

Minutes of the

MEETING OF THE METROPOLITAN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION

Tuesday, April 7, 2015

Committee Members Present:

William Weber, Sarah Hietpas, Anthony Taylor, Rick Theisen, Robert Moeller, Dean Johnston, Wendy Wulff, Council Liaison

Committee Members Absent:

Barbara Schmidt, Carrie Wasley

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Johnston called the meeting of the Council's Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to order at 4:02 p.m. on Tuesday, April 7, 2015.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Chair Johnston asked for motion to approve the agenda of the April 7, 2015 meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. Hietpas motioned and it was seconded by Weber. **Agenda was approved.**

Chair Johnston asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2015 meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. Weber motioned and it was seconded by Hietpas. **Minutes were approved.**

PUBLIC INVITATION

Invitation to interested person(s) to address the Commission on matters not on the agenda.

None.

BUSINESS

Baker/Carver Regional Trail Park Master Plan – Jan Youngquist, Manager

Youngquist presented the staff report outlining the Carver/Baker Regional Trail Master Plan submitted by Three Rivers Park District (3RPD) for approval.

Weber asked if Segment B will be paved. Youngquist stated that it is owned/ operated by the DNR and is an existing state trail of aggregate and will remain as such.

Weber asked if there is any anticipated problem with Woodland Cove, Segment F, getting easements. Youngquist responded that the city approached 3RPD originally to make this a trail search corridor to serve this new development.

Hietpas asked if easements are being granted and if the trail is being developed in Woodland Cove. Youngquist stated that the developer is working with 3RPD.

Taylor asked what the timeline on this portion of the trail is. It was noted that the Woodland Cove segment will be complete in 7-10 years.

Moeller questioned the width in this section and asked why not 10 feet? Youngquist stated that it will be 8 feet until the end of the pavement life and then brought up to regional trail development standards. She noted that our Regional Parks Policy Plan does not require 10 feet; it is just a preferred width for 3RPD.

Kelly Grissman, Director of Planning for 3RPD discussed the development of the trail in its entirety and noted that when 3RPD takes it over, it will be updated.

Hietpas asked if easements will be in place at this time. Grissman responded that they will.

Theisen asked for clarification on the easements if the trail is to be widened. Grissman explained that the current easements are wider than the actual trail and so 3RPD will not need to re-negotiate easements.

Moeller questioned the excessive cost of wayfinding signage. Grissman stated that there will be kiosks and a lot of maps and information on the entire parks system, not just simple signs.

Moeller stated that this is a very exciting piece of work and complemented 3RPD and staff for bringing this forward.

Moeller motioned and it was seconded by Weber to approve the recommendation that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Baker-Carver Regional Trail Master Plan.
2. Require that prior to initiating development of the Baker-Carver Regional Trail, preliminary plans must be sent to Scott Dentz, Interceptor Engineering Manager at Metropolitan Council Environmental Services for review in order to assess the potential impacts to the regional interceptor system.

Chair Johnston called for a vote. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Grant for Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail, Edina Easement, Three Rivers Park District – Tori Dupre, Senior Planner

Stefferdud gave a presentation discussing the request from Three Rivers Park District for the acquisition of a trail easement for Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail as outlined in the materials provided.

Weber discussed his concern over the costs of easements and stated we need to ask ourselves - what is the limit. He also proposed the question – what is the Commissions role in where the trail goes and when property get so expensive. What would happen if we said no?

Youngquist discussed how/where trails are developed. In looking at this trail as a whole, there are tremendous efficiencies. She encouraged the Committee to look at the overall trail corridor. She also discussed the \$6 million Federal grant that 3RPD would lose if easements are not achieved.

Weber discussed the lack of information in the report to give proper perspective. Youngquist noted that moving forward staff can provide more information in the staff reports.

Weber asked what happened with the condo association. Grissman stated that they said they were not a willing seller and it would require condemnation. 3RPD began looking at alternatives at that time and Grissman discussed how the easements were agreed upon.

