

Minutes of the

MEETING OF THE METROPOLITAN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION

Tuesday, May 2, 2019

Committee Members Present:

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

Committee Members Absent:

Catherine Fleming

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 4:01 p.m. on Tuesday, May 2, 2019.

INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Yarusso noted that there were two new members, Jeremy Peichel and Cecily Harris who were replacing Sarah Hietpas and Mike Kopp (who did not seek reappointment). Commissioners and staff introduced themselves.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Chair Yarusso asked for a motion to approve the May 2, 2019 Agenda. It was motioned by Andreason and seconded by Theisen to approve the agenda. The **agenda was approved**.

Chair Yarusso asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the April 4, 2019 meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. It was motioned by Moeller and seconded by Kemery. The **minutes were approved**.

PUBLIC INVITATION

None.

BUSINESS

2019-87, Central Greenway Regional Trail Master Plan Amendment, Washington County - Tracey Kinney, Planner

Kinney gave a presentation on a request from Washington County for an amendment to the Central Greenway Regional Trail Master Plan as outlined in the materials provided.

Chair Yarusso commented on a crossing near a horse camp that should keep both paved and natural surfaces.

Taylor asked if there were traffic counts done and if folks would continue using County Road 17 rather than going through the park reserve. Connor Schaefer, Washington County Parks discussed the intent to connect to Park Reserve and the high bicycle usage in Washington County. He noted this is something to monitor.

Chair Yarusso felt good signage will help to let folks know bikes are allowed.

Harris asked about truncated domes on crossings and related a story where she found it difficult to traverse. Kemery discussed the recognized priority for sight impaired.

Kemery commented that it was helpful to receive comments that were included in the materials. He asked how busy is the railroad and also about the 58th Street overpass – how will it align? Schaefer clarified this will connect to the high school, so the overpass is a ‘spur’.

Schaefer stated that the rail line is Union Pacific and noted that there are several trains a day but that they are at low speeds. He noted they will work closely with the railroad on the design of this project.

Kemery asked about crossing of Highway 36. Schaefer stated that there will be an overpass.

Kemery commented that if the trail is a crushed/tamped surface rather than a solid surface it will be more difficult to maintain.

Peichel asked about drainage of the underpasses. Schaefer stated that this has been considered and discussed where the water could be drained to.

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

1. Approve the Central Greenway Regional Trail Master Plan Amendment.
2. Require that Washington County Parks, prior to initiating development of the regional trail, send preliminary plans to the Engineering Services Assistant Manager at the Metropolitan Council's Environmental Services Division, for review in order to assess the potential impacts to the regional interceptor system

Moeller asked if there were any comments on equity usage. Schaefer discussed the equity planning approach that was done throughout the planning. Moeller encouraged staff to include this information as part of the staff report.

Chair Yarusso asked about the connection to this trail from the West. Schaefer stated that they believe County Road 14 will have a trail when the road maintenance is done. They also foresee a trail along 10th as well.

Atlas-Ingebretson discussed the importance of promoting this and encouraging participation. Schaefer discussed the large population of Latinos residing at Cimarron (a mobile home park in the area) and a meeting held with them to provide more programming. Washington County staff are currently working on this.

Atlas-Ingebretson discussed legacy funds that are under-utilized that are specifically for programming and promoting parks.

Moeller felt this is a great conversation and would like to see more of this in the presentation to CDC and also to be a part of the Master Plans.

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

2019-88, Luce Line Regional Trail Master Plan, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board - Colin Kelly, Planning Analyst

Kelly gave a presentation on the Luce Line Regional Trail Master Plan from the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) as outlined in the materials provided.

Atlas-Ingebretson asked about the Basset Creek Park area and the alignment shift south. She asked where the northern access for the Harris neighborhood would be. Adam Arvidson, Minneapolis Parks noted that all trails on the north side of the creek will remain as they are today. He also showed where connections would be.

Atlas-Ingebretson asked about the access north of Hwy 55. Arvidson noted that the new bike track being constructed and where it will loop around to provide a connection.

Atlas-Ingebretson noted that this is where she grew up and still uses these trails now. She asked what is planned to maintain habitats and also to maintain lower speeds on the trails. Arvidson discussed the Wirth Park Master Plan that has restricted mountain biking. He also discussed the lack of signage and a future allocation that they hope to use for strategic signage. Atlas-Ingebretson stated it is really important to maintain access to north Minneapolis.

