

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

The Ramsey Park and Recreation Commission conducted a regular meeting on September 9, 2021, at Elmcrest Park, 16303 Quicksilver St NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Commission Members Present: Chair Shane Bennett
 Vice Chair Brandon Sis
 Commissioner Nathan Barten
 Commissioner Jennifer Leistico
 Commissioner Justin Loss
 Commissioner Dean Olson
 Commissioner Brian Walker

Commission Members Absent: None

Also Present: City Council Liaison Ryan Heineman
 Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bennett called the Park and Recreation Commission meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

A resident from 6311 169th Lane NW, asked if anything could be done about the trash and debris alongside the road coming into Elmcrest Park. She stated that the trash keeps accumulating and does not look good for those coming into events in the park. She asked if it would be possible to have a map of the park so that people that are walking in the park are aware of the trail locations. She stated that perhaps something could be added to the kiosk with information on the trail locations and distances for the walkers. She commented that parks staff do a great job mowing and are very friendly. She commented that there is one bench on a mile long stretch of the trail, whereas Rivers Bend Park has nine benches along a half mile segment. She stated that additional benches would be nice to those that need a break along the way. She stated that there are two trash cans at Rivers Bend and perhaps another trash can could be added where the trails come in from Bunker Lake Boulevard. She thanked the Commission for the walking trails as they are phenomenal.

Chair Bennett thanked the resident for her input.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood stated that the land under Quicksilver Street coming into the park is private property and there is a complicated background story. He stated that he believes the property owner may be working to clean up the property

willingly at this time. With respect to trail distances, he stated that there is a mapping tool but the issue with mapping trails is that a trail can go further than the specific park or there are different trail loops possible, and therefore it is difficult to provide accurate distance mapping. He stated that he can provide the resident with the online mapping tool that can be used. He stated that he is working with a resident that would like to donate a bench to Elmcrest and asked for a location suggestion.

The resident provided a location suggestion. She noted that staff can choose the best spot for people to sit and enjoy the beauty of the park.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood stated that he will look into the trash can suggestion for Rivers Bend but noted that there have been instances of vandalism with the cans and that is why they are strategic with the locations. He also thanked the resident for the positive comment about parks staff.

Glen Semenko, 6311 169th Lane, referenced the Central Park tennis courts and pickleball courts and thanked the Commission for those improvements. He stated that within one week of the project completion he noticed cracks on the surface of every court. He stated that the court closest to Armstrong has become very uneven. He stated that the courts get a lot of use.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood stated that he has been in communication with the contractor that completed the work in attempt to have those cracks sealed prior to winter. He noted that cracks in asphalt will always come through and that is why scoring is done in attempt to have some control.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

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

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett; Commissioners Sis, Barten, Leistico, Loss, Olson, and Walker. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

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

- Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes dated August 12, 2021

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett; Commissioners Loss, Barten, Olson, Sis, and Walker. Voting No: None. Absent: None. Abstain: Commissioner Leistico.

5. COMMISSION BUSINESS

5.01: Recommend Park Dedication and Trail Fees for North Brook Meadows (The Hunt Property)

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood summarized the previous discussion that had occurred on the concept plan reviews for the Hunt and Makowski properties by the Commission in May of 2020. He stated that it is the recommendation of staff that the park dedication for this 40-acre property be satisfied by cash contribution. He provided additional details on the available park facilities in the area and the future park facilities planned with development of the Makowski property. He reviewed the recommended trail connections for this development.

Councilmember Heineman asked for clarification on the proposed size of the park and size of the parcel.

Chair Bennett explained that the parcel is 40 acres in size and would not have its own park. He stated that the staff recommendation would be to receive cash payment in lieu of property or park space within this parcel.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood stated that sidewalks and trails are a basic infrastructure requirement by the developer and those trails and sidewalks will get these residents to the parks and fields at the elementary school and the community park on the future Makowski property.

Councilmember Heineman asked where the regional park would be located.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood confirmed that the park would be proposed for the Makowski property when that develops, and would be proposed to include flex use fields and the farmstead building. He noted that it would serve as a heritage park to help preserve the rural character of the community. He reviewed the calculation used to determine cash payment of park and trail dedication. He stated that the trails recommended within the development and along arterial roadways are a part of the basic development infrastructure.

Commissioner Sis noted that the trail proposed along CR5 does not seem to connect anywhere.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood confirmed that to be true. He stated that this property has to work with the Makowski property for sewer and water connections. He provided additional details on the reasoning behind the recommended crossing connections and noted that the developer has so far agreed with staff's recommendations.