Taylor discussed his concerns with the valuation of the property. Grissman noted that 3RPD works with professional appraisers.

Wulff stated that it's an unfortunate alignment that doesn't serve the public well. She stated it is sad that the trail couldn't run along the creek.

Weber asked what the budget is for the entire regional trail. Grissman stated that most easements are coming in where they expected. She noted that there is one that they anticipate having trouble with.

Theisen asked how many more segments will there be. Grissman reviewed Figure 10 from the staff report and described each of the segments and current negotiations on the table.

Theisen asked about usage – current and predicted. Grissman discussed the differences in the trails. Edina’s trail is along a creek and Richfield is along a roadway.

Steve Sullivan, Dakota County Parks noted that the discussion today is one that agencies and their boards have with each development. He stated that the implementing agencies appreciate flexibility to establish continuity in the regional trail system.

It was motioned by Weber seconded by Taylor to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Authorize a grant of up to \$105,300 to Three Rivers Park District to acquire an easement at 7171 Ohms Lane for Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail.
 - a. The Metropolitan Council will finance the grant through the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund, with Metropolitan Council bonds funding 75 percent of the total acquisition costs.
 - b. Three Rivers Park District will match the grant with \$35,100, or 25 percent of the total acquisition costs.
2. Authorize the Community Development Director to sign the grant agreement including the restrictive covenant.

Chair Johnston called for a vote. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Grant for Intercity Regional Trail, Richfield Parkway Easement, Three Rivers Park District – Tori Dupre, Senior Planner

Stefferdud gave a presentation on the request from Three Rivers Park District for an easement for the Intercity Regional Trail as outlined in the materials provided.

It was motioned by Theisen and seconded by Weber to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Authorize a grant of up to \$150,375 to Three Rivers Park District to acquire an easement along Richfield Parkway for the Intercity Regional Trail.
 - a. The Metropolitan Council will finance the grant through the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund, with Metropolitan Council bonds funding 75 percent of the total acquisition costs.
 - b. Three Rivers Park District will match the grant with \$50,125, or 25 percent of the total acquisition costs.
2. Authorize the Community Development Director to sign the grant agreement including the restrictive covenant.

Chair Johnston called for a vote. **The motion carried unanimously.**

INFORMATION

None.

REPORTS

Chair: None.

Commissioners: Theisen asked when vacant seats on the Commission will be filled. Youngquist noted that they are conducting interviews tonight and hopes to have new members appointed by the May MPOSC Meeting.

Theisen asked about contact information for the implementing agencies. He felt this would be helpful for new and existing members. Youngquist stated that it will be provided with the orientation and she will also copy current members.

Weber discussed the equity lens implementation. Youngquist stated that staff is in conversations with the implementing agencies and noted that updates will come back to this committee.

Moeller felt it would be helpful for Commissioners to be invited to sit in on equity discussions.

Moeller asked if summer park tours have been scheduled. Youngquist stated that the tours will probably begin in July. Exact locations have not yet been determined.

Wulff thanked Commissioners for their discussion today. She felt it was very insightful.

Moeller asked about new Council Members and interaction with them. Wulff noted that she felt that Council Members (new or existing) would be happy to meet with any members.

Theisen noted that he meets with his Council Member and implementing agency a couple times a year and has found it is very helpful for communication.

Youngquist stated that this contact information will be provided for all as well and she noted that she is happy to be a part of any conversations.

Weber noted that there was an article about 'rouge' counties and the Metropolitan Council in the paper today that members may find interesting.

Staff: Stefferud gave a legislative update and discussed the Governor's recommendations. He also discussed a large appropriation for Como Zoo being proposed. He noted that the Senate Finance Committee meets tonight and will begin negotiations on the Legacy Appropriation Bill.

ADJOURNMENT

5:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandi Dingle
Recording Secretary