

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Thursday, February 21, 2008, 7:00 p.m.

ARC, 1701 West Ash

MINUTES

Commission Present: Terry Kloepfel, Marin Blevins, Bill Pauls, Dennis Knudson, Dan Devine, Gary Kespohl

Staff Present: Mike Hood, Gary Ristow, Mike Griggs, Tammy Miller

Kloepfel called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Mike Griggs introduced members of the Parks Planning and Development staff, Steve Saitta, Mike Snyder and Richard Perkins. Staff had been present for an interested parties meeting prior to the Commission meeting. Saitta would stay for the presentation during the Commission meeting.

Agenda: One rezoning was added to the agenda. The amended agenda was approved on a motion by Pauls, seconded by Devine.

Minutes: The January minutes were approved on a motion from Blevins, seconded by Pauls.

Monthly Report:

Pauls asked about the warnings issued by the Park Ranger at the Skate Park.

Hood said he thought a majority of them were for skateboarders not wearing a helmet.

Pauls speculated some of the warnings may have been for kids riding their bikes.

Griggs agreed, saying the number of youth on bikes seems to go in phases. As some kids grow up and develop other interests, new youth start hanging out at the Skate Park, riding their bikes there.

The January monthly report was approved on a motion from Pauls, seconded by Devine.

Rezoning: Chapel Hill

Griggs said the request from Prima concerns property off of Chapel Hill which is within a half-mile of the MKT Trail. It involves two tracts possibly being rezoned from O-P (planned office) to C-P (commercial). Both tracts would be used as offices with space for an additional parking lot. The C-P rezoning would be more in line with surrounding zonings, Griggs said.

Pauls made a motion, seconded by Blevins to recommend to City Council that they see no potential adverse impact to parks or trails from the proposed rezoning.

All in favor: Kloepfel, Blevins, Pauls, Knudson, Devine, Kespohl

Motion carried.

Rezoning: ABC Labs

ABC Labs would like to rezone 56 acres off of I-70 near the Lake of the Woods Golf Course. The company wants to annex the property into the City. Griggs reviewed how the tract is presently broken up under Boone County zoning and how those would translate to City rezoning, including planned office, planned industrial and controlled industrial.

A portion of the tract is the north fork of the Grindstone Creek. Griggs said it drains away from Lake of the Woods, and may possibly be an attractive trail corridor in the future, linking to the course and the future new high school.

Kespohl asked for clarification in that the interstate is the only thing contiguous to the property?

Hood said yes, that was true. He added that this request may eventually allow Lake of the Woods to be

annexed into the City, then eventually the high school.

Devine asked if that would be a good thing for the golf course?

Hood and Griggs said yes, with Griggs adding that it would simplify matters, such as law enforcement and other services.

Hood emphasized that a trail along the Grindstone Creek would be a very positive action to take.

Devine asked if the City would need more than just a trail easement?

Griggs said no, that the City could work within the stream buffer.

Devine made a motion, seconded by Kespohl to recommend to City Council that they see no potential adverse impact to parks or trails from the proposed rezoning. As part of the zoning, the Commission recommended that Council request a trail easement as part of the north fork of the Grindstone Creek trail buffer zone for consideration of a future trail.

All in favor: Kloepfel, Blevins, Pauls, Knudson, Devine, Kespohl

Motion carried.

GetAbout Columbia Presentation

Hood introduced Ted Curtis of Get About Columbia, along with Steve Saitta of the Parks and Recreation staff. GetAbout has been working on trail design guidelines and is seeking input from numerous boards and commissions, including Parks and Recreation.

Curtis presented the guidelines to the Commission. He pointed out that the grant is for transportation-related projects only regarding trails, pedways and bike paths. Curtis detailed the guidelines that would exist for major new trails built in Columbia, including hard surface at least 12 feet wide, with shoulders.

Kespohl asked about the size of the easement needed to construct a trail?

Curtis said at least 20-25 feet would be needed, but 50 feet would be preferred.

Hood added that it would depend largely on the site, but could be between 30 and 50 feet in some cases.

Saitta pointed out the new standard that when sewer extensions are installed, Parks and Recreation can take advantage of the engineering work already completed to plan new trails. He said a lot of that planning depends on surrounding development.

Kespohl asked about the size of shoulders on the trails?

Curtis said the standard is five feet on one side of the trail and two feet on the other.

Curtis showed photos of recommended designs as well as examples of concrete versus asphalt surfaces. He mentioned that with the high clay content in Columbia soil, asphalt tends to not hold up as well here as concrete.

Saitta said a good example of that is the asphalt trail at Cosmo Park. Within a year of being built, Bermuda grass was edging onto the trail and maintenance work was needed. At Stephens Lake Park, with its concrete trails, there have not been any big maintenance issues, except for those caused by truck traffic from the ongoing construction.

Curtis continued his presentation, discussing and defining pedway and sidewalk connectors. He also discussed wayfinding markers and their importance, as well as landscaping and amenities. The guidelines offer a sort of “toolkit” on methods that could be used to improve beauty and ambience of the trails, such as park benches, water fountains, tree plantings, and rain gardens.

Kloepfel asked about how benches would be placed?

Curtis said each trail is different so benches would almost be a “custom-fit,” however, it could be recommended that the benches be placed near an attractive feature such as a stream.

Curtis said he is making the same presentation to other commissions and boards to get input and recommendations. He asked the Commission to offer their thoughts on the guidelines at some point. The guidelines will have to be endorsed by the City Council.

