

**PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Ramsey Park and Recreation Commission conducted a regular meeting on March 10, 2011, at Ramsey Municipal Center, Minnesota.

Commission Members Present: Vice Chair Angela Olsen
 Commissioner Bridgett Barr
 Commissioner Shane Bennett
 Commissioner Andrew Fyten
 Commissioner Tom LaMere

Commission Members Absent: Chairperson Shryock

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Olsen called the Park and Recreation Commission meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

CITIZEN INPUT

There was none.

APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Bennett, seconded by Commissioner Barr to approve the agenda.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Vice Chair Olsen, Commissioners Bennett, Barr, Fyten, and LaMere. Voting No: None. Absent: Chairperson Shryock.

APPROVE MINUTES

Motion by Commissioner Fyten seconded by Commissioner Barr, to approve the following Park and Recreation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes:

- 1) Park and Recreation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes dated February 10, 2011.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Vice Chair Olsen, Commissioners Bennett, Barr, Fyten, and LaMere. Voting No: None. Absent: Chairperson Shryock.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

**Case #1: Recommend Park Development Implementation Plan for “North Commons”
 in the COR**

Park Supervisor Riverblood reviewed in the staff report that throughout the last year it has been discussed initiating park improvements of City owned space in the COR known as 'North

Commons' and that most recently the conversation has included the sale of lots on the west side of this property to fund the proposed development costs.

Development Manager Darren Lazan was present to give a quick overview of the project.

Jonathan Werner 7764 149th Avenue NW, was present to discuss his concern of the wildlife in this area and asks that the development be kept in its natural state as much as possible. He would like to see a minimally evasive wood chip walking trail around the perimeter around the parcels. He also requested consideration for trail access along Lot One for access for the residents along 149th Avenue.

Commissioner Barr stated her concern is if we still have a number of large lots available why would we put more into the market right now. Why would we have a better product to offer than what is already there.

Development Manager Lazan responded there is a lot of strategy into how a project comes to market, that additional surplus will affect the pricing, additional foot traffic of different product will increase all those opportunities for builders in this area. In general a more diverse variety of products in there will help all the lots in the area.

Tom Purmort 7842 149th Avenue NW stated he has 30 lots in this area and his main concern is he has 15 lots available now. As far as getting a different product out there, he is set to a different building standard over there and feels that there is different ways to raise the revenue. He discussed for example a big anchor store, then those homes will be more apt to sell. Mr. Purmort stated he paid \$1500 per lot to put into a fund and his calculation is a total of \$100,000 and asked what happened to that money for that park.

Park Supervisor Riverblood responded this was discussed at the open-house and explained the main developer went bankrupt and the bank held the property and a lot of things went away. Some of those monies were recaptured and park and streetscape improvements were made and the money is now gone and the entire landscape has changed.

Tom Purmort likes the park idea but now is not the time

Jason Tossey 7788 149th Avenue NW, he is well aware of this plan, he understands Mr. Purmort's frustrations he also understands the frustration of all the homeowners in the area. There was a plan from the very beginning for a park and would encourage this to go forward and feels this decision is the better one to get this done without really costing taxpayers. If we don't move now on this park under this plan he doesn't think there is going to be a park. Keep in mind, that land is not dedicated as park land and there is nothing to stop the City from developing the whole thing. He expressed we need to be conscience of the builders but not be too evasive to the existing homeowners and he wanted to state that he is in support of this plan.

Bob Brenner, Realtor with RES Realty introduced himself as the listing agent for Purmort Homes for the last three years and has been a realtor since the mid nineties. He stated he has been trying to sell the homes in the 10th Addition that have been recently built there and according to the MLS listing that day a total of 12 new lots have been sold since 2008, roughly 4 a year. If information is correct there is about 40 lots available now and currently have about 10 years of inventory already. He stated if you add 7-8 lots in a small area and another 40 more lots

you are doubling what is available for what is already a saturated market and he doesn't feel this is going to raise revenue. Right now they are aggressively marketing them and it is a very slow market and to think these new lots are going to generate more sales and more income is not very realistic.

Commissioner LaMere asked if this doesn't go forward now what would be the timeline for doing a park in that area.

Park Supervisor Riverblood stated there isn't a lot of momentum of satisfying the initial park improvements for these residents without atleast a sale of a lot. He stated the proceeds may not be available right away but it may add momentum for park improvements.

Commissioner Bennett's concern is if we don't move forward now with this recommendation that we lose the park altogether and asked what the HRA's perspective is.

Development Manager Lazan stated it has been the HRA's goal to maintain as many community components as possible and stated it is fully developable piece of property and that's where this is at. To date he has looked at marketing kind of a different product type as much as possible.

Commissioner Barr is concerned we already have parks that we are struggling to maintain and that we continue to still have budget cuts.

Commissioner Barr stated she is not comfortable going forward with this right now if there were 80% of the lots already sold then she would feel comfortable with it.

Motion by Commissioner Bennett, seconded by Commissioner LaMere to recommend to City Council and the HRA to create, develop and sell more residential lots that minimize the impact to the area from a total number of home sales. Give us the ability to look back and take into account some of the additional recommendations from the public of what that park ultimately looks like, and get to those park improvements and ultimately we end up with a park and a dedicated park there and limit the amount of potential growth.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Vice Chair Olsen, Commissioners Bennett, Fyten, and LaMere. Voting No: Commissioner Barr. Absent: Chairperson Shryock.

COMMISSION/STAFF INPUT

Parks Supervisor Riverblood reviewed that City Council at City Council Work Session last Tuesday authorized staff to move forward with placing a Resolution on their agenda for March 22nd for applying for MN DNR Trail Grants. These grants are very competitive and if awarded he reviewed the project schedule for the two trails listed in the City's CIP for 2012-2013 and also what has been presented to the Commission previously.

The other item Park Supervisor Riverblood discussed was the Environmental Expo. He explained he spoke with Chairperson Shryock earlier that day and she thought what might work is to place this on the Commissions agenda for April. She also discussed scheduling a work session before or after that meeting to talk about shift coverage and what things were needed at the Expo. Separate from the Expo, Chairperson Shryock would like to have conversation

amongst the Commissioners about what individual special project ideas they would like to collaborate on.

Final input item, Park Supervisor Riverblood reviewed the summary of the ice skating season which ended two weeks earlier due to weather conditions. The total number of users at both Ramsey Elementary and Central Park were 6,040.

Vice Chair Olsen announced this is the last meeting for Commissioner LaMere after serving 16 years on the Park and Recreation Commission.

Commissioner LaMere wanted to express how extremely lucky we are to have Parks Supervisor Riverblood heading up our program. Over the years he has seen tremendous vision and foresight and commends Riverblood for being a step ahead of other cities. Commissioner LaMere stated he gets to see a lot of different parks in other cities and we are very fortunate to have Riverblood battle for us.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Fyten, seconded by Commissioner Bennett to adjourn the meeting at 7:17 p.m.

Motion carried.

The Park and Recreation Commission meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Riverblood
Parks Supervisor

Drafted by Mary Jo Warner
City of Ramsey Public Works Secretary