

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

**MEETING OF
METROPOLITAN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION**

November 9, 2010

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Chuck Haas, Barb Schmidt, Richard Jabs, Doug Baines, Tom Gamec, Jeff Lee, Bob Moeller, Daniel Shlaferman, Wendy Wulff, Metropolitan Council Liaison to the Commission

ABSENT: Billy Dinkel

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Haas called the meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to order at 4:04 p.m. on November 9, 2010.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES

Commissioner Jabs motioned and Commissioner Schmidt seconded to approve the November 9, 2010 Agenda and the October 5, 2010 Minutes. Chair Haas called for a vote. Commissioner Moeller abstained. **The motion carried.**

PUBLIC INVITATION:

None.

BUSINESS

Big Marine Park Reserve Master Plan, Washington County, Arne Stefferud, Planning Analyst-Parks

Stefferud reviewed the master plan for Big Marine Park Reserve submitted by Washington County. This plan updates the 1988 master plan. The master plan update builds on the previous master plan by:

1. Updating site improvements within the park reserve.
2. Preserving contiguous habitat corridors for upland/wetland wildlife, mature oak forests, and potential aquifer recharge areas.
3. Establishing native landscape buffers along the park's perimeter.
4. Limiting vehicular access to the park from adjacent roadways.
5. Including trails for bike/pedestrian, horse-back riding and cross country ski use.
6. Introducing mountain bike trails, an archery trail target loop, and campgrounds.

Mr. Brent Reibel who resides on land within the park's boundary spoke to the Commission. He described issues regarding a road easement which bisects his land, and his attempts to have the road easement vacated. Mr. Reibel requested that the master plan be changed by deleting his property from it. The Commission noted that addressing the road vacation issue and modifying the park's boundary are the responsibility of Washington County. The Metropolitan Council does not have the legal authority to address these issues. The Metropolitan Council's role and authority is limited to proposing generally what areas should be considered for a regional park (MS 473.147, Sub. 1) and to review park master plans for their consistency with Metropolitan Council policy plans (MS 473.313, Sub. 2). The park master plan was found to be consistent with Metropolitan Council policy plans.

Questions were raised about the Metropolitan Council's review of funding requests to implement projects in approved park master plans—specifically if approval of a master plan also meant approval of any controversial projects proposed in the master plan. Council staff replied that Council approval of master plans does not grant any approval of funding for projects proposed in the plan. Furthermore, the Council conducts a public review of its proposed capital improvement program, which may lead to modifying what is approved for funding. An example was given in which a project was changed based on the public review of the Metropolitan Council's parks capital improvement program. Even after a grant has been awarded for a project, modifications to the project have been made in response to public review of building permits needed for a project.

It was moved by Commissioner Gamec and seconded by Commissioner Moeller to recommend that the Metropolitan Council approve the update to the Big Marine Park Reserve Master Plan (Referral No. 50003-) and to recommend that a letter be sent to Mr. Reibel and Washington County that:

- a. acknowledges the roadway easement issue and the County's authority to determine the boundary of Big Marine Park Reserve,
- b. acknowledges that the Metropolitan Council cannot unilaterally amend the boundary of Big Marine Park Reserve, and
- c. supports amicable resolution of these issues between the affected parties.

Chair Haas, with no further discussion, called for a vote. **The motion carried.**

REPORTS

- **Chair** – Chair Haas noted that Commissioner Dinkel's absence has been due to his opening his own business.
- **Commissioners** – None.
- **Staff** – Update given on the Parks Policy Plan, noting that there have been comments in favor from Dakota County, questions regarding brownfields, and concerns expressed regarding trail accessibility from the Transit Accessibility Advisory Board. Final adoption is scheduled for December 8, 2010.

Schmidt asked staff to talk about the omission of the Highland Park proposed study area. Beckman discussed the public hearing process, etc.

NEXT MEETING

The next MPOSC meeting will be Tuesday, December 7, 2010. The meeting will be at 4 p.m. Room LLA.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandi Dingle
Executive Assistant
Community Development