Kespohl commented that he has heard from many constituents regarding trail planning and development. He asked about the correct procedures when stating concerns about the route of certain trails?

Hood said depending on the details of concern, Commissioners could always contact staff or bring their concerns to Commission meetings. Staff is always willing to work with neighborhoods and wants to find acceptable solutions for everyone when there is a concern about trails.

Kespohl then asked about a timetable as to when projects were scheduled to be done?

Hood said staff would make sure he received that information.

Pauls said his concern was that the trail guidelines emphasized the difference between transportation corridors and recreational trails. He mentioned it was important to consider all uses as we move forward with new trails, as some surfaces present different challenges. He thought there might be some resistance with paving new trails, but if it was presented and approached in the right way, it would be acceptable.

Curtis commented that there was always mixed use on trails, with runners, walkers and cyclists, and the key was to try to make it work for all.

Pauls said it could be a win-win if the surface would be safe and acceptable for everyone. He said his reservation was the possibility of hard surface being installed on existing trails.

Curtis said a demo project has been considered on the Bear Creek Trail between Cosmo and Vanderveen. That area of the trail washes out frequently and is in need of a solution.

Pauls said he did not want concrete on that trail at all, as there is a lot of natural beauty in that area of the trail. He said there would be opposition to that, including himself.

Saitta said the problem on that area of the Bear Creek has been the total number of hours and staff trying to maintain that trail. He said almost 60 tons of rock was lost there last year. Once the surface washes out, it is difficult to get the hard surface back again, so it makes it difficult for use, particularly bikers.

Pauls disagreed, saying that area of the trail really can't be ridden in bad weather. He said he thought the demo was being planned for Bear Creek, because there are so many users of the MKT, that there would be too much opposition. He believes other solutions could be found for the Bear Creek, including building the trail up the same level or nearly the same as the MKT.

Curtis acknowledged that the MKT does not have the wash-out problems that Bear Creek has.

Saitta pointed out that staff does face limitations set in place by the Corps of Engineers and other regulatory agencies. There are certain things, such as building up trails, that just could not be done, with regulations that are in place.

Knudson commented on the history of the MKT and asked about what would happen when two surfaces could not exist. He asked if a dual path is built?

Curtis answered that when it is not possible to have a dual path, a hard-surface is preferred.

Kloepfel asked about the next step in the process?

Hood said the Commission could make recommendations tonight or table and discuss it at the next meeting.

Knudson moved, seconded by Kespohl, that the Commission table the issue until the March meeting for discussion.

Council Items

Hood updated the Commission on Council items:

MKT Bridges: The City has received a \$97,000 grant for improvements to Bridges 12 and 13 on the MKT. Bridge 12 is a large bridge with support structures in need of repair. Bridge 13 will be completely replaced. Staff will try to minimize impact to trail users while construction is going on.

Garth Nature Area: Councilman Janku had requested additional parking to accommodate large crowds at the leash-free area. Staff has designed a 22-space expansion which would double the parking lot at Garth. It would be designed similar to the Forum Nature Area. Council approved the design, so a public hearing will be scheduled.

Curtis asked if staff had considered porous concrete for the lot?

Saitta said they considered it, but with the clay soils in the area, it would be difficult.

Oakland Family Aquatic Center: Council has authorized the transfer of funds to install a 125-foot water slide

at Oakland. It will have a 16-foot tower and be an enclosed flume. Efforts will be made to have the slide installed in time for the pool's opening.

ARC: After the carjacking incident in November, many patrons requested more lighting on the ARC's parking lot. Staff considered a dusk-to-dawn light, but those are not attractive. Solar lighting was an appealing option, because they look nice aesthetically and they can be easily moved if needed—no wiring is involved. The environmental aspects of solar lighting are appealing as well. An interested party meeting on the subject was held prior to the Commission meeting.

Cosmo-Bethel Tennis: Four additional courts are planned in conjunction with Gentry Middle School and Rock Bridge High School, to bring the total at the complex to 12. An interested party meeting was held on this as well, and a public hearing will be held at the Council's March 17 meeting.

Knudson asked about spectators at tennis matches?

Griggs showed on the drawing where bleachers would be placed.

Capital Project Update

Griggs shared these updates:

Cosmo-Bethel shelter: The three shelters next to each other have been demolished to make room for construction of one large shelter, similar to Dexheimer at Cosmo Park.

Again Street Park: Work has been done to stabilize the stream bank.

Harris Shelter: New trees were planted near the new parking lot at Harris Shelter.

MKT: Limestone edging was installed along the steps at the Stewart/Providence underpass on the MKT. The edging will help retain rock mulch that was washing away.

PMC: Work is being completed at PMC for the new offices and repairs.

Stephens Lake Activity Center: Crews have been doing "finish work" at the new recreation facility, such as installing cabinets.

Commission Comments

Kespohl asked if it was still possible to attend the MPRA Conference the following week?

Hood answered yes, he could register on-site and be reimbursed.

Staff Comments

Hood reminded the Commission of the MPRA Conference from Feb. 26-29 and also mentioned the retirements of two parks supervisors, Jerry McCauley in January and Jim McClelland coming in early March.

Griggs said interviews for both of those positions would be conducted on March 5.

Ristow added that long-time executive director of MPRA, Dave Ostlund, has resigned and would be leaving his position in May.

Public Comments

None

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.