

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
February 4, 2004**

1. Roll Call

Park Board Members Jim Calkins, Bruce Gefvert, Andrea Fiterman, Paul Lehman, Freinde Mills, and Sue Woodrich were present. Attending staff were Geralyn Barone, Dean Elstad, Dave Johnson, Perry Vetter, Mark Simenson and intern Julie Opsahl.

Chair Lehman called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

Gefvert moved and Calkins seconded a motion to approve the Minutes of January 7, 2004 as submitted. All voted "Yes". Motion carried.

3. Citizens wishing to discuss items not on the agenda

No requests were made.

4. Business Items

A. Review of Civic Center Master Plan

Barone introduced the item and reminded the board that the civic center plan had previously been reviewed by the park board. Barone indicated that staff was requesting park board direction following the evening's discussion.

Barone noted that the city council commissioned an update of the 1985 plan in 2002. She added that aspects of the updated plan include both recreational and public service uses of the site. Input used in plan development has come from the city council, park board, neighbors, and user groups.

Barone reviewed the master plan and highlighted expansion of the trail system, the addition of play equipment, conversion of the horse ring to open green space for informal soccer uses, roadway and parking improvements, natural resources stewardship and the installation of public service improvements including a water treatment facility and communications tower.

Barone then highlighted past park board actions noting an earlier recommendation to convert the horse arena to athletic use consistent with identified park board goals and objectives.

Barone noted that at the request of residents, the trails located on the civic center site would not be paved, unless needed for maintenance purposes, to provide more of a natural feel.

Barone then reviewed some changes to the master plan that have occurred since the last park board review. These changes included the addition of a pergola

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
February 4, 2004**

south of the creek and the inclusion of a message board at the entrance to the civic center.

In reviewing a time table for completion of the master plan improvements, Barone noted that a schedule was included in the meeting packet that showed completion of the water treatment plan this year; 2005 improvements would include the communications tower, roadway and parking improvements, along with the message sign; 2006 improvements to include canceling of the horse ring, and landscaping upgrades; 2007 improvements would include natural resources management (ongoing) and installation of the pergola. All remaining work would be completed in 2008.

Barone informed the board that the meeting packet included information submitted by the Minnetonka Horseman's Association (MHA) including a petition requesting continued use of the site for horse shows. Barone added that she has been working closely with Dr. Alan Bensman of the MHA, and noted that he has expressed concerns related to the wording of the community survey regarding improvements to the civic center campus. Barone informed the board that she has consulted with Dr. Bill Morris of Decision Resources who conducted the survey, and that Dr. Morris stands by the content and outcomes of the questions asked regarding the civic center. Barone added that recommendations made regarding improvements to the civic center campus are not influenced greatly by the results of the survey, but more so by the desires and needs previously expressed by the community.

Barone then asked Johnson to provide some background related to athletic participation and needs within the community. Johnson reviewed participation numbers from 1989 to 2003 and reported that overall athletic participation declined from 1989 to 2003 by 3.2% (12,111 to 12,389). During this same period, Johnson noted that youth soccer participation increased 105% from 2,056 in 1989 to over 4,200 in 2003.

In reviewing field availability, Johnson explained that community soccer fields increased from 21 in 1995 to 24 in 2003. He added that the strongest requests he hears from youth soccer organizations is the need for practice fields, although game fields are also in very short supply. Johnson noted that the city provides five of the 24 community fields currently available.

Lehman opened the floor to park board member questions.

Gefvert asked if any youth were being deprived of playing soccer due to a shortage of fields. Johnson responded that the city does not deprive anyone the opportunity to play, however the number of games and practices are significantly reduced, especially students fourth grade and up.

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
February 4, 2004**

Gefvert followed with a question on trends in activities. Johnson reverted to a comparison of 2003 activity participation to numbers compiled in 1989. He noted that soccer was up 105% during that period, while baseball was down 1.6%, youth softball down 18% and intermediate baseball up 27%. Barone added that new activities including lacrosse are gaining in popularity for both boys and girls.

Lehman followed up on Gefvert's question about future projections and asked if staff had any information regarding this. Johnson indicated that school district projections show an expected decrease in enrollment of 5 - 10% over the next five years. Barone added that city demographics indicate little change in population for ages 18 and under, with increases in the "baby boomer" population.

Woodrich supported Barone's comments regarding the popularity of lacrosse.

