

Minutes of the

MEETING OF THE METROPOLITAN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION

Thursday, August 1, 2019

Committee Members Present:

Rick Theisen, Tony Yarusso, Jeremy Peichel, Cecily Harris, Margie Andreason, Bob Moeller, Todd Kemery and Lynnea Atlas-Ingebretson, liaison to the Council

Committee Members Absent:

Catherine Fleming, Anthony Taylor

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Yarusso called the meeting of the Council's Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to order at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday August 1, 2019.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Chair Yarusso asked for a motion to approve the August 1, 2019 Agenda. It was motioned by Moeller and seconded by Harris to approve the agenda. The **agenda was approved**.

Chair Yarusso asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the July 9, 2019 special meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. It was motioned by Peichel and seconded by Harris. The **minutes were approved**.

PUBLIC INVITATION

None.

BUSINESS

2019-203, Kingswood Special Recreation Feature Acquisition Master Plan Amendment and Boundary Adjustment, Three Rivers Park District – Colin Kelly, Planning Analyst

Kelly gave a presentation on the master plan amendment and boundary adjustment for Kingswood Special Recreation Feature acquisition as outlined in the materials provided.

Kemery asked about accessibility on natural surface trails. Kelly stated none of the trails are paved at this time. Kemery asked if there are any plans to install hard trails. Kelly Grissman, Three Rivers Park District stated that this park has very little visitation. The focus has been on removing structures and managing the natural amenities. They are discussing future development including hard surface trails and access to the water. Currently they are focusing ADA accessibility on existing amenities, i.e., bathrooms, playgrounds, etc.

Chair Yarusso asked if there is a development master plan. Grissman noted this is an acquisition master plan amendment and development concepts are contained within it, but there is not an existing development master plan.

Chair Yarusso asked about additional properties to the south. Kelly discussed other parcels privately owned and the camp on the southern portion of the lake. Grissman stated they are not actively looking for additional acquisitions.

Chair Yarusso asked about connectivity, i.e., trails and this camp. Grissman stated they may look at opportunity if it presents itself.

Moeller asked if the shooting range is still in use. Grissman stated that it is.

Moeller motioned, and it was seconded by Peichel to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve Three Rivers Park District's Kingswood Special Recreation Feature Acquisition Master Plan Amendment.
2. Approve the boundary adjustment adding 15.95-acres of high-quality, natural resource land on Little Long Lake in the City of Minnetrista.
3. Inform Three Rivers Park District that it must submit the Kingswood Special Recreation Feature Development Master Plan for Metropolitan Council approval prior to requesting funding for development.

Chair Yarusso called for a vote. **The motion carried.**

2019-204, Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Grant for Kingswood Special Recreation Feature (Baker II), Three Rivers Park District - Jessica Lee, Senior Grants Administrator

Lee made a presentation on a park acquisition opportunity fund grant request for Kingswood Special Recreation Feature (Baker II) as outlined in the materials provided.

Chair Yarusso asked what the balance of the fund is after this approval. Lee stated she does not have that information with her at this time but noted that there are plans for the remaining balance.

Harris stated that the \$5,000.00 for stewardship seems low. Grissman stated that there are no structures on the property to remove and as such, there are minimal needs. She noted that this area has a high quality natural resources and the plans are to maintain and improve these resources.

Moeller motioned, and it was seconded by Harris that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve a grant of up to \$547,500 to Three Rivers Park District to acquire the 15.95-acre Baker parcel located at 1755 Retreat Circle in the City of Minnetrista for Kingswood Special Recreation Feature; and
2. Authorize the Community Development Director to execute the grant agreement and restrictive covenant on behalf of the Council;
3. Consider reimbursing Three Rivers Park District up to \$182,500 from its share of a future Regional Parks Capital Bonding Program;
4. Inform Three Rivers Park District that the Council does not under any circumstances represent or guarantee that the Council will grant future reimbursement and that expenditure of local funds never entitles a park agency to reimbursement; and
5. Inform Three Rivers Park District that the funds must be incurred before the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund appropriation end date of June 30, 2020.

Chair Yarusso called for a vote. **The motion carried.**

INFORMATION

Equity Analysis Requirement for Park and Trail Master Plans – Tracey Kinney, Parks Planner and Darcie Vandegrift, Principal Researcher

Kinney and Vandegrift gave a presentation on the Equity Analysis Requirement for Park and Trails Master Plans as outlined in the materials provided.

Vandegrift discussed equity initiatives – current and planned - and then invited the Commission to participate in an exercise to help inform the development of the Equity Analysis Requirement.

Kinney discussed Park and Trail Master Plan elements including a vision statement, engagement efforts, and community input. She asked members to identify hopes – what would an equitable regional park and trail system look like. Commission members shared their ideas on post-it-notes.

Kinney shared the agency Master Planning process and Master Plan requirements, and then asked Commissioners, how would they build an equitable regional park system, what questions should the master plans address?

