

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

MEETING OF
METROPOLITAN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION

February 6, 2008

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Glen Skovholt, Barb Schmidt, Gary Botzek, Richard Jabs, Daniel Shlaferman, Emily Barbeau, Jesse Reinhardt, Bob Moeller, Robert Wicklund

ABSENT: Dan Wolter, 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 4:04 p.m. on February 6, 2008.

SWEARING IN OF CHAIR AND MPOSC MEMBERS

The following members were sworn in:

- Glen Skovholt, Chair
- Robert Wicklund, District A
- Robert Moeller, District B
- Richard Jabs, District C
- Jesse Reinhardt, District D

Their terms will expire in January 2011.

INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Skovholt asked members of the Commission to go around the table and introduce themselves and note the District that they represent for the benefit of the two new members, Jesse Reinhardt and Robert Moeller.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES

Commissioner Botzek motioned and Schmidt seconded to approve the February 6, 2008 Agenda and both the November 13, 2007 and the December 4, 2007 minutes, which were carried over for approval due to a lack of a quorum at the December 4 Commission Meeting. 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.

APPOINTMENT:

Appointment of Richard Jabs as Vice-Chair to the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission
- Glen Skovholt, Chair

In accordance with the terms of the MPOSC bylaws, Skovholt stated his intent to appoint Richard Jabs as Vice-Chair subject to approval by the Commission.

Commissioner Schmidt motioned and Commissioner Shlaferman seconded to recommend that the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission approve the appointment of Richard Jabs as the Commission's Vice-Chair for 2008. **The motion carried.**

INFORMATION:**2008 Parks Visitor Study - Jan Youngquist, Senior Planner-Parks, John Kari, Planning Analyst-Regional Growth Strategy**

Youngquist gave an update on the process of the 2008 Parks Visitor Study and gave background.

Kari discussed the 2008 Visitor's Survey Timeline and also the advisors, peer review, DNR Staff and U of M Faculty involved. He noted that the actual survey will be done from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Shlaferman asked if the survey is going to ask questions about winter usage. Youngquist stated that the survey will ask how many times visitors use the parks summer, winter, fall and spring.

Schmidt asked if the Commission will see the questionnaire. Kari responded yes, and noted that a similar survey was just completed in State Parks.

Barbeau asked how much time is spent at each park. Youngquist stated that there will be a schedule and noted that we are looking for a good sampling of weekdays/weekends.

Reinhardt asked how this survey will be compared to the one done in 1998. Youngquist stated that the survey done in 1998 was very extensive and this one is scaled back looking at key factors.

Moeller stated that it is prudent to measure winter usage. Youngquist stated that annual use data is averaged over 4 years to compensate for anomalies, i.e., bad weather.

Jabs asked if we are considering doing internet surveys. Youngquist stated not with this survey.

Schmidt discussed annual use data estimates and suggested comparing to agencies that do actual counts.

BUSINESS:**(2008-1) Central Anoka County Regional Trail-East Alignment development master plan and request for reimbursement consideration in 2008-09 CIP, Anoka County - Jan Youngquist, Senior Planner-Parks**

Youngquist gave a PowerPoint presentation describing the master plan and request for reimbursement. She noted that this Master Plan focuses on the eastern alignment of the trail and will be nine miles long. She discussed estimated development costs.

Skovholt asked if this request was included in request to administration.

Commissioner Botzek motioned to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Central Anoka County Regional Trail—East Alignment Master Plan (Referral No. 20140-1).
2. Approve the request to consider reimbursing Anoka County up to \$125,000 in the 2008-09 regional parks capital improvement program for the construction of a portion of the Central Anoka County Regional Trail-East Alignment. 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 Wicklund seconded the motion.

Schmidt asked how much of the trail will run through housing vs. open space. Youngquist stated that 20% would be through housing and 80% through open space (including agricultural space).

Jabs asked about public meetings and whether there was controversy. John VondeLinde, Anoka County Parks stated that there was little public involvement and no controversy.

The motion carried.

(2008-6) Rush Creek Regional Trail master plan, Three Rivers Park District - Jan Youngquist, Senior Planner-Parks

Youngquist discussed Three Rivers Park District's new Master Plan for the Rush Creek Regional Trail.

