

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

The Ramsey Park and Recreation Commission conducted a regular meeting on February 12, 2015, at the Council Chambers, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Commission Members Present: Chair Shane Bennett
 Vice Chair Bridgett Barr
 Commissioner Richard Chubb
 Commissioner Andrew Fyten
 Commissioner Thomas Mobry
 Commissioner Jon Trappen

Commission Members Absent: None

Also Present: Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. CITIZEN INPUT

Mr. Jeremy Zaller, 15600 Yakima Court, Ramsey stated he will be the contact person for Anoka Ramsey Athletic Association's Lacrosse program. He has been involved with athletics in Ramsey for many years. He stated field space has become a premium and asked if there are any upcoming projects ARAA would like to have some input. Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated the city is looking at some large field expansions at Central Park.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Mobry, seconded by Commissioner Chubb, to approve the Park and Recreation Commission meeting agenda as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett, Commissioners Mobry, Chubb, Barr, Fyten, and Trappen. Voting No: None. Absent:

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes dated January 8, 2015

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

- 1) Park and Recreation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes dated January 8, 2015.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett, Commissioners Barr, Fyten, Chubb, Mobry, and Trappen. Voting No: None. Absent:

5. COMMISSION BUSINESS

5.01: Consider Recommendation Confirming Existing Master Parks and Trail Plan Regarding the Sketch Plan of Harvest Estates Located at 15153 Nowthen Blvd NW; Case of N.I.K. Management, Inc.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood reviewed the purpose of this case is to confirm the current Master Parks and Trail Plan as it relates to the Sketch Plan for Harvest Estates, a proposed 45-lot detached, single-family subdivision on the former municipal center campus located at 15153 Nowthen Blvd. NW. the topics of confirmation include the following:

Sketch Plan Review is a process outlined in City Code that provides an opportunity for the Planning Commission to review compliance with the Comprehensive Plan as well as Zoning and Subdivision Codes (City Code Chapter 117) before an Applicant spends resources on detailed civil engineering drawings. The Parks and Recreation Commission does not traditionally review Sketch Plans; however, given the significant policy topics, confirmation of direction is warranted before the Applicant proceeds with future review steps. This step is not required by Minnesota Statute Chapter 462; however, it provides for a more proactive and collaborative design approach in an effort to avoid issues at a later date.

Master Park and Trail Plan

As the redevelopment of the old municipal center has been discussed over a number of years and has taken a number of forms. A topic that routinely is raised is the potential for a new City Park. The City has routinely responded that it does not plan for a future City Park in this development. The area is well served by existing parks, connected through a series of pedestrian trails. Additionally, the focus of the Parks and Recreation Commission has shifted away from a series of smaller “pocket” parks to larger community parks with higher quality amenities connected through the City’s pedestrian trail system.

Alternatives

Alternative #1. Confirm the policy direction to not include a City park within the proposed development. This alternative would allow the proposed development to move forward as presented. Park Dedication and Trail Development obligations would be satisfied by cash contribution.

Alternative #2. Amend the policy direction to include a City park within the proposed development. This would require the Applicant to revise the proposed development as presented. The addition of a park in this area would reduce resources available for other future improvements already planned and would add to the City's ongoing maintenance costs. (The Park and Recreation Commission previously held that, there are adequate parks, recreation, and open spaces available to the proposed development within reasonable distance.) This alternative would reduce or eliminate the cash contribution to the Park Trust Fund to be utilized to enhance the existing, surrounding parks and trail connections.

Over the past years the City has looked at various options for the use of the property. It was decided to have a policy of not constructing pocket parks putting more focus on the community parks and trail connections to existing parks within the City.

Staff recommends that the City confirm the existing Parks and Trail Master Plan and not include a new City Park within the proposed development known as Harvest Estates.

Park dedication is suggested cash in lieu of land for Harvest Estates. Maintain the policy of not constructing pocket parks. Mr. Riverblood indicated the location of the property on a map. There is a great need for park improvements, as noted in the Park Improvement Plan, which reaffirms not constructing any pocket parks. The trail systems and sidewalks in the surrounding neighborhoods are complete. Solstice Park is disconnected from the trail system. The City does own a small parcel that could be used to connect the two cul-de-sacs to Soltis Park.

Chair Bennett stated he does not feel the Commission has changed their mind on the policy of not creating pocket parks and in taking cash in lieu of land to support improvements in other larger parks.

Motion by Commissioner Barr, seconded by Commissioner Fyten, to recommend that the City Council confirm the existing Parks and Trail Master Plan and not include a new City park within the proposed development known as Harvest Estates and reaffirm the Commission's Policy.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Vice Chair Bennett, Commissioners Barr, Fyten, Chubb, Mobry and Trappen. Voting No: None. Absent:

6. COMMISSION/STAFF INPUT

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood reviewed the following:

Winter Recreation – Some of the winter recreation activities are less than normal for the year due to the lack of snow. The sledding hill at Alpine Park is open. The ski trails are maintained at Rum River Central.

Mississippi River Trail and Tourism – A bike trip is planned for Itasca to Iowa Border and one of the stops they are looking at is the Comfort Inn.

Invitation for Public Engagement – Residents can see plans on the website and comments are welcome. Chair Bennett stated all three plans reviewed were outstanding and he invited residents to look at the website and provide their input.

Mississippi Skyway Project – The grant application was submitted today. A video was produced by QCTV and will be shown to the Commission in March. The video is also available on the website.

Commissioner Barr asked if there were updated counts on the skating rinks. Mr. Riverblood stated they have been disappointing. There was good ice over Thanksgiving. It has been a roller coaster season for the rinks. They will be flooded again tomorrow. February will most likely be the end of the skating season.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Chubb, seconded by Commissioner Mobry, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett, Commissioner Chubb, Mobry, Barr, Fyten, and Trappen. Voting No: None. Absent:

The Park and Recreation Commission meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Riverblood
Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent

Drafted by Debbie Wolfe
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.