Vandegrift and Kinney reviewed the responses from the Commissioners, and then opened it up to questions. Next, the Commission discussed the themes they were hearing.

Kemery asked who's making decisions and how did they arrive at the final plan. Peichel discussed the importance of having a future orientation.

Chair Yarusso asked is 10-20 years long enough? He felt it might be more like a 50-year plan.

Moeller felt data gathering is not equitable. Andreason asked for clarity on the engagement process.

Chair Yarusso asked about defining current problems and if it is realistic to organize them by park.

Theisen discussed accessibility of the transportation system. Chair Yarusso asked how will changes be measured. Theisen discussed linking engagement to the proposed recommendations.

Atlas-Ingebretson discussed employment structures of those conducting work, inside and outside the organizations.

Chair Yarusso discussed how the involvement of young people and children is key to creating a vision for the future.

Moeller asked about how master plans address some of the known problems, i.e., knowledge of where parks are, safety concerns, public transportation to parks, etc.

Kemery discussed how planning will incorporate the needs of future users. He provided an example about autistic children and asked if there will be thought given to quiet areas or low stimulus areas.

Kinney pointed out that master plans can be amended as agencies learn more or conditions change.

Peichel asked about the amendment process and asked if there is an opportunity for revisioning.

Kinney stated it depends on the scale of the change. Some changes only affect small areas of a park while others require larger spaces.

Atlas-Ingebretson discussed advancing equity. She asked how historically underserved communities are made whole - addressing historic, unconscious, infrastructure challenges/inequities. She discussed the nimbleness of the master plan with population changes and asked how hard is it to change? She noted she is not looking for an answer now but wants folks to think about it.

Vandegrift discussed the timeline and next steps.

Using Location Based Services Data to Analyze Visitation to Regional Parks - Darcie Vandegrift, Principal Researcher, Joel Huting, Research Manager

Huting gave a presentation on using location-based services data to analyze visitation to regional parks outlined in the presentation provided.

Atlas-Ingebretson asked about the cost of the earlier University of Minnesota study and the cost of the Streetlight data. Huting stated he didn't know the cost of the U of M study, but the Streetlight data is free to the Met Council through MnDOT, yet he noted the Council may have to start paying \$5,000.00 per year, per user.

Harris asked when will the 2020 Census be out and how will it will be used with this data. Huting stated it will be Spring 2021 and discussed the Met Council partnership with the Census Bureau and how this information will help future park studies.

Harris asked about people who don't use cell phones in parks. Huting stated the data is weighted to help account for this. This data source will provide opportunities to understand park level patterns, which are cost prohibitive using more traditional research methods.

Harris stated she is curious about uses, i.e., data shows density in parking lots but how do we know what the people are there for? Huting stated data helps us understand where people are coming from and may help with engagement. It also may help show access issues as well as help us to target other research efforts, i.e., where to put surveyors on the ground in parks. This data source will complement our other research methods.

Peichel asked if there is a way eliminate “outliers” such as people who are repeat individuals and not representative of general use. Huting felt there is so many data points that it would not be affected by this use pattern. Peichel discussed biased samples. Huting stated it’s possible but that’s why survey data is so important. He feels it’s a good methodology.

Atlas-Ingebretson asked if the implementing agencies have learned about this data source. Huting stated they’ve had a lot of conversations with implementing agencies on this topic.

Jonathan Vlaming, Three Rivers Park District, discussed perceived potential issues of location of cell phone users. He shared his some of his board members’ concerns about using private data.

Chair Yarusso asked if the Met Council has a policy regarding what can be used and how it was obtained. Huting is not aware of a policy. He stated he is comfortable with Streetlight data as it’s patterns of travel not tracking individuals. He stated that Streetlight has a very strong policy on protection of private data. They do not collect information on individuals.

Atlas-Ingebretson received a briefing on Streetlight data and feels comfortable that individual privacy is being protected.

REPORTS

Chair: Chair Yarusso discussed the Equity Grant Program Review Committee opportunities, and stated that he is interested in understanding whether Commissioners would like to participate. MPOSC will contribute three members to this group.

Atlas-Ingebretson asked if there is a description of the Equity Grant Program and what we need. Staff said that this has been shared with the Chair.

Commissioners: Kemery met with Dakota County and discussed the Equity Grant Program and will be meeting next with Scott County.

Atlas-Ingebretson stated she is working on how feedback/comments are shared at the Community Development Committee (CDC). She asked what MPOSC members would like to hear back about CDC and Met Council conversations.

Staff: Mullin stated that the September 5, 2019 meeting will be at Keller Golf Course. The tour will begin at 3pm from the Clubhouse and the business meeting will begin at 4:30pm. He noted that a bus will be provided.

ADJOURNMENT

With business completed, the meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Sandi Dingle
Recording Secretary