

# **PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

**Thursday, Jan. 19, 2006**

**Daniel Boone City Building, 701 E. Broadway**

**Mezzanine Conference Room**

**7:00 pm**

## **MINUTES**

**Commission Present:** Bill Pauls, Terry Kloepfel, Larry Hine, Julia Grus, Marin Blevins

**Commission Absent:** Dennis Knudson

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

Meeting called to order at 7 pm by Pauls.

Mike Hood addressed Chairman Dan Devine's recent resignation from the Commission. Devine has moved out of Ward 3 and will no longer be able to serve. He sent a letter to Hood and copied the City Clerk's office, so actions have been taken to start taking nominations to fill his position.

Hood said he checked with the city attorney about filling Devine's position as chair. He said it is up to the Commission to either continue until regular elections this summer or hold a special election.

Hine made a motion, seconded by Blevins, that Vice-Chair Bill Pauls act as Chair until a normal election is held in June or July. All were in favor of the motion.

The Commission decided to table the issue of selecting a new Vice-Chair until the February meeting.

**Agenda:** The agenda was amended to include a new rezoning review. The revised agenda was approved on a motion from Kloepfel, seconded by Hine.

**Minutes:** The November minutes were approved on a motion from Kloepfel, seconded by Hine.

**Monthly Report:** Blevins told Hood and Griggs he had been impressed with the presentation made at a recent meeting to the Commission by Park Ranger Arens. Blevins told staff he thought Arens was doing a great job. The November and December monthly reports were approved on a motion from Grus, seconded by Blevins.

### **Rezoning – 1504 Bass Avenue**

Griggs said the rezoning would be located south and west of Stephens Lake Park and Lions-Stephens Park. Boone Hospital is seeking to purchase the tract, which may become a parking lot.

Hine made a motion, seconded by Kloepfel to recommend to City Council that no adverse impact is anticipated from the rezoning request.

**All in favor:** Pauls, Kloepfel, Hine, Grus, Blevins

**Motion carried.**

### **Rezoning – Stephens College**

Griggs told the Commission the college's request comprises four tracts of land, on all four corners of Broadway and College, near Lions-Stephens and Paquin parks.

Hood explained that the college is interested in renovating the properties and will seek historic tax credits. To qualify, the college has leased the buildings to a developer. The tracts must be zoned C-2 to accomplish the renovations. Usage of the property will not change.

Kloepfel made a motion, seconded by Hine to recommend to City Council that no adverse impact is anticipated from the rezoning request.

**All in favor:** Pauls, Kloepfel, Hine, Grus, Blevins

**Motion carried.**

### **Rezoning – 104 Orr Street**

Griggs said the request is located near Village Square Park. No adverse impact is expected. Hine made a motion, seconded by Blevins to recommend to City Council that no adverse impact is anticipated from the rezoning request.

**All in favor:** Pauls, Kloepfel, Hine, Grus, Blevins

**Motion carried.**

### **Rezoning – 720 Rustic**

Griggs said the request in this case is an annexation south of American Legion Park. No impact is expected.

Kloepfel made a motion, seconded by Grus to recommend to City Council that no adverse impact is anticipated from the rezoning request.

**All in favor:** Pauls, Kloepfel, Hine, Grus, Blevins

**Motion carried.**

### **Nifong Park Master Plan**

Hood told the Commission that Council referred the proposed update of the master plan for Nifong Park to them for review and recommendation. The Boone County Historical Society would like to develop a historical village at the park. A draft of the proposed master plan revision has been reviewed and endorsed by the Society's board. The Society is applying for grants for the village and is seeking approval of the park master plan update as soon as possible to meet application deadlines.

Griggs added that the village idea has been in the works for about five years. On a map of the park, he pointed out various points of interest, including the Pop Collins Cabin (which is already at the park), locations of other buildings, and a gravel road that would run through the village.

Deborah Thompson, executive director of the Historical Society, told the Commission that since Nifong is considered a "history park," plans are to make the village an authentic historical experience for families.