Fiterman asked for clarification on the number of soccer requests received and how the space is allocated. Johnson responded that field availability is unavailable for individual requests, adding that the city assigns space to youth organizations to schedule. He added that 100% of the "prime time" soccer field availability is scheduled. Johnson added that for practice field space, city coordinated teams are on their own to find space.

Mills asked for clarification of the size of space needed for soccer use. Johnson responded that the field size was age specific ranging in field size 30 x 50 yards for the younger ages to a regulation field approximately 100 x 50 yards in size.

Lehman added that from experience, coaches are able to adapt practices to whatever space is available.

Woodrich asked if other areas of the civic center were considered for the bocce ball courts. Barone responded that other areas were considered, however, placing the courts next to the community center provided accessibility to the facility for storage and senior use.

Calkins asked if the park board's previous request to obtain resident input on the addition of bocce ball as an amenity was ever acted upon. Johnson noted that a "snap" poll was added to the Web site with minimal response either way, and that the park renewal surveys now include bocce ball as a possible amenity. Vetter added that Woodgate and Boulder Creek park surveys were the first to include bocce ball as an option, noting that as these surveys come in, staff will keep the board informed.

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
February 4, 2004**

Lehman then opened the floor to public comments, noting that he would take soccer comments first, followed by general public and then Horseman's Association' comments.

Mark Broin, 14814 Timberhill Road, noted that he was speaking for both his organization (Hopkins Dynamo), and for Bill Sorteberg, Tonka United Soccer program's representative, who had to leave the meeting early.

Speaking for Tonka United, Broin indicated that the association organizes soccer programs for boys and girls ages 5-19 from the Minnetonka School District. Play occurs from late spring to the end of July. The Tonka United program has expanded from 17 players in 1978 to 2,600 in 2003, including 172 recreational teams. Of the participants, 60.5% are female. The City of Minnetonka provides Tonka United the use of Big Willow Park one night per week and Lone Lake Park two nights per week. Of the 2,004 participants, 700 are residents of the City of Minnetonka.

Broin then informed the park board that he represents the Hopkins Dynamo Soccer program. He added that living just west of the civic center, he is also a horse owner and has been for over 30 years.

Broin noted that the Hopkins Dynamo program includes 85% of their participants are from the cities of Minnetonka or Hopkins. He added that space for both games and practices is a desperate need. Broin concluded that, in his opinion, soccer would be the best use of the horse arena space.

Jean Martin, 4941 West Lane, Minnetonka, commented that her children would benefit more by having the horse arena stay. She indicated that there are other areas in the park system that could be utilized for soccer and other activities including baseball and softball. She added that the horse arena provides an opportunity for residents to see rodeo style events that other communities don't have access to.

Marvin Cleppe, 14823 Timberhill Road, noted his concerns regarding the exit suggested on the northern portion of the ice arena "A" lot onto Timberhill Drive. He was concerned about the possible increase in traffic this might cause. Cleppe also requested the addition of a sidewalk on the west side of Williston Road from the school north.

Lehman asked if the sidewalk request would be considered along with the overall civic center plan. Barone indicated it would be and that she would follow up with the project consultant and engineering department.

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
February 4, 2004**

Jim Zilverberg, 14852 Timberhill Road questioned who would pay for the improvements and expressed concerns related to the trail link from the civic center to Jidana Park and the need for play equipment on the civic center campus. Barone responded that funding would be covered through the CIP by way of the Community Investment Fund, Park, Street Improvement Fund and Capital Improvement Fund. She added that with the exception of the CIF, all funds essentially come from the taxpayers and will be funded over a period of years. In response to the Jidana trail, Barone indicated that the trail is still scheduled for this year. Barone closed by noting that the play equipment formerly located north of the well house has been removed and relocated just south of the horse ring for transitional use.

Alan Bensman, 14410 Orchard Road, spoke in support of the horse arena. He indicated that he currently owns horses in the city and is a member of the MHA. Bensman added that the arena has been in existence for 35 years and is part of Minnetonka's history. Bensman informed the park board that the Horseman's Association conducts approximately eight shows each year with 100-150 riders per event.

Bensman indicated that in addition to MHA's interest in keeping the arena, over 400 Minnetonka residents signed a petition included in the park board's packet. Bensman went on to suggest that Minnetonka could become known for the horse arena and associated traditions much like other cities are recognized for unique aspects they represent.