Commissioner Olson referenced a suggestion made at a previous meeting for a disc golf course in Ramsey and asked if this area of the community would be a good fit for that type of amenity.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood stated that he drafted a Capital Improvement Plan project sheet that speaks to disc golf and anticipated that the Commission would be reviewing that plan in October or November. He stated that disc golf can be hazardous to people and therefore a busy community park may not be the best setting for that activity. He stated

that the Makowski property may not be the best fit for that activity either, but noted that the Commission could conduct a search process to find the best fit for disc golf when that time comes.

Commissioner Loss asked if the Park Dedication funds would be earmarked for the Makowski park.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood stated that the funds would be contributed to the Park Trust Fund. He stated that typically funds are spent where the need arises and although funds are not always spent in the specific area collected. He stated that if the need arises for park improvements to support the development that has occurred, funds are spent in that area even though it may not be on that specific property.

Chair Bennett asked for details on where this request is within the planning process.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood replied that the Planning Commission has recommended approval of the preliminary plat, and this will go forward to the City Council for its consideration.

Chair Bennett noted that the staff recommendation seems in line with the previous discussions the Commission has had with this area of the community and its park needs. He noted that while he may not agree with the type of development proposed for this rural area, that is not part of the discussion tonight.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood stated that the Hunts have owned this property and farmed it for over 100 years. He stated that in the previous Comprehensive Plan processes, the Hunts requested this property to be included in the MUSA and have planned for this for over a decade.

Chair Bennett acknowledged the complexities of the situation. He stated that is why it will be important to obtain park dedication in the right manner in order to leverage that to provide the best amenities for the area and preserve the rural character.

Commissioner Walker stated that he has been aware of the Makowski development since the concept review and has been active in the public hearings. He stated that he previously gathered signatures in opposition of the development of the Makowski and Hunt properties and also provided comments in opposition at the last Planning Commission meeting. He stated that the only people that will be happy with this development are those that will be living in them. He stated that the existing residents will not be pleased with the development because it is tearing apart the rural character. He stated that because of his history with the project he will be opposing the vote on principal and not because he does not want a park in this area.

Chair Bennett appreciated the transparency and the passion that Commissioner Walker has expressed throughout this process.

Commissioner Walker commented that when the guiding for the properties were changed, the residents in that area were not notified and have felt cheated throughout this process. He commented that this issue is very personal to him.

Motion by Commissioner Sis, seconded by Commissioner Loss, to recommend to City Council that Park Dedication and Trail fees be satisfied by cash for the North Brook Meadows Subdivision.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett; Commissioners Sis, Loss, Barten, Leistico, and Olson. Voting No: Commissioner Walker. Absent: None.

5.02: Recommend Park Dedication and Trail Fees for the Proposed Lynwood Subdivision

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated that staff is recommending that Park and Trail dedication be satisfied by cash for this development. He stated that the Applicant is proposing a 34-acre residential subdivision that includes a mix of single family lots in the northwestern portion and attached townhomes in the remainder of the Subject Property. The single family residential portion would have a density of three units per acre and the attached townhome portion would have a density of approximately six units per acre— which is less than the overall density the property is zoned for. He stated that this area is well served by parks and trails already in existence, therefore staff recommends cash in lieu to satisfy park dedication and trail fees. He reviewed the Park Dedication and Trail Fee calculations.

Commissioner Sis asked if each townhome building would be considered a lot.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood clarified that each dwelling unit is considered a “lot” for the purposes of Park Dedication.

Motion by Commissioner Barten, seconded by Commissioner Lestic to recommend to the City Council that Park Dedication and Trail Fees be satisfied by cash together with a trail easement at the south of the Lynwood Subdivision for the future construction of a portion of the Circle of Ramsey.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett; Commissioners Barten, Leistico, Loss, Olson, Sis, and Walker. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

6. COMMISSION/STAFF INPUT

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood summarized some of the recreation programming occurring and the upcoming Happy Days festival. He also reviewed the request by a resident to designate the new portion of the off-leash area at Alpine Park as a small dog area. Riverblood reminded the Commission that the new expansion was at the request of a different resident who proposed it such that people can separate themselves and dogs from more rambunctious dogs, without regard to size. Commissioner Loss stated he was a regular dog park user, and at Coon Rapids he regularly sees small dogs in the large dog area.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Loss, seconded by Commissioner Olson, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett; Commissioners Barten, Leistico, Loss, Olson, Sis, and Walker. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

The Park and Recreation Commission meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Riverblood
Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.