

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

The Ramsey Park and Recreation Commission conducted a regular meeting on July 12, 2018, at Central Park, 7925 161st Avenue NW, in the Park Center Building.

Commission Members Present: Chair Shane Bennett
 Vice Chair Brandon Sis
 Commissioner Andrew Andrusko
 Commissioner Jennifer Leistico
 Commissioner Jon Trappen

Commission Members Absent: Commissioner Charles Tchuinkwa and
 Commissioner Russell Bayer

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 6:50 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

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

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett; Commissioners Sis, Trappen, Andrusko, Leistico. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Tchuinkwa and Commissioner Bayer.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Leistico, seconded by Commissioner Andrusko, to approve the following Park and Recreation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes, as presented:

- 1) Park and Recreation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes dated April 12, 2018.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett; Commissioners Leistico, Andrusko, Trappen, Sis. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Tchuinkwa and Commissioner Bayer.

5. COMMISSION BUSINESS

5.01: Approve Concept Plans for Municipal Plaza and The Waterfront

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood presented the concept plans for Municipal Plaza and the Waterfront. In 2014, staff did a lot of work on what park spaces could look like in the COR. He reviewed the public involvement process. One unifying, almost unanimous thought was the idea of a splash pad. Thus, it is set up with a water-centric park, and the concept plans have ratified that concept. He pointed out the elongated shape for Municipal Plaza and compared it to the proposed nearby apartment building. The apartment building will be breaking ground this month, and the purchase agreement was contingent upon the City's commitment to build a park in the area. The apartment complex will house a lot of folks 55 and over. More than likely, a lot of grandparents will live here, so the park spaces will be heavily utilized by grandchildren visiting.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood continued that Municipal Plaza has a couple defining themes; it is a contiguous programmable space, but there is a lot of park roaming capability. The parks are really the defining features of the COR. Wayfinding features are also significant in defining the quality of life in downtown. He pointed out several spaces in the Plaza. Vendors will be able to bring in refrigerated ice sheets for ice skating, which is also near where the tree lighting will happen. Along Centre Street, parallel parking on both sides will probably be built. All or part of Centre Street can be closed off for large events, to be used for programmable space. Solar panels will be incorporated as well, for bicycle stations, laptop stations, et cetera. The hardscape will be pervious, so storm water will enter. There will be great locations for a potential brew pub or a wine bar. Alongside the apartment, he envisions a series of stone walls that are seat walls for both the park users as well as the apartment residents.

In response to a question by Chair Bennett, he also pointed out the stormwater plans, noting it is intended to be smart and sustainable in design. There are drinking water protection zones in the COR, so the City cannot allow in many areas infiltration. The stormwater has to be captured and brought to a different pond for reuse. The storm pond in the waterfront will be clay-lined so as not to allow that connection to the ground water. He also presented unique outdoor hearth setups. From the very beginning, Fire and Ice has been a theme of the COR. These propane hearths can make a chilly evening very enjoyable as people gather around.

Commissioner Trappe asked how the hearths work.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood explained there may be a motion-detector system that triggers the hearths, though there may be other new technologies available in the next couple of years. He also is envisioning movable furniture. If someone is sharing a hearth and need more chairs, they can easily be moved. These hearths will really make the park space a fun gathering spot in all seasons.

Chair Bennett asked about the vision for the lighting along the hearths, along the street, and within the park. He also asked about restroom access.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood responded that some of that detail has not been decided yet. There will be sidewalks on both sides. The City Code has curfews, but that will need to be fixed for this space, in his opinion. The parks in the COR need to be open 24 hours a day. Not everyone works 9-5pm, and folks need to be able to get out later in the evening or early mornings to exercise or walk the dog in the park. That said, the parks also need to be safe and secure in them. This is a key point that needs to be considered.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood returned to the issue of stormwater management. He noted the theme with the waterfront is glacial history. The pond will be a lined pond, and he pointed out several municipal water wells. It will be important not to have surface water getting into the drinking water. When planning this, the glacial history and the formation of this area were considered. The landscape is a result of the sand plane and rocks in the Mississippi are a direct result of the outwash of glaciation. Those realities are a thing to subtly bring forward in terms of the parks landscape and interpret it through landscape. And this pond, in the middle of downtown, starts to make sense as a kettle lake. Kettle lakes were formed with glaciers moved across the landscapes.

