

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
METROPOLITAN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION**

Thursday, March 3, 2022

Committee Members Present: Assata Brown, Monica Dillenburg, Robert Moeller, Tony Yarusso, Cana Yang, Jeremy Peichel, Anthony Taylor, Cecily Harris and Susan Vento, liaison to the Council

Committee Members Absent: Todd Kemery

CALL TO ORDER

The Recording Secretary did a roll call for a quorum.

Present – 8

Absent – 1

With a quorum being present via WebEx, Commission Chair Yarusso called the meeting of the Council's Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to order at 4:02 p.m. on Thursday, March 3, 2022.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Chair Yarusso asked for a consensus to approve the March 3, 2022, Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission agenda. The agenda was approved by consensus.

Next, Chair Yarusso asked for a motion to approve the February 3, 2022 minutes. Peichel motioned, and it was seconded by Dillenburg to approve the February 3, 2022 minutes of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission meeting.

The Recording Secretary issued a roll call vote.

Aye – 6 (Brown, Dillenburg, Moeller, Yarusso, Peichel, Taylor)

Nay – 0

Abstention – 0

The motion was approved.

PUBLIC INVITATION

As a reminder, if you wish to offer public comment at a virtual meeting, please pre-register by emailing public.info@metc.state.mn.us. You may also send us your comments by email.

Debra Jensen provided public comment on the role of MPOSC in grantmaking.

BUSINESS

2022-53, Point Douglas Regional Trail Master Plan, Saint Paul - Tracey Kinney, Senior Planner

Kinney gave a presentation on Point Douglas Regional Trail Master Plan, submitted by St. Paul, as outlined in the materials provided.

Chair Yarusso asked about trail erosion and how is it being addressed. Kinney stated there is an existing interim trail where this issue has been identified and funds are planned to be set aside for repair as part of this master planning process.

Peichel asked if the trail overlaps with any of the Pig's Eye Lake Unit restoration project, which is part of Battle Creek Regional Park. Brett Hussong, St. Paul responded that they are working with Ramsey County for future connections and noted that all trails on the west side of Highway 61 already existing and run near but not through this unit.

Dillenburg asked about the costs and fees estimated included in the Master Plan. Kinney stated the costs are estimated in 2020 dollars. Lisa Barajas, Community Development Director added as we begin updating our 2050 Plans (including the Parks Policy Plan) we look at costs to complete the system and include inflationary measures in those estimates.

Peichel asked if there is any space in the right of way for hybrid facilities? Hussong discussed the trail alignment and noted that there are places where the trail is narrow due to the alignment to Highway 61.

Chair Yarusso asked if there has been any contact with local tribal groups and if there are any concerns. Hussong stated they contacted the tribal groups, and these groups did not express concern as this is a planning document however, it was suggested to do a geo-physical study during the design phase.

With no further discussion, Chair Yarusso called for a motion. It was motioned by Dillenburg and seconded by Moeller to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Point Douglas Regional Trail Master Plan.
2. Require Saint Paul, prior to initiating any new development of the regional trail corridor, to send preliminary plans to the Metropolitan Council's Environmental Services Interceptor Engineering Assistant Manager.

With no further discussion, Chair Yarusso called for a vote. The recording secretary issued a roll call vote.

Aye – 8 (Brown, Dillenburg, Harris, Moeller, Yarusso, Yang, Peichel, Taylor)

Nay – 0

Abstention – 0

The motion was approved.

2022-55, Cleary Lake Regional Park Master Plan Amendment and Land Conversion, Three Rivers Park District - Colin Kelly, Planning Analyst

Kelly gave a presentation on a Master Plan Amendment and land conversion for Cleary Lake Regional Park submitted by Three Rivers Park District as outlined in the materials provided.

With no discussion, Chair Yarusso called for a motion. It was motioned by Moeller and seconded by Brown to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Cleary Lake Regional Park Master Plan Amendment and Land Conversion.
2. Approve the permanent release of the restrictive covenant on 0.09 acres of land within Cleary Lake Regional Park in exchange for a channel stabilization project in the regional park approved by the Council in September 2021.