Jonathan Vlaming, Three Rivers Park District discussed the public meetings held. He stated that they were well attended and noted that there were good conversations and a lot of 'fears' (of people being forced to sell) were squelched.

Commissioner Wicklund motioned to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Rush Creek Regional Trail Master Plan (Referral No. 20144-1).
2. Require that prior to development of new trail segments, final plans be sent to Metropolitan Council Environmental Services for review and comment to ensure the integrity of the interceptor system.

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

(2007-352) Request for Acquisition Opportunity Grant to partially finance the acquisition of Lakeside Ballroom in Lake Waconia Regional Park and request for reimbursement consideration in future regional parks CIP for local match, Carver County - Arne Stefferud, Planning Analyst-Parks

Stefferdud gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the request for an acquisition opportunity grant from Carver County and also the request for reimbursement consideration in a future regional parks CIP for local match.

Schmidt asked Stefferud to explain how Council bonds can be used to buy 'a house', in this case the Lakeside Ballroom building, whereas state bonds cannot. Stefferud described the process.

Shlaferman asked if there is a re-use opportunity for this property. Marty Walsh, Carver County explained that it will go through a re-use study. In the meantime, the ballroom will be leased by the seller. Revenue from the lease reduces the County's acquisition costs.

Shlaferman asked if this is the last parcel. Stefferud noted that parcels 4 and 5 are yet to be acquired.

Commissioner Moeller motioned to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Authorize a grant of \$1,000,000 to Carver County comprised of \$600,000 from the 2007 State Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund appropriation and \$400,000 of Metropolitan Council bonds in the State Acquisition Grant Account of the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund. The grant will partially finance the lakeshore land associated with the Lakeside Ballroom Parcel in Lake Waconia Regional Park as shown on Attachment 2.
2. Allow up to \$1,530,000 of costs incurred and financed by Carver County for acquiring the Lakeside Ballroom Parcel minus the lease revenue the County receives from the seller 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 Jabs seconded the motion. Reinhardt abstained from the vote as he is a paid employee of Carver County. **The motion carried.**

(2008-37) Request for Acquisition Opportunity Grant to partially finance the acquisition of 350 Water Street in Harriet Island-Lilydale Regional Park, City of St. Paul - Arne Stefferud, Planning Analyst-Parks

Stefferdud discussed the request from the City of St. Paul for an acquisition opportunity grant.

Schmidt asked what is on the property. Stefferud stated that there is a small business that is vacant (was a bait shop).

Wicklund asked if there's a public roadway between these parcels and the park. Stefferud stated that there is a road and noted that this road will stay open.

Jody Martinez, St. Paul Parks explained these parcels are adjacent to a bluff. She discussed the main park road and the benefit to cleaning up the blighted parcels.

Skovholt gave some background on option 1 vs. option 2 described in staff's memo.

Commissioner Barbeau motioned to recommend that the Metropolitan Council authorize a grant of \$122,726 comprised of Metropolitan Council bonds in the Land Acquisition Opportunity Account portion of the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund to the City of St. Paul. The grant will partially finance the land and structure associated with the 350 Water Street Parcel in Harriet Island-Lilydale Regional Park as shown on Attachment 2. Commissioner Wicklund seconded the motion. **The motion carried.**

REPORTS

Staff: Stefferud reviewed the status of the CIP request and discussed the LCCMR recommendation.

Stefferud discussed the constitutional amendment – a ballot to be put to voters where 3/8 of a cent sales tax for 25 years would be put towards wildlife, parks and trails, water, and arts. He noted that a ballot question cannot be vetoed. Schmidt asked what the division of this revenue would be. Stefferud stated that 1/3 would be for water, 1/3 for wildlife, and 1/3 would be divided between parks and trails and arts. He noted that it is estimated that \$100 million dollars each year would be generated for each.

Skovholt discussed the campaign for this constitutional amendment. Botzek noted that the lottery is not getting the job done. He stated that only 6% of every lottery dollar goes into the fund.

Beckman stated that there will be a report on the Regional Park Foundation coming in March or April.

Chair: None.

Commissioners: Wicklund commented on a recent visit to the Elm Creek Park Reserve Winter Recreation Area he enjoyed and was impressed on how well it is being used. He suggested Commissioners visit, if they get the chance.

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, March 4, 2008 at 4:00 p.m. in Robert Room LLA.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Skovholt adjourned the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandi Dingle, Executive Secretary

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