Commissioner Leistico asked about interpretive signs for the purpose of education.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood responded that on one hand, he likes not explaining everything for park users. There can be interpretive elements and also information on the City's website. It could also be a discovery for people visiting the parks. He pointed out that he remains concerned about the water quality in the park because of the storm pond. He also pointed out the concept of the two boardwalks. He pointed out the park concession area and pavilion with restrooms. He also highlighted a traditional splash pad and the wading area which can be used by kids of all ages. Someone in a wheelchair could use the wading area. There will also be cabana-type structures, which may be rentable. The concession area will have seasonal staff and lunches and evening dinner options in the park. An RFP may be issued such that a concessionaire runs the whole thing, with the stipulation that they are open during the weekends 11-1pm to cater to the business crowd and open on the weekend. The vendor could keep all the profit, as long as price points are approved.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood also pointed out that underneath the boardwalk/bridge is a 4-bay. The splash pad can spill out so that the quality water runs into the 4-bay. He pointed out an area for paddleboat, kayak, and canoe rentals. A climber play structure will be included, with probably the resilient flooring underneath that is very cushioned. He noted that many apartment buildings are including play structures, so not a lot will be needed in the COR.

In response to a comment by Chair Bennett, Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood explained that as the COR expands, the City will need to be more creative in responding to programming by having people working in the evenings to unlock restrooms. Thus, City Hall may be open more in the evenings, until 9:00 pm.

Chair Bennett asked whether both spaces will be built out simultaneously.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood responded he had hoped to have cost estimates tonight. Earlier costs show The Waterfont costs as \$6 million and the Municipal Plaza at \$3 million, and those figures are probably greater now. The Park system plan needs to be completed, to show what an equitable distribution amongst the parks and trails throughout the City community-wide. If things are done with value City-wide, like the splash pad and the restaurant pavilion, it makes a lot of sense. Things will be done incrementally. It will be interesting to think that these parks are catalysts for development.

Chair Bennett asked whether the agreement with the adjacent apartment developer calls for a specific timeline.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood responded there was no agreed-upon timeline, as the concept plan was not even developed yet. He added he would like approval of the initial concept plan tonight, as well as a motion to authorize up to \$5,000 of the contingency to, in part, develop a promotional magazine that describes to the public and developers what these park spaces will look like and will function like. It will be a marketing piece.

Commissioner Andrusko asked about funding options.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood responded there are elements of the concept plan that are perfect for funding by the Livable Communities monies by the Met Council. There are also sustainable design elements, and bundling that up as a demonstration project causes means several hundred thousand dollars may be available in grant money. That is another reason to develop nice promotional materials to tell that story.

Motion by Commissioner Trappen, seconded by Commissioner Andrusko to approve the Concept Plans of the Municipal Plaza and The Waterfront.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett; Commissioners Trappen, Andrusko, Leistico, Sis. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Tchuinkwa and Commissioner Bayer.

Motion by Commissioner Trappen, seconded by Commissioner Sis to authorize the use of up to \$5,000 for promotional and marketing materials for Municipal Plaza and The Waterfront.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett; Commissioners Trappen, Sis, Andrusko, Leistico. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Tchuinkwa and Commissioner Bayer.

6. COMMISSION/STAFF INPUT

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood provided no updates.

Chair Bennett noted he volunteers regularly as a coach for Anoka-Ramsey Athletic Association. The Association has struggled to find volunteers, and they are looking for great people who care

about the kids, the program and the community. He encouraged people to look at the website for available openings.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Leistico, seconded by Commissioner Sis, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett; Commissioners Leistico, Sis, Andrusko, Trappen.
Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Tchuinkwa and Commissioner Bayer.

The Park and Recreation Commission meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Riverblood
Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent

Drafted by Allison Burr
TimeSaver off Site Secretarial, Inc.