

Gro Tonka Park Neighborhood Meeting #1 Summary

Meeting Date: 5-29-03

Location: Purgatory Creek Room, Minnetonka Community Center

Time: 7:30 p.m. (start) – 9:45 p.m. (completion)

Resident Attendance: 3/5 (start/completion)

Staff/Consultant Attendance:

Perry Vetter, City of Minnetonka Recreation Services

Craig Sinclair, City of Minnetonka Public Works

Jason Amberg, Brauer and Associates, LTD.

George Watson, Brauer and Associates, LTD.

- I. Introductions by staff, process explanation and meeting schedules were given. Next meeting is June 18, 2003 at 7:30 p.m. Meeting will be held in the Purgatory Creek Room of the Community Center (same location as first meeting).
- II. Potential program elements were handed out to those in attendance. Element ideas were taken from the Parks, Open Space and Trails System Plan (POST).
- III. As questioned before the meeting, staff explained that they have been receiving large amounts of inquiries on the development project (Sanctuary) located to the west of Gro Tonka Park and if storm water will be treated at the park. Staff explained that those issues are separate from the park planning process and that regardless of the development; there is a current problem with drainage on site that makes the ball fields unusable after rains. Water from the rains does not drain off and therefore sits on the surface of the fields. Water also backs up from the existing pond area as well. As a location that is indicated as having non-dedicated practice fields, it is desirable to have better conditions for local organizations/neighbors to use and practice at. Recreation Services does not program games/tournaments at this site and has no plans to do so. The development was continued to be discussed and staff reiterated that the developer could meet all storm water requirements on the proposed development site and not have to treat water off of the site. The planning staff and planning commission preferred treating water off of the development site (Gro Tonka Park) to achieve a more efficient treatment system. No decisions were made about storm water ponding and discussion was directed back to the park planning. The issue of the development and ponding was raised numerous times and distracted from the park planning. Staff encouraged those in attendance to continue to follow the public process by attending public meetings, asking questions of staff (planning, engineering, recreation, public works), continue dialogue with planning commission members and their elected officials.

- IV. Expansion of the tot lot was favored, as well as having separate activities for both the 2-5 and 5-12 age groups. Swings were also desired. Although the present location is not accessible, it is nice because it is away from vehicular traffic. If tot lot is moved, keep in mind the desire to distance it from traffic and roads. Vandalism has happened to the equipment over the years and durable equipment should be purchased for the improvements.
- V. A trail within the park would be desired as long as it is located on the perimeter of the park and does not take away and open space for the play fields.
- VI. The acquired property (NW Corner of park) should be incorporated into the plan to make it more a part of the park. If fill is needed for the fields, it could be taken from the hill, solving both problems.
- VII. Sledding was discussed, as this is a popular place for that activity. Although not encouraged by the city, no plans to design barriers for sledding were a goal of staff. Discussion of using the hill as fill was thought to possibly limit sledding, but the neighbors felt that it is still feasible in other locations of the park.
- VIII. Volleyball was discussed and not highly desired, although if it can be worked into a picnic area it is ok. It was not thought to be a priority and should not take away from more desired activities.
- IX. Natural habitat was discussed and thought that it could be improved. Trails through passive area could be opportunity for better landscaping/plantings that would attract more wildlife. Sitting viewing areas would then be desirable.
- X. Those in attendance were not against relocating the hockey rink if it provides for better open play space and helps solve drainage problems. It should be kept close to the warming house, as they are interrelated.
- XI. The picnic area is a nice amenity, although permanent picnic tables are nice, as they aren't moved around for the wrong purposes (snow boarding). Making the picnic area and warming house improvements were brought up by staff and thought to be good ideas. A second picnic area (SW Corner of park) was brought up by neighbors as a potential nice quiet area. All in attendance like this idea as it was located in a more passive area of the park and sheltered by large canopy trees, and protected from the sounds of Minnetonka Blvd. by a beam. This secondary picnic area should not be reserved, but used for smaller gatherings or when the main picnic shelter is being used.
- XII. The open entrance gate was brought up and desired to be kept closed at all times that the maintenance crews do not need access to the lower portion of the park. People are driving down to the lower level, which causes ruts in the grass (especially due to the drainage

problems) when they are turning around and leaving. The gate will be closed and looked at when concepts are created.

- XIII. The drainage problems of the fields were brought up and questioned as to if they are only a result of the development. Staff responded that the POST plan that was developed in 1998-2001 had indicated numerous times in its inventory of Gro Tonka Park that there are drainage problems with the fields. In addition, a baseball infield was removed in 1998 due to problems with it being so wet.
- XIV. A resident in attendance requested a copy of the POST Plan. A digital CD-Rom copy will be borrowed to him for copying and he will return the original.

5/30/03 PLV