Harris asked about system use estimates and how that is done. Mullin discussed a survey that is done annually.

Kemery asked a clarifying question – are pedestrian and bike trails separate? Arvidson discussed one section where they are separate – otherwise they are combined.

Kemery asked what happens if Canadian Pacific doesn't sell. Arvidson stated they will wait them out.

Andreason asked about public engagement – what were the themes? Arvidson stated the engagement was done as part of a larger project engagement. People talked about wanting more linear connectivity. He also discussed the creek that now divides north/south Minneapolis and the new crossing that will bridge the two communities.

Taylor felt engagement was done well and with other opportunities of work being done in Glenwood. He discussed wayfinding and programming in the park and asked if it will be increased. Arvidson stated there are no specific plans now for programming in Basset Creek but he discussed future plans for that. He also discussed future plans for wayfinding within the City. He noted they are focusing south of Glenwood and have not been approached by developers.

Chair Yarusso asked about the lack of an estimated cost of acquisition and if the master plan would need to be amended once a number was available. Mullin will look into this.

Motion by Andreason and seconded by Harris to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Luce Line Regional Trail Master Plan.
2. Require that the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, prior to initiating development of the regional trail, send preliminary plans to the Engineering Services Assistant Manager at the Metropolitan Council's Environmental Services Division, for review in order to assess the potential impacts to the regional interceptor system.

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

2019-90, Future Reimbursement Considerations for Anoka and Dakota Counties - Deb Jensen, Senior Parks Financial Planner

Jensen discussed requests from Anoka and Dakota Counties outlined in the materials provided. The requests are for future reimbursement of the projects listed.

Mullin noted that an information item on future reimbursement considerations will be brought forward in June.

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

1. Consider reimbursing Anoka County up to \$50,000 from its share of a future Regional Parks Bonding Program for costs it incurs to build a segment of the Coon Creek Regional Trail.

Project Title	Amount
Design and Construct the Coon Creek Regional Trail along Coon Rapids Boulevard to fill a gap of approximately 2000 linear feet between Avocet Street and Egret Boulevard in the City of Coon Rapids.	\$50,000

Total **\$50,000**

2. Consider reimbursing Dakota County up to \$7,407,134 from its share of a future Regional Parks Bonding Program for costs it incurs to design and construct the following five projects in Dakota County, as per Exhibit 2.

Project Title	Amount
1. Design and Construct the Rosemount East Segment of the Mississippi River Regional Trail	\$2,000,000
2. Design and Construct the Cedar Nicols Trailhead for the Minnesota River Greenway Regional Trail	\$440,000
3. Design and Construct the Burnsville Segment of the Lake Marion Greenway Regional Trail	\$2,390,000
4. Design and Construct Grade-Separated Crossing of Robert Street for the River to River Greenway Regional Trail	\$1,844,500
5. Design and Construct Master Plan Improvements at Lake Byllesby Regional Park	\$732,634
Total	\$7,407,134

3. Inform Anoka County and Dakota County that the Council does not under any circumstances represent or guarantee that it will reimburse the Counties and that expenditure of local funds never entitles a park agency to reimbursement.

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

2019-89, Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Grant for Phalen Regional Park, Saint Paul - Deb Jensen, Senior Parks Financial Planner

Jensen gave a presentation on a Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund (PAOF) grant for Phalen-Keller Regional Park as outlined in the materials provided.

Taylor asked if there will be restrooms added. Alice Messer, Ramsey County Parks stated they would.

Peichel recommended more color-blind friendly colors be used in mapping.

Kemery asked if these will be the only restrooms. Messer clarified that there are restrooms on the west end of the park, but these would be the only restrooms on the east side of the park.

Chair Yarusso suggested in a future Regional Parks Map that we noted where water and restrooms are available.

A motion was made by Taylor and seconded by Moeller to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve a grant of up to \$217,065.20 to the City of Saint Paul to acquire the 0.89-acre McKinney parcel located at 1298 Arlington Avenue East in the City of Saint Paul for Phalen-Keller Regional Park;
2. Authorize the Community Development Director to execute the grant agreement and restrictive covenant on behalf of the Council;
3. Consider reimbursing the City of Saint Paul for up to \$72,355.21 from its share of a future Regional Parks Bonding Program for costs associated with this purchase; and
4. Inform the City 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.

