

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
390 N. Robert Street, St. Paul, MN 55101

MEETING OF
METROPOLITAN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION
May 1, 2007

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Glen Skovholt, Barb Schmidt, Richard Jabs, Gary Botzek, Emily Barbeau, Robert Wicklund

ABSENT: Lars Erdahl, Michael Rainville, Daniel Shlaferman, Natalie Steffen, Metropolitan Council Liaison to the Commission

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Skovholt called the meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to order at 4:03 p.m. on May 1, 2007.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA & MINUTES

Commissioner Wicklund motioned to approve the May 1, 2007 agenda and the April 10, 2007 minutes. Commissioner Barbeau seconded the motion. **The motion carried.**

PUBLIC INVITATION: Invitation to Interested Persons to Address the Commission on Matters Not on the Agenda (Each speaker is limited to a five-minute presentation.)

None.

BUSINESS:

Cedar Lake Regional Park Acquisition Master Plan and Request for Acquisition Opportunity Fund Grant, Scott County - Arne Stefferud, Planning Analyst

Stefferud did a PowerPoint presentation to discuss:

- Master Plan review
- Acquisition opportunity grant request
- Reimbursement consideration for County funding

Stefferud noted that Scott County is requesting a DNR Metro Greenway Grant and if granted, it would reduce the amount of future reimbursement consideration.

Wicklund asked who operates the two public boat accesses now. Stefferud stated that the DNR does.

Wicklund asked about the poor water quality and asked if there are any plans in the Master Plan to deal with it. Stefferud concurred that the water quality is poor and discussed actions being taken to remedy this including expanding sewer service. He also noted that converting existing farm fields to park land will lower the phosphorus content in the lake. He further stated that it remains to be seen if a swim beach would be developed.

Wicklund asked about the lots noted to be divided. Patricia Freeman, Scott County stated that this will aid in buffering the park's public use areas from adjacent homes, provide space for future trail access and protect some natural resource areas.

Wicklund stated he was concerned about the property (2.9 acres) that was earmarked (where the seller may or may not want to build a house). He was concerned that having this property within the park boundary creates an in-holding where the value of this property could become over-inflated. He suggested that if Scott County is not going to purchase this land now, the park boundary should be redrawn to remove these 2.9 acres.

Barbeau asked if there were restrictions being placed on the 173 acres being dedicated. Freeman responded that there are not. She noted that Scott County has had conversations with the homeowners to date and feels they have good rapport.

Freeman discussed the quality of the 2.9 acre in-holding and noted that they are also working with the land owner to establish a conservation easement. She discussed keeping the in-holding within the boundary and trust that future commissioners will decide if the cost is too high when/if the land becomes available. Wicklund stated that he is concerned that we're obligating a future commission to a commitment to buy this land by leaving it within the park boundary. Freeman stated that if others feel strongly about this boundary, other means of conservation can be looked at. Mark Themig, Scott County stated that this is part of the purchase agreement that the land owner retain this property for a possible future home site. Barbeau asked if it is likely they would consider a conservation easement. Freeman stated that it is very likely and it would allow for buffering. Themig stated that Scott County is very willing to work with the Commission and appreciates suggestions regarding this master plan. Skovholt asked if this land was not purchased by Scott County would it be sold for development. Freeman stated that it would.

Skovholt asked if there are currently homes on the partial lots noted. Freeman stated that there are on the land outside the park boundary and noted that Scott County has talked with the homeowners and they are willing sellers.

Skovholt discussed future development of the park and stated that there should be some reference to plans for the park.

Wicklund asked how much of the resort is still going. Freeman stated that the landowner stated last summer that it would be his last year.

Skovholt asked about opportunity acquisition grant fund – does the total include additional 2.5 million approved by the legislature. Stefferud stated that it did not and noted that this bill (from the LCCMR) did pass today.

Skovholt clarified that there is a one million dollar limit that agencies can request. Stefferud stated that there is. Skovholt stated that if we have more funds from the LCCMR we need to spend them and therefore may need to discuss changing this limit. Schmidt asked if Scott County could ask for an addition \$1 million after June. Stefferud stated that in the past our policy has been one grant per parcel. Skovholt stated that this could also be an issue for future discussion at a later date.

Schmidt discussed boundary potential and noted that the problem now is we are adding up inholdings and showing what a problem we have.

Wicklund moved and Jabs seconded to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park Acquisition Master Plan (Referral No. 20001-1).
2. Authorize a grant of up to \$1 million from the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund to Scott County to partially fund the acquisition of the Cedar Lake Farm Resort parcel for Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park.
3. Allow up to \$3,526,192 of the acquisition costs of the Cedar Lake Farm Resort parcel to be eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional parks CIP. The reimbursement amount will be reduced by any DNR Metro Greenways grant provided for this parcel. The Council does not under any circumstances represent or guarantee that reimbursement will be granted, and expenditure of local funds never entitles a park agency to reimbursement.

Wicklund amended his motion suggesting that the 2.9 acre parcel be removed from the Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park Acquisition Master Plan.

Schmidt seconded the amended motion. **The motion carried.**

REPORTS

Chair: Skovholt referenced an April 30 memo regarding the reconsideration of Park Agency share for 2008-2013 Regional Park CIP. He suggested holding a special meeting to discuss a 70/30 split vs. the 80/20 split that the Commission took action on at the April 10, 2007 MPOSC meeting.

Barbeau discussed her concern with the previous action and her desire to reconsider.

Skovholt polled members and it was decided to hold a special meeting. The date was tentatively set for May 8, 2007 with a start time of 5:00pm to accommodate members.

Boe Carlson, Three Rivers Park District commented that he feels that this topic has been discussed at length and it is time to move forward. He discussed the future opportunity have a broader philosophical debate in two years.

Mike Kimble, Minneapolis Park and Recreation stated that he wants to make sure that when this topic is discussed next week that we don't lose sight of each agency receiving its fair share each biennium. Skovholt asked for clarification, rather than saying 'fair share' are we looking for guaranteed dollar amounts. Kimble stated yes, and that no agency's projects get 'bumped'. He stated that he would like this stated in the motion.

Steve Sullivan, Dakota County stated he would like to discuss what the principals are that are driving this change in the CIP formula and what the anticipated outcomes are. In terms of the percentage, this will be a policy decision. Schmidt agreed with Sullivan and noted that one reason why we are seeking to change the formula is to level the playing field and that message should be sent to the Community Development Committee and the Council.

Botzek stated that better counts on non-local visitation needs to be a part of the motion. Beckman stated we are currently working with the Research Department on an upcoming survey.

Mark Themig, Scott County stated that he would like to see revised information regarding other funding coming through the Legislature at next weeks meeting.

Barbeau asked if non-local use information would be available in two years. Beckman stated that yes and we're looking at a system where we could afford to collect that data regularly.

Staff: None

Commissioners: None

NEXT MEETING

SPECIAL MEETING: Tuesday, May 8, 2007 at **5:00 p.m.** at 390 N. Robert Street, St. Paul, MN in Room LLA.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Skovholt adjourned the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandi Dingle, Executive Secretary

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