

Summary background on Loral I Armstrong Delaney Central Park and adjacent parcel to the east  
March 22, 2022 City Council Meeting

**Zoning:**

In the 1970's into the 1980's Federal Cartridge Corporation owned a tract of land north of 161<sup>st</sup> Avenue, east of Armstrong Boulevard (80 acres), and a larger tract of land east of Variolite Street that was the site of the St. Anthony Gun Club. A zoning map dated September, 1975 identifies the site as R1 Suburban Residential. This is presumably rural residential given the other residential zoning is R-2 Urban Residential on the map.

Around 1983, 45 acres of Federal's land was given to the City, under the stipulation that it would be developed to what would become Central Park. The remaining property maintained a zoning of R-1R per a zoning map dated as of April, 1989. This is presumably rural residential given other zoning designations on the map as R-1U, R-2U and R-3U.

Other comprehensive plans and zoning maps have maintained residential designations.

**Recent discussions on a proposed expansion of Central Park:**

For many years while the 35 acres of land remained vacant east of Central Park, the city had expressed interest in acquiring some or all of it to expand the community park. During this period, the city purchased significant acreage of land that is now Elmcrest Park, and approximately 20 more acres of land to add to the undeveloped Lake Itasca Community Park.

Discussions with the present owner east of the park have reoccurred over the last decade and a half on potential acquisition, and included different scenarios, with none of the proposals accepted by the landowner. Late in 2020 the same landowner, St. Katherine Drexel church brought to the city a specific proposal to sell 11 acres that would abut the existing park at the east—and communicated that a residential developer intended to also purchase the same rectangular parcel. In summary, the Park and Recreation Commission received this proposal, and sought to ensure that the long, north to south parcel would all be usable for the park, in that previously about 15 acres was looked at for the potential addition to the park.

At the regular January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Park and Recreation Commission meeting, the Commission discussed various aspects to the potential purchase and directed staff to prepare concepts of how the park could be expanded with proposed residential land use in a synergistic manner—in essence, 'ghost plat' the 11 acres to show both athletic field expansion, additional parking and a residential plat.

Following the Commission's direction to ghost plat the property to see what residential land use patterns might look like, along with Park Dedication/Park Expansion, staff worked with the Owner to develop a series of land use concepts.

At the February 11, 2021 Park & Recreation Commission meeting, five alternatives were deliberated, relative to the original question on the proposed purchase of approximately 11 acres to expand Central Park (for \$517,000) these were:

- Take no action at this time (formally or informally decline)
- Purchase 11 acres without a plan for the land's use
- Attempt to negotiate different terms or acreage for a purchase
- Attempt to negotiate the dedication of land to be credited against future Park Dedication
- Designate minimum expectations and goals for a park expansion to satisfy future Park Dedication obligations, to be met before or no later than the time of the subdivision of land east of the park.

By Motion, the Park & Recreation Commission's recommendation to City Council was that, "the future subdivision of land east of Loral I Armstrong Delaney Central Park include a park expansion consisting of a minimum of two new areas for flex-use athletic fields, additional public access and parking, to be considered as fulfilling Park Dedication obligations".