

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

MEETING OF
METROPOLITAN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION

October 2, 2012

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Dean Johnston, Daniel Shlaferman, Seyon Nyanwleh, Tony Yarusso, Barb Schmidt, Emily Johnson Piper, Wendy Wulff, Metropolitan Council Liaison to the Commission

ABSENT: Bob Moeller, Carrie Wasley, Jeff Lee

OATH OF OFFICE

Recording Secretary, Dingle swore in Dean Johnston as the new Chair of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Johnston called the meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to order at 4:00 p.m. Tuesday, October 2, 2012.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES

Shlaferman made a motion and it was seconded by Nyanwleh to approve the October 2, 2012 agenda. **The motion was approved.** Piper made a motion and it was seconded by Schmidt to approve the September 11, 2012 minutes. **The motion was approved.**

PUBLIC INVITATION

None.

BUSINESS

Intercity-Regional Trail Master Plan, Three Rivers Park District - Jan Youngquist, Planning Analyst - Regional Parks and Natural Resources Unit

Youngquist reviewed the Master Plan submitted by Three Rivers for the Intercity Regional Trail as outlined in the materials provided. She noted that this is a 5 mile trail that runs through three regional park implementing agency service areas which include:

- Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board – City of Minneapolis
- Three Rivers Park District – City of Richfield
- Bloomington – City of Bloomington

Youngquist discussed the challenges involved, for example, crossing I-494. She discussed the planning process and public presentations done in the master planning process.

Youngquist then outlined the conclusions found in the staff report as well as staff's recommendations.

Piper asked if the development costs include the cost of bridges. Youngquist stated that the Master Plan shows more detail of costs, but yes, they are included.

Nyanwleh asked why the \$5.5 million grant is coming from only one implementing agency. Youngquist explained that Three Rivers Park District spearheaded this Federal Grant on behalf of all three agencies involved.

Nyanwleh asked what the challenges are for developing the trail. Youngquist stated that the major challenges include securing enough space in already developed areas and also crossing two major highways. She noted that alternative routes were reviewed in selecting the trail alignment.

Yarusso asked about additional trails southwest of this area noted on the map provided. Youngquist explained that the area Yarusso is referring to is a proposed trail corridor along a railroad corridor however this is an active railroad corridor at this time. Jonathan Vlaming, Three Rivers Park District stated that this is a progressive rail corridor – which is only a ‘search corridor’ at this time and noted that they do not see any near term transfer of land at this time.

Shlaferman asked what the timeframe for development is. Vlaming explained that the Federal Grant has specific timelines and stated that the goal is to get it completed by 2015.

Schmidt asked what is there now. Joni Giese from SRF Consulting stated that there are several different situations, e.g., sidewalks, open space, off roadway (where the current roads may need to be narrowed).

Schmidt asked about B2, 3, 4, and 5 areas shown on the map provided. Giese stated that B2 and 3 run through Taft Park and B4 and 5 run through new Richfield Parkway (part of a new development).

Schmidt asked if the trail will meet design standards (of 10 foot widths). Giese stated that there are some segments (66th Street and American Boulevard) that would remain as 8 foot width trails until they need to be replaced, at which time they will be upgraded.

Nyanwleh asked if this project would include only the regional trail corridor. Vlaming stated yes.

Piper made a motion to recommend and it was seconded by Nyanwleh that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Intercity Regional Trail Master Plan (Referral No. 50027-1).
2. Require that prior to development of new trail segments, development plans be sent to Metropolitan Council Environmental Services for review and comment in order to ensure the integrity of the interceptor system.
3. Advise Three Rivers Park District, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and the City of Bloomington that the design of any bridges crossing Trunk Highway 62 or Interstate 494 must avoid encroachment into the airspace of the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and require that any correspondence between the regional park implementing agencies and the Metropolitan Airport Commission be forwarded to the Metropolitan Council’s Senior Aviation Planner.
4. Retain the regional trail search corridor from the terminus of the Intercity Regional Trail at the 86th Street Bikeway south to the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge and the planned Minnesota Valley State Trail in Bloomington within the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.

Chair Johnston called a vote. **The motion was approved.**

Scheduling MPOSC Special Meetings for November, December and January - Arne Stefferud, Acting Manager - Regional Parks and Natural Resources Unit

Stefferud reviewed options for alternate meeting dates in November, December, and January due to various reasons outlined in the memorandum provided. The Commission reached a consensus to hold the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission Meeting on the following alternate dates:

November 8, 2012
December 11, 2012
January 8, 2013

REPORTS

• **Chair** – None.

• **Commissioners** – Nyanwleh discussed his concern with being charged admission to regional parks and asked if Commission members could be given passes to enter all regional parks free of charge.

Piper spoke to the statute and asked what constitutes compensation and also asked for guidance as to what constitutes an expense eligible for reimbursement.

Stefferud explained that if you are going to a regional park for MPOSC purposes, it is reimbursable. He will check with the Council Legal Department for clarification.

Nyanwleh clarified that he is not asking for reimbursement for past expenditures (for a family reunion), however would like a yearly pass to be allowed to look at all regional parks. Yarusso agreed and stated he feels Commissioners should be visiting parks that they are making policy decisions about.

Stefferud stated he will look into this matter and report back to the Commission at the November meeting.

• **Staff** – None.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, November 8, 2012 (due to Election Day on 11/6) in Room LLA at the Metropolitan Council.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 5:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandi Dingle
Principal Administrative Specialist
Community Development