This includes plans to restore the Easley Store building to pre-Depression times. Thompson said the Society is also considering a one-room schoolhouse that is located in southern Boone County and is searching for a small church.

She added that the Historical Society needs the Commission's and Council's endorsement of the park master plan as they apply for funding.

Kloepfel asked if the Society would be paying for all historical village acquisitions?

Thompson answered yes.

Kloepfel then asked about maintenance of the area and the exteriors of the buildings?

Griggs said that park staff would maintain exteriors only, which is similar to the agreement regarding the Maplewood Home.

Kloepfel asked if staffing and maintenance would be a problem as the size of the village increased?

Thompson said that the Historical Society has a pool of 110 volunteers who would be able to handle increased demands.

Blevins asked how the modification of the lake at Nifong Park would be affected by the village?

Griggs responded that the modification would actually benefit the village and the entire park by fitting in more logically.

Kloepfel made a motion, seconded by Grus, that the Commission recommend approval of the addition of a Historic Village to the master plan of Nifong Park.

**All in favor:** Pauls, Kloepfel, Hine, Grus, Blevins

**Motion carried.**

### **Philips Property Update**

Hood told the Commission that the lake on the property has been formally transferred as of Dec. 30, 2005.

Some earthwork has been completed around the lake and the dam and berm have been raised. The lake's holding capacity has increased and silt has been removed. The earthwork will allow a trail along the top of the berm. Hood said the lake is not open to the public yet because there is no access. Plans include access to the north part of the property via Ponderosa. By the summer, Hood added there is a good chance that a south access would be open to the property for the public.

The Department of Conservation's Community Lakes Partnership would manage fishing at the lake, as they handle other lakes in the parks system.

Hood said a top priority would be building a parking lot and developing a full master plan for the property.

Blevins asked about flooding and how the dam would hold up.

Griggs answered that the dam has a large emergency spillway.

Hood added that the DNR's Dam Safety Program would inspect the dam on a regular basis to ensure its safety. He said that the lake also qualified as a "Waters of the State" under Department of Conservation guidelines. Fishing and boating would be allowed, but no gas motors.

Pauls asked about swimming?

Hood said that staff intends to recommend using the lake for fishing and boating only.

### **Rangeline and Wilkes Building Update**

Hood updated the Commission on the background of the historic building, which is located at Field Park.

A community group has been trying to raise funds to revitalize and renovate the structure. City Council granted a one-year lease extension to the group last fall, with the new lease set to expire in September 2006. At this time, the group is required to submit a progress report on the building's renovation in March. The cost of renovation is about \$200,000. Hood said the group has put up signs, but it does not appear that any renovation work is going on. He said if Council chooses not to renew the lease in September, parks staff would have to evaluate the building and site and determine what course of action to take.

Hine said he initially supported the neighborhood group but feels frustrated that nothing has happened with the building.

Pauls asked about the possibility of keeping the outside façade of the building?

Hood said the interior is in very poor condition, but he thinks there would be a lot of people interested in preserving the building somehow.

### **MPRA Conference**

The annual conference will be held February 21-24 in St. Louis. Hood said if any Commissioners were interested in attending, let Tammy Miller know and she would take care of registration.

### **Council Items**

Hood said public hearings are planned at the next Council meeting regarding the Garth Nature Area and Flat Branch Park Phase II. At Garth, a grant has been received to fund loop trails and an area similar to the Forum Nature Area. The Bear Creek Trail would be just to the north of the new Nature Area.

At Flat Branch Park, environmental clean-up work is being done to prepare for Phase II, which will include a new parking lot, MKT Trail linkage, a walking bridge crossing over to the CVB and Chamber of Commerce building, a sprayground, and public art. The actual work may start in the spring, Hood said.

### **Capital Projects Update**

Griggs shared project updates along with photos:

MKT underpass at Providence and Stewart-is under construction and brush removal along the trail continues.

Flat Branch Phase II-environmental clean-up includes removing contaminated soil.

Paquin Park-New shelter and fence installed at the park.

American Legion Park-New fence has been installed at the archery range, as well as a new batting cage.

