

Minutes

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission



Meeting Date: June 1, 2023

Time: 6:00 PM

Location: 390 Robert Steet

Members Present:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chair, Tony Yarusso,
at large | <input type="checkbox"/> Cana Yang, District C | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anthony Taylor, District G |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monica Dillenburg, District A | <input type="checkbox"/> Tess Bouska, District D | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacant, District H |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Robert Moeller, District B | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacant, District E | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Susan Vento, Council Liaison |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cecily Harris, District F | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> = present |

Call to Order

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Yarusso called the regular meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to order at 4:07pm.

Agenda Approved

Committee members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda. The agenda was approved.

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Harris, seconded by Dillenburg to approve the minutes of the May 4, 2023 regular meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. **Motion carried.**

Public Invitation

Tom Darling, a Summit Avenue resident discussed a couple issues prior to the acceptance of the Summit Avenue Regional Trail Plan. He feels MPOSC members have an important role in determining if this is a feasible plan. He invited commission members to invite his organization, the Summit Avenue Residential Preservation Association (SARPA), to make a presentation prior to taking a vote.

Bridget Ales, a Summit Avenue resident stated she feels the plan does not respect the natural resource base. She feels that the proposed Summit Avenue Regional Trail is the first-of-a-kind trail built in such a high-density residential area. She encouraged bringing in an expert on trails to work on this plan.

Bob Cattanach, a Summit Avenue resident stated that he is not picking a side to support or oppose the trail. He discussed concerns about the planning process and feels it has not been done well. He is concerned with the finality of the Council vote and noted that once the trees are down and curbs are moved, they can't be put back. He encouraged the City to bring in a bicycle expert to advise the City on the design. He also noted that there is a lawsuit filed against the City. He encouraged the documents to get produced before moving forward.

Chair Yarusso asked staff when the plan will come to this Commission. Mullin responded that it is scheduled to come to MPOSC on July 13; to the Community Development Committee on August 7; and to the Council on 8/23.

Harris stated she would like to hear from the citizen groups.

Business

1. **2023-116:** Annual Metropolitan Regional Parks Operation and Maintenance Allocation (Aimee Junget)

Junget gave a presentation on the operations and maintenance allocation as outlined in the materials provided.

It was moved by Dillenburg, seconded by Taylor, that the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission report to the Metropolitan Council the Regional Parks System state fiscal year (SFY) 2024 Operations and Maintenance Funding requests.

With no discussion, Chair Yarusso called for a vote. **Motion carried.**

Information

1. Parks and Trails Legacy Funded Streetlight Research Project Findings and Summary (Raven McKnight)

McKnight gave a presentation on the Streetlight Research Project findings and summary as outlined in the materials and presentation provided.

Chair Yarusso questioned the reliability of inferred demographics. McKnight noted that the Streetlight data was validated by comparing it to the 2021 Regional Parks System Visitor Study data.

Harris questioned the different definitions with location-based services (LBS) data research compared to the traditional intercept surveys. McKnight stated staff will look at this question and include a response in the summary.

Harris asked if the 'out of state' visitors identified in the research are Minnesota Snowbirds? McKnight said that LBS data determines home location by where the phone rests at nighttime, not by area code.

Harris shared her thoughts on the pandemic influencing the LBS results and asked if it could be done again? McKnight stated, yes, that would be important to continue this research.

Harris asked about parks/trails that are not located near cell towers. McKnight shared that only GPS connectivity is needed to capture LBS data, which is much more prevalent than cell service.

The commission discussed many interesting nuances of this data.

Taylor asked if we could measure new visits versus return visits. McKnight responded, unfortunately we cannot. Harris asked about providing park visitors the opportunity to collect their visitation information, akin to downhill ski hills that allow people to track their daily activity. McKnight said it was not possible at this time because the data is anonymized.

2. 2050 Regional Development Guide: Exploring Shared Regional Goals and Policy Area Objectives (Dan Marckel and Colin Kelly)

Marckel and Kelly gave a presentation on the 2050 Regional Development Guide: shared regional goals and policy area objectives as outlined in the materials provided. They also touched on an existing conditions report that is in the works.

Chair Yarusso questioned having a goal of doing a better job of connecting and integrating our different divisions at Met Council, i.e., public transportation to our parks. Marckel stated this is our starting point. He discussed the benefits of conducting all system plans at the same time to better align their shared goals and opportunities for coordination.

Vento discussed ridership as a key driver for determining public transportation routes. She is new on the Transportation Commission and is learning a lot. She encouraged us to think outside the box, suggesting using school bus drivers in the summer months to drive people to parks.



Chair Yarusso asked what are staff looking for? Marckel stated staff are looking for discussions on how housing, land use, transportation, water, etc., can help parks with their goals and objectives.

Barajas noted that the Vision is the Vision for the region, not simply the Met Council. She also discussed shared goals and objectives and a comprehensive plan for the region.

Taylor discussed the concept of intersectionality and how transportation funding, which is far greater than Parks funding, could help influence and support our other systems, including better developed trails and stronger connections to link people to parks.

Harris asked how big do we want the system to be regarding acreage and miles of trails.

Moeller suggested a questionnaire or form that commissioners could fill out.

Moeller discussed needing to know what the projected size/scope of the population will be. Barajas stated that staff can share our 2050 Regional Forecast at a future meeting.

Chair Yarusso discussed the benefit of some 'homework' for Commissioners prior to our Regional Development Guide work.

Reports

1. Chair

Chair Yarusso noted the Legislature completed their redistricting work for the region. He discussed potential impacts to Commissioner districts. He also asked Mullin to send out the details of the 2023 Legislative Session Outcomes. Mullin stated he can send out a summary.

2. Committee Members

Taylor shared the exciting reopening of the Phyllis Wheatley campus, which is of historical significance, connecting black youth from North Minneapolis to Carver County. He noted that the Camp is working closely with Carver County staff to help create a connection point to youth in Carver County and in the more urban City of Minneapolis.

3. Council Liaison

Vento discussed a radio interview she heard about Three Rivers Park District working with victims of gun violence. She encouraged staff to invite this organization and Three Rivers to come present to the Commission.

4. Staff

Mullin discussed a park event this Saturday at Keller Regional Park that infuses Ramsey County's new park and trail ordinances and welcomes signs with public art.

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission meeting of June 1, 2023.

Approved this 13th day of July 2023.

Council Contact:

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