Chair Yarusso asked about Peichel's previous concerns about runoff and sediment and asked if the drainage easement change raises any concerns. Peichel stated that given this is a design error correction to the easement, he does not have concerns. Chair Yarusso agreed.

With no further discussion, Chair Yarusso called for a vote. The recording secretary issued a roll call vote.

Aye –7 (Brown, Dillenburg, Harris, Moeller, Yang, Peichel, Taylor)

Nay – 1, (Yarusso)

Abstention – 0

The motion was approved.

2022-54, West Mississippi River Regional Trail, Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund (Haider), Three Rivers Park District - Chee Yang, Planner

Yang gave a presentation on a request from Three Rivers Park District for a grant from the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund program for West Mississippi River Regional Trail as outlined in the materials provided.

Harris asked if the trail will be close to the river. Yang said yes, it will be closer than the existing road.

Harris asked what is the guideline for placement near the river? Jonathan Vlaming, Three Rivers Park District responded that placement depends on the context, slopes and many other factors. He noted that the intent is not to put the trail right on the river's edge but to provide access to the river. He added that their intent is to purchase additional land from willing sellers for this trail.

With no discussion, Chair Yarusso called for a motion. It was motioned by Peichel and seconded by Harris to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve a grant of up to \$262,500 to Three Rivers Park District to acquire the 1.22-acre Haider property located at 17700 Dayton River Road in the City of Dayton for the West Mississippi River Regional Trail.
2. Authorize the Community Development Director to execute the grant agreement and restrictive covenant on behalf of the Council.

Chair Yarusso discussed the costs involved in removing structures and noted that oftentimes these existing structures are difficult to reuse.

Peichel stated his highest preference is to reuse housing stock and second is to limit landfill space, so he appreciates Three Rivers efforts to reuse even at a higher cost. Moeller agreed. The Commission discussed reuse of materials at a higher cost versus demolition and felt a future discussion on this topic would be interesting.

With no further discussion, Chair Yarusso called for a vote. The recording secretary issued a roll call vote.

Aye – 8 (Brown, Dillenburg, Harris, Moeller, Yarusso, Yang, Peichel, Taylor)

Nay – 0

Abstention – 0

The motion was approved.

INFORMATION

Equity Nudge: Making time and space to get to know one another – Amanda Lovelace, Parks Ambassador

Lovelace discussed a 'coffee time' idea, for Commissioners to meet informally with one another. She harkened back to when MPOSC Commissioners could chat informally before each meeting while getting coffee, etc. These opportunities are lost with virtual meetings. The idea of today's Equity Nudge is to breakout into small groups to take this time to talk. Due to technical difficulties this was not possible, so members shared what connects them to the outdoors and what has drawn them to this commission.

REPORTS

Chair: Chair Yarusso noted that state agencies will be opening publicly at the end of April or early May.

Chair Yarusso recognized the loss of Al Kordiac, who was known as the "father of Anoka County Parks" and recently passed away.

Commissioners: None.

Staff: Mullin stated he had no additional information on in-person meetings at this time.

Mullin announced that the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board proposed a name change for Theodore Worth Chalet to the Eddie Manderville Chalet. Mr. Manderville helped desegregate the golf course. He noted that public comments on this proposal were being accepted until April 29, 2022.

Mullin asked about the Commissioner's preferences for receiving MPOSC meeting materials electronically or if they would prefer getting hard copies mailed (not PowerPoints). Members noted that they primarily read the packet online. He asked if members preferred paper copies to let the recording secretary or himself know. Otherwise, we would discontinue this practice.

Mullin gave a brief Legislative update and shared the Governor's bonding request for the Regional Parks System Bonding Program of \$3 million. If appropriated, the Council's match will be \$2 million. He noted that the park implementing agencies have proposed their own bill that requests \$30 million. It is House File 3821 and Senate File 3321 respectively.

Council Liaison: None.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed the meeting adjourned at 5:29 p.m.

Sandi Dingle
Recording Secretary