



PARK SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PLAN REFINEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

December 09, 2021

7:00 PM

Fridley City Hall, 7071 University Avenue N.E.

MINUTES

Present: Peter Borman, Mike Heintz, Dan Gourde, Maija Sedzielarz, Malcolm Mitchell, Jeremy Powers, Jordan Hurst, Traci Wuchter, Jim Stangler, E.B. Graham^[MM1], Ken Schultz,

Absent: Don Whalen, Liz Novotny, Kim Ferraro

Others Present: Candace Amberg, WSB Landscape Architect
Mike Maher, Community Services Director
Jeff Jensen, Operations Manager for Streets, Parks and Facilities
Melissa Moore, City Clerk

Mike Maher, Community Services Director, called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

1. Meeting Minutes of November 10, 2021 Refinement Advisory Committee Meeting

There were no revisions to the minutes.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

2. Preferred Community Park Concept Plan Review and Discussion

Ms. Amberg noted the exhibits in the agenda are concepts. She will review them with the group and solicit their feedback for further revisions.

Ms. Amberg described the updated proposal to Commons Park. The committee expressed support for the proposed plan, and shared hopes the Fridley School District (District) would be supportive of an agreement to implement the proposed plan. Mr. Maher met with Stephen Keeler from the District who expressed generalized support for the City's initiative to improve the area, and would be open to discussing plan details.

Ms. Amberg described the updated proposal to Community Park. Mr. Mitchell asked for more data on what trends are in recreation. Ms. Amberg said it varies community to community, and changes over time. This plan creates flexibility and allows for future changes if needed.

Ms. Amberg described the updated proposal to Moore Lake Park. Mr. Maher notified the group that the City was recently notified that the entire area was newly designated as a flood zone by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), so the original plan for the park must be significantly pulled back. The new flood plain means the City is greatly restricted in what can be done with the land immediately surrounding the lake. Mr. Jensen added that he is working with the City Engineer to determine if the existing shelter structure could be renovated to meet the new needs of the park, but improving the structure will be tough with the requirements established by the DNR. Mr. Jensen informed the group that work by Anoka County will begin in 2022 on the planned roundabout.

Mr. Heintz asked if more shelters could be added to the park, since that is a popular use for the park. Mr. Maher said that yes, more shelters could be added.

Ms. Amberg reviewed Draft Implementation Strategy - Approach #1. The spreadsheet prioritizes work to be done throughout the City. The base estimate column includes all work originally proposed by WSB for a total of \$37 million, with approximately \$14 million in alternate or deferred amenities. This approach prioritizes Moore Lake Park, Commons Park was secondary, and Community Park would wait for future work. The remainder neighborhood parks would also be prioritized except for a few that can wait for future work. Mr. Heintz shared feedback given to the Parks and Recreation Commission for a significant desire to have work done quickly on Moore Lake Park.

Ms. Amberg reviewed Draft Implementation Strategy - Approach #2. This approach prioritizes work to be complete on the three community parks sooner, along with a few neighborhood parks in underserved areas.

Mr. Scultz confirmed that in the first five years there are no committed plans to construct pickleball courts. Ms. Amberg confirmed that until deferred plans are implemented, pickleball courts will be re-stripped on repurposed tennis courts [at Commons?]

Mr. Mitchell asked for guidelines, or policy, to be established to help the City shape a plan for what activities it will provide. Ms. Amberg replied these are still high-level discussions, and her firm's plans do not get into details. Mr. Mitchell asked for a City policy to guide how the City will choose what activities to implement.

Ms. Amberg reminded the committee of the survey feedback from Finding Your Fun in Fridley and subsequent community surveys. That feedback has inspired the plans and proposals to this point.

Mr. Shultz expressed support for Approach #1 to enhance neighborhood parks for the biggest impact on residents. The committee expressed general agreement. Mr. Heintz added that waiting on renovating Community Park would provide the City more time to gather data on recreation trends if plans should change for that particular.

Mr. Borman asked if Moore Lake can not receive newly constructed buildings, how the City would provide any restroom options. Mr. Jensen replied that he and the City Engineer are exploring options for improving the existing building, or possibly creating a vaulted restroom. Ms. Sedzielarz asked for timeline for when staff would know more information. Mr. Jensen said hopefully in the next few months. The DNR

and the City are still working on restrictions and possibilities to figure out the potential engineering solutions for the park.

Mr. Maher reminded the committee this is a long process and the City will still be working on the plan in ten years. What the committee is tasked with, right now, is a preliminary planning process. The committee is charting a basic roadmap for the City. He asked if the committee with the amount of information given on Approach #1, if they are comfortable with staff drafting a proposal, from tonight's discussions and feedback, for the committee to consider at its next meeting.

Mr. Heintz said yes, and acknowledged the City will need to address future changes as the plan is implemented.

Mr. Schultz added Approach #1 shows most immediate impact for residents.

Mr. Stangler Approach #2 because he does not feel Approach #1 serves certain youth activities, such as baseball, but understands the value in Approach #1.

Mr. Maher restated his perception of a consensus of the committee to endorse Approach #1 as a general guiding plan, knowing there will be changes and modifications based on cost and environmental conditions the City finds as work begins.

Mr. Heintz motioned that the Financing Committee formally endorse Approach #1, which should be recommended to the Fridley City Council. Seconded by Mr. Mitchell. All committee members voting aye.

3. Review Next Steps and Proposed Future Meeting Dates

Mr. Maher thanked the committee for their time, effort and dedication.

ADJOURN 8:40