers meeting scheduled. He noticed that pond hockey was not on the list of activities and he would like an update on the baseball numbers. Acting Chair Brecht stated that there was mention of a meeting after the summer months.

Council Liaison Klein asked if the trail at Loren Thompson was going to be flooded. Acting Chair Brecht thought that the paved trail was not going to be flooded but the area closer to the hockey rink would be flooded.

Council Liaison Klein asked about the three tracks of property that the City of Brainerd has on the river, he was curious what their intent was with that land. CD Director Doty did place a call to the City of Brainerd and would report back.

Adjournment

MOTION by Commissioner Hardness, seconded by Commissioner Thramer to adjourn the meeting at 5:11p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

Acting Chair Gail Brecht

Shanna Newman CD Clerk