

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

MEETING OF
METROPOLITAN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION

November 13, 2007

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Glen Skovholt, Richard Jabs, Daniel Shlaferman, Emily Barbeau, Barb Schmidt, Lars Erdahl, Robert Wicklund

ABSENT: Michael Rainville, Gary Botzek, 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 4:02 p.m. on November 13, 2007.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Wicklund motioned to approve the December 4, 2007 agenda and the November 13, 2007 minutes. Commissioner Jabs 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:

Evaluating Land Acquisition Opportunity Fund Distribution Rules - Arne Stefferud, Planning Analyst-Parks

Stefferd did a PowerPoint presentation and discussed opportunity fund distribution rules. Park agencies have submitted acquisition needs and cash flow projections for those acquisitions. Analysis of that data by Stefferud and Fiscal Services staff results in a proposal that increases the amount for each park agency to \$1.7 million from the present to June 30, 2008; provides a grant that can finance up to 75% of the total costs; requires the park agency to provide a 25% local match that is not eligible for future CIP reimbursement consideration; and allows any local match above 25% of the total cost to be eligible for future CIP reimbursement consideration. Stefferud stated that the rules will need to be considered again in the spring of 2008 after the Legislature has appropriated any Environmental Trust Fund money for the Acquisition Opportunity Fund.

Skovholt clarified that requests can be made until funds are exhausted and it is possible that an agency may not have a request.

Wicklund asked if any rule changes would be retroactive. Stefferud stated that they could not be.

Schmidt asked about requests coming before the Commission today. Stefferud stated that the only request that would be affected would be Ramsey County's and he noted that there are two recommendations to be considered.

Stefferd discussed his analysis at length.

Skovholt asked if any of the implementing agencies wished to comment. The Commission heard comments from Three Rivers Park District, Ramsey County, Carver County, Dakota County and also Minneapolis Park and Recreation. A couple of the agencies asked to have an opportunity to take this back to their park boards for review and stated that there could be immediate budgetary impacts. Several of the agencies spoke in favor of the changes.

Wicklund noted that reimbursements are not currently guaranteed and stated that perhaps, 'a bird in hand is better than two in the bush'.

Skovholt suggested waiting to take action on this item, as it is not a time sensitive issue. Schmidt agreed noting that it would give the IA's an opportunity to bring this to their policy boards. The other Commissioners agreed. Skovholt stated that this item will be brought back to our December 4, 2007 MPOSC meeting.

No action was taken.

Request for Acquisition Opportunity Grant to partially finance the acquisition of Parcel #6 in Battle Creek Regional Park and request for reimbursement consideration in future regional parks CIP for local match, Ramsey County - Arne Stefferud, Planning Analyst-Parks

Stefferd did a PowerPoint presentation and discussed Ramsey County's request. Ramsey County has negotiated the acquisition of Parcel #6, which is an inholding in Battle Creek Regional Park. The County is requesting \$116,609 to finance 40% of the cost to acquire the land from the Acquisition Opportunity Fund and also that the Metro Council consider reimbursing the County up to \$174,913 in a future regional parks CIP for its local 60% match to this acquisition. The project is consistent with the requirements of the Acquisition Opportunity Fund and the reimbursement consideration policy. Stefferud noted that Council staff recommends approval of the requests.

Commissioner Jabs motioned, under existing rules for distributing grants from Acquisition Opportunity Fund, that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Authorize a grant of up to \$116,609 from the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund to Ramsey County to finance 40% of the costs to acquire Parcel #6 in Battle Creek Regional Park as shown on Attachment 1. The grant is financed with \$116,609 of Metropolitan Council bonds in the Acquisition Opportunity Account.
2. Allow up to \$174,913 which is 60% of the acquisition costs of Parcel #6 to be eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. However, 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.

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

Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park Master Plan update, Washington County - Jan Youngquist, Senior Planner-Parks

Youngquist gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the update to the Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park Master Plan and noted that the plan has been reviewed for its consistency with applicable Council policies. Staff recommended approval of the plan.

Commissioner Barbeau motioned to approve the following recommendations that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park Master Plan (Referral No. 20042-1).
2. Require that prior to development, final plans be sent to Metropolitan Council Environmental Services for review and comment to insure the integrity of the interceptor system.
3. Require that Washington County submit more refined and detailed cost estimates for natural resources restoration work prior to requesting Council funding for these costs.

Commissioner Erdahl seconded the motion. **The motion carried.**

Request to Amend Land Exchange Approval for Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park, Washington County - Jan Youngquist, Senior Planner-Parks

Youngquist gave a PowerPoint presentation and discussed the request from Washington County. As part of the updated master plan for Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park, Washington County proposes amending the park's boundary to include 15 acres of adjacent forested land, and that the County acquire this land with its own funds to partially replace the 17.7 acres it converted to a County service center in 2004. Staff recommends approving an amendment to the Land Exchange deal of 2004 which requires the County to purchase the 15 acres in the amended

park boundary with its own funds to partially replace the 17.7 acre County service center site. An additional 2.7 acres will have to be acquired by the County to fully replace the converted land for the service center.

Commissioner Shlaferman motioned that the Metropolitan Council approve the Request to Amend Land Exchange Approval for Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park, subject to execution of an agreement between the Metropolitan Council and Washington County specifying the terms and conditions of the land exchange. Commissioner Wicklund seconded the motion. **The motion carried.**

REPORTS

Chair: Skovholt noted that this may be Commissioner Erdahl's last meeting and thanked him for his service.

Skovholt discussed the awards/nomination for the Parks and Trails Council.

Staff: Stefferud noted that the January meeting would fall on New Years Day and suggested an alternative date. The Commission agreed to meet on January 8, 2008.

Commissioners: Schmidt thanked Stefferud for his memo on the LCCMR.

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, December 3, 2007 at 4:00 p.m. in Robert Room LLA.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Skovholt adjourned the meeting at 5:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandi Dingle, Executive Secretary

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