Bensman closed by asking for an extended two-year period to allow the MHA to prove their benefit to the community.

Bensman stated his concern over the wording of the question related to the horse arena that was included in the community survey. He agreed that soccer fields are a major need in the community, but not at the expense of the horse arena.

Duff Elleby, 18065 Breezy Point Road, Woodland, noted that he serves on the MHA. Elleby described his interest in horses and his daughter's involvement in showing horses. He voiced support to continuing to operate the horse arena and promised to bring other events from outside of the community to the Minnetonka facility.

Elleby noted that his daughter plays soccer and understands the need, but not at the expense of the horse arena.

Lehman requested a show of hands for remaining speakers and received three requests.

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
February 4, 2004**

Karrie Rand, 5885 Hillendale Road, Shorewood, spoke in support of the horse arena and indicated she has been a member of the association for five years. Rand indicated that her interest in horses dates back to high school. She stated concerns that people do not know the arena exists resulting in low attendance at events. She asked for the city to allow the Association to prove their value to the community over the next two years prior to making a decision.

Cheryl Vargo, Watertown, explained her long tradition with horses and the horse arena. She voiced support for keeping the arena.

Gwen Smith, 14801 Cherry Lane, Minnetonka, noted that she was a resident and business owner. Smith noted that she asked customers to sign the petition previously and had two additional pages to provide. Smith expressed her concerns that more soccer fields are not needed, adding that the cost to convert the arena to soccer fields was a waste of dollars because soccer is going to go away and is not here to stay. She noted that 10 years from now, horses will still be popular.

Virginia Olson, 18707 Red Cherry Circle, explained that she is a member of the Horseman's Association. She added that as a single parent, her two children benefit greatly from the arena.

Nichole Rail, 830 Stoutland Avenue, Chaska, noted that she has been involved in horses since a young age and supports the continued use of the arena.

Nichole Lovie, Watertown, informed the board that she represents the Tri-County Riding Club and would hate to lose the Minnetonka Horse Arena.

Natashia Rail, 820 Stoutland Avenue, Chaska, voiced support for the horse arena because to the users such as she, it is their recreation area.

Lehman closed the floor to public comments hearing no further requests to speak. Lehman then called for a 10-minute recess.

Lehman opened the floor to park board member comments.

Calkins asked how the master plan had changed from previous reviews by the park board. Barone informed the board that the current plan shows an expansion and relocation of the water treatment plant, the addition of the pergola, minor changes to the trails, the addition of bocce ball courts, some minor entrance point changes, utility roadways between ice arenas, marquee sign location, and the location of play equipment east of ice arena "B" versus on the church property.

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
February 4, 2004**

Calkins questioned what the plan was for the canoe landing. Barone responded that changes to the area's current use as a launch/landing area was not proposed to change. Calkins suggested making the canoe area more visible if it is to be promoted. Jeff Shoenbauer, Brauer & Associates Ltd., added that signage would also be provided to assist users in locating the canoe area.

Calkins reviewed concerns he had related to previous reports to provide improved aesthetics and landscaping and increased green space, particularly in the parking areas. He noted that this desire was noted in the post plan as well as previous conversations related to the master plan. Calkins added that he didn't feel these requests had been taken into consideration, noting that to do so around the parking areas may be difficult. Shoenbauer noted that to provide that level of detail in a master plan is difficult to do. He described the changes he sees being incorporated into the plan as ornamental in nature around the facilities with a transition to a more natural character with natural landscapes. Shoenbauer noted that some maintained turf would be transitioned to native grasses, adding that a specific delineation had not yet been defined. Calkins suggested that sugar maples not be used in the new plan.

Calkins asked if there were opportunities to promote improvements to the property south of Minnetonka Boulevard not owned by the city. Barone responded that natural plantings have occurred along the trail but not beyond that point.

Calkins questioned the amount of space needed for the ice arena facilities, noting the plan indicated 135 total. He asked if there was documentation indicating this amount of space was needed. Shoenbauer indicated that from discussions with staff, the amount of space will be adequate for most uses. Barone noted that the property west of ice arena "A" was designated as possible expansion for parking. Shoenbauer added that the desire was to not overbuild parking areas, but to instead design around what is most commonly needed. Johnson added that for general use, each ice arena building requires approximately 60 spaces. He added that 2 - 3 times per week the need reaches 110 cars, and a few times each year both arena lots as well as city hall are needed for ice arena activities.