Nifong Park-photos shown of the newly expanded animal fence. A new restroom is under construction.

Stephens Lake-The new restroom is progressing. Riechmann Pavilion is garnering a lot of interest. The

retaining wall has been installed, and rentals of the facility will start March 1.

Antimi-The concession stand construction continues.

Twin Lakes-The leash-free area has been fenced.

Indian Hills-Shelter completed in late August.

MLK Memorial-Tiles have been cleaned and replaced. The site is still closed as work continues.

Rhett's Run-Improvements are planned for the mountain bike trail. Griggs shared the history of the trail, which was somewhat controversial when it was first designed. There was some opposition by those who wanted to preserve green space. After much debate and a redesign of the original plan, the Commission approved the trail in September 1998.

Since that time, Griggs said many authorized and unauthorized trails have been created as offshoots. This causes a lot of confusion. Griggs said the plan is to standardize signs and have a trail marking system, maintain a single competitive trail loop, eliminate all unauthorized trail offshoots, and improve the wildlife habitat.

Griggs showed the Commission and audience on a map the offshoots to be closed and how erosion along the nature trails in the area has been occurring.

Hood pointed out the intent of the improvements is not to shut out mountain bikers, but to eliminate confusion and improve the area for use by all park users.

Hine said he used to walk in the area, but has stopped because of fear of being run over by a mountain biker.

Larry Subulsky, resident, asked which trails mountain bikers are supposed to be on?

Hood showed the areas on the map.

Griggs added that there was supposed to be one trail for bikers only and one for pedestrians, but it has not worked out that way. He showed a sample of the trail markers that will be installed.

Barbi Miller, resident and member of All Sports Club, said her group did not go into areas they were not supposed to be in and that they adhered to very strict rules when it came to pedestrians. She said she has talked to Brett O'Brien and plans to walk the trail with him soon to get a better picture of what is planned. Subulsky mentioned that the original trail was cut off when the parking lot at Antimi was installed.

Hood said that loop at Antimi was created as a secondary trail, not the main trail. He added the main point of the debate is that the mountain bike trail was created as a careful compromise and that the concern now is that many fears voiced in the beginning have come to fruition.

Miller responded that her biking group is not out there to create problems. She would like a map of the original trail.

Grus asked about the signage problem on the trail?

Griggs answered that a representative of the Columbia Bike Club has admitted to building some portions of new trail out and posting of directional signs without Department approval.

Pauls stated he would prefer that parks staff only maintain and do work on the trail, not volunteers.

Hood said there are a lot of split feelings among staff about the trail. Most are comfortable with the thought of it as a recreational activity, but if improper things continue to occur, the whole issue of even allowing mountain biking in the park may be addressed. He feels it is important to work with all sides on the issue. He said most changes appear right before races—new signs, offshoots etc. He said permits are completed to lay out races and get approval, but then staff finds out later a different route was used than the one that was approved on the permit.

Subulsky asked if parks and recreation would take over all maintenance of the trail?

Griggs said that that falls under the department's Natural Resources program, but he thinks there is a compromise there because the department depends on volunteers. Griggs added the bottom line is that when a route is laid out for a race, he wants to make sure that is the route being raced.

Pauls said the trail is a gem in the crown of the parks system, and it is intended for everyone. But there have been so many cut-throughs, that it will be good to standardize the trail with park markers. He added that he thinks everyone will be happy with the proposed improvements.

Kloeppel asked for clarification about secondary trails just being open for races?

Griggs answered that the secondary trails would not be signed, but would not be closed off.

**Commission Comments**

None.

**Staff Comments**

Griggs informed the Commission that Daniel Gibbins, a groundskeeper, has been promoted to horticulturist and will take an active role in wildlife management. Advertising will begin to fill Gibbins' old position.

Grus asked about recent positions she had seen in the paper?

Ristow told her an aquatics staff member recently resigned to take a position in Jefferson City closer to her home, and the vacant Special Olympics position has just been filled.

**Public Comments**

None.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.