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

INFORMATION

Equity Grant Program Update - Emmett Mullin, Manager Parks; Amanda Lovelee, Senior Outreach Coordinator; Dan Markel, Planning Analyst

Mullin, Marckel and Lovelee reviewed the different scenario's on how to build the Competitive Equity Grant Pilot Program as outlined in the materials and presentation provided. Today's discussion is intended to bring about discussion to consider how each scenario could increase equitable use and focus on policy-level advice.

The group began with discussing scenario one – Regional Equity Topic.

Chair Yarusso felt that agencies would still be competitive.

Andreason shared her concern with what the topic is.

Peichel discussed agency engagement.

Harris discussed the small pot of money for a committee and time commitment and how it's structured.

Next the group discussed scenario two – Community Engagement for Capital Projects.

Harris asked what is in-depth community engagement? Marckel discussed using money for a deeper engagement on how the project is planned and built.

Chair Yarusso felt incentive is not good. He stated when a project is awarded, we want to encourage community engagement regardless. He discussed other incentives like doing community engagement for the entire CIP.

Taylor asked how do we expand community's imagination? For example, if people know what a 'best in class' bike path looks like, we may get better feedback.

Kemery stated he would like to attend the CDC on May 6 and asked if he would have an opportunity to speak.

Chair Yarusso encouraged members to email additional thoughts to staff.

Moeller asked if we are seeing things that have been brought to the implementing agencies. Marckel stated staff will meet with them on May 23, 2019 to update them.

Next the group discussed scenario three – Public Art.

Chair Yarusso noted Legacy on Arts and Heritage is a larger pot of money available along these lines.

Next the group discussed scenario four – Community-led Projects.

Harris asked what the timeline is. Marckel reviewed the grant period.

Chair Yarusso stated this was interesting due to the unknowns but noted the potential for building relationships.

Taylor discussed the Indian Mound protest that ended with good community engagement.

Peichel suggested doing a community engagement piece where the community comes up with projects. He felt this would give them ownership.

Marckel noted that a discussion on how power is shared is another topic.

Lastly the group discussed scenario five – Open Call.

Chair Yarusso stated this puts most of the burden on the review panel to determine projects.

Harris felt there was not much innovation for a pilot program.

Theisen felt the review panel will have the burden with any scenario.

Next the group discussed general comments.

Moeller discussed goals and asked what are we trying to do – build usage from underserved populations? He asked how we measure the success of this.

Mullin stated that this is the question of the day and discussed trusting the process.

Chair Yarusso asked how we are going to measure success in 1-2 years and use that to develop scoring criteria. He discussed the big picture and asked should agencies be able to apply together or will there be a limit. He suggested the Council apply as well.

Marckel discussed Step 4 – Fund Distribution Plan and the next steps.

Mullin noted that this is the first year and noted it is a pilot. He stated we can hope to learn and improve going forward.

REPORTS

Chair: Chair Yarusso noted that there is a press release on the lawsuit regarding the naming of Bde Maka Ska. He noted that we do not have any purview over naming, but we do care about community engagement.

Commissioners: Kemery stated he is working closely with Dakota County Parks.

Moeller discussed wayfinding signage and encouraged the Met Council to be a convener to put together best practices for all to use. He discussed the question of transportation speed biking vs. leisure speed biking and encouraged the Met Council to again convene a meeting to look at this.

Moeller also commented on staff's thrive equity report included in the staff reports and stated he like seeing that.

Moeller also discuss meeting the Met Council Chair, Nora Slawik on a Carver County bus tour.

Taylor stated that bike speeds is being discussed and they are trying to shift the idea of whoever is moving the fastest has the right of way to whoever is fastest has the most responsibility.

Staff: Mullin gave a legislative update.

Mullin discussed the July 4 MPOSC meeting will need to be moved. He stated staff will poll members via email to be help the week after on either July 9 or July 11, 2019.

Moeller suggested thinking about park tours.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Sandi Dingle
Recording Secretary