Calkins requested the addition of green space in the parking areas, more specifically in front of ice arena "A". Calkins added a suggestion that reinforced turf areas also be considered for parking. Shoenbauer indicated that he would not be comfortable reducing the number of parking spaces currently shown. He added that the use of turf parking areas are not recommended due to the demand for parking during the winter season.

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
February 4, 2004**

Calkins asked that considering previous desires for a less utilitarian feel to the civic center campus, how does the existing master plan accomplish this desire? Shoenbauer responded that the main drive will be more aesthetically pleasing, landscaping will be improved, and parking areas will be broken up with added green areas where possible. Schoenbauer added that it is important to keep the roadway that extends through the campus down to ice rink "B" and the open green space safe and practical.

Calkins asked about the entrance concerns in and out of ice rink "A" previously mentioned by a resident and asked what the reasoning was for the northern exit on to Williston Road. Schoenbauer responded that the existing plan is based on circulation and providing a safe drop-off for arena users. He added that the goal is to make the exit clear that traffic is to go south and not north into the neighborhood.

Fiterman noted that facility users typically use the quickest way out of an area and expressed concern that there is only one way in and one way out of the civic center. She added that she understood options for creating a second exit point did not exist. Fiterman supported any changes or signage that would reduce traffic through the neighborhood.

Fiterman supported Calkins request for improved landscaping and increased green space.

Woodrich questioned the need for bocce ball. Shoenbauer noted that to be included on the master plan does not imply that the courts will be provided, that determination is made by the amount of requests received to provide the courts.

Gefvert asked about the sign that would be included at the main entrance to the civic center. Shoenbauer noted that the sign is proposed to be electronic but low key. Gefvert indicated that he felt this type of sign would detract from the natural feel of the master plan.

Gefvert noted that he uses the canoe landing and is concerned about the lack of visibility to this amenity. Gefvert suggested providing carts to assist users in hauling their canoes from the parking area to the creek.

Gefvert asked if the new trails would be maintained during the winter months. Shoenbauer noted that the trails not be plowed and are essentially nature trails.

Mills commented that she liked the master plan and felt that the trails provided excellent opportunities for users of the senior center and Williston Fitness Center.

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
February 4, 2004**

Mills asked about previous discussions related to an amphitheater on site. Shoenbauer responded that the city would work cooperatively with the church to utilize an amphitheater planned in the future on their property.

Fiterman noted that she was not on the park board when the community survey was conducted. She indicated that not having knowledge of where other horse arenas are located in the area, she was inclined to support keeping the horse arena on site. She stated that she agrees with Mr. Bensman that the question asked on the community survey is misleading. His concern was that the question did not make it clear that the arena currently exists.

Woodrich indicated that the decision regarding the horse arena is a difficult one, however, she supports the conversion to open green space for informal use based on previous discussions that have taken place. She added that she felt the master plan seems to work well in directing people to areas within the site. Although she stated it was a tough decision, she indicated that use of the area for soccer seemed to be a use that would benefit the community the most.

Calkins questioned what the city's involvement has been in the promotion within the facility. Barone responded that the city has an agreement with the Horseman's Association detailing use and maintenance responsibilities. She added that the city does not promote the programs offered by the association, but instead leaves that to their responsibility. Johnson added that the MHA is treated the same as any community organization that utilizes city facilities including parks and facilities. He commented that in all of these cases, it is the organization's responsibility to promote their events.

Calkins agreed that the decision regarding the best use of the horse arena area is a tough one. He added that it was his belief that the sport of soccer is a fad that will pass. As an example, he sees in the numbers provided by Tonka United, that participation peaked in 2000 and has trended downward since. Even with that, Calkins understands there is still a shortage of fields. With regards to the community survey question, Calkins indicated that from a scientific standpoint the question is a valid one, however, the fact it does not address the fact that the facility currently exists does bias the results significantly.

Calkins noted that the petition received is the largest he has seen since becoming a park board member and that should carry some weight. Calkins added that he felt the need to make the decision this evening was not needed since the change would not take effect for two years. He felt that the facility has value and supports giving the association two more years to prove their benefit to the community.

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
February 4, 2004**

Gefvert indicated that he supports the bocce ball courts based on the previous presentation provided by a resident. He added that the investment is minimal and the use could always change if the courts are not used.

Gefvert indicated that the decision to convert the horse arena to soccer use appears to be an easy one at first due to the popularity and demand for the sport. He expressed concern that the participation numbers for soccer do appear to have peaked and have started to trend downward. Gefvert also indicated that he felt the community survey question was not worded properly. Due to the uniqueness of the facility, he supported continued use of the site for horse area use and suggested examining other park locations for soccer field expansion.

Mills supported delaying the decision on future use of the horse arena site, however supported moving ahead on the civic center master plan.

Fiterman indicated that her dilemma was making a choice between numbers, which would favor soccer use, versus the uniqueness and lack of knowledge that the facility exists.

Lehman reminded the board that it was never intended that the decision was between soccer or the horse arena. Instead, he indicated that it was the responsibility of the park board to offer the amenities desired by those who pay taxes to the city. He indicated that it was his perception that the horse arena is not used heavily by residents, adding that this was reinforced by the number of non-residents who spoke in favor of keeping the facility. Lehman compared the decision to the mountain biking decision made regarding Lone Lake Park a few years ago. In that case, the park board felt that the vast majority of use came from non-residents and the cost to maintain trails was not seen as beneficial to the community.

Lehman indicated support for the master plan and the conversion of the horse arena to soccer use based on his belief that priority should go to community needs rather than regional needs. He added that he was not opposed to delaying the decision as long as that delay did not impact moving ahead with the overall master plan.

Lehman asked staff if it was possible to phase the project so that the horse arena decision could be delayed without impact on the remaining work. Barone responded that the master plan was developed based on input provided by several groups and the resident input process. She added that the information collected in the community survey was not the driving point behind the recommendation to convert the horse arena to green space. Barone recommended that the park board approve the master plan and if desired time remains to make changes down the road if so desired.

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
February 4, 2004**

Barone added that several of the requests made this evening were from people living outside of the community, while previous information collected came from Minnetonka residents.

Shoenbauer added that to his knowledge, only three families from Minnetonka are currently members in the MHA, and that for all practical purposes, the facility is a regional amenity. Shoenbauer added that a benefit of master planning is that the plan is somewhat flexible and developed based on existing needs. This does allow for change if so desired at a later time.

Calkins disagreed that the city does not provide regional facilities and noted Headwaters Park as a facility where most of the people launching their canoes are not Minnetonka residents. He added that the minimal maintenance the city provides to the horse arena could be made up by not mowing other areas of the park system.

Calkins indicated that he agreed with Lehman that the horse arena decision does not have to impact the rest of the plan. However, he expressed additional concerns related to the parking areas and traffic flow and needs assurances that these issues will be addressed.

Shoenbauer suggested approving the plan with caveats put in place for the council to consider. This would provide assurances that all issues of concern would be addressed. Calkins responded that concerns mentioned tonight have been questioned all throughout the process with no response, adding that changes may not be possible, however, no response has been provided. He again expressed concerns regarding parking for all facilities.

Woodrich asked if it was possible to adopt a motion approving the plan in general, adding a process over the next several months to refine the horse arena area use and parking space numbers. She supported moving the process forward.

Lehman cautioned other board members against overriding previous input provided by several residents throughout the planning process.

Fiterman asked that parking spaces near the proposed soccer area be confirmed as being adequate, and noted that she was opposed to asphalt trails within the plan unless needed for maintenance purposes.

Calkins indicated that he felt the master plan had strong points, however without answers to the issues he has raised he is unable to support the plan as

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
February 4, 2004**

presented. He added that he has been concerned that requests for changes or revisions have not always been responded to.

Gefvert agreed with Calkins and cited the Jidana trail connection as an example of the project that was not recommended by the park board, placed back in the plan by council, but never communicated to the neighbors.

Lehman offered suggestions for a motion.

Calkins questioned if the park board was scheduled to meet again prior to the March 15 council review of the plan. Barone responded that the board will meet on March 3, and added that the council review could be moved back to March 29 if needed.

Calkins asked Barone if she felt the park board could either approve the plan with recommended changes, or ask for staff responses to the issues and place the plan on the agenda for the March 3 meeting. Barone recommended the option of approving the plan with recommended changes and concerns listed. She noted that she felt the concerns of the park board were clear and could be forwarded in a record to the council.

Fiterman asked if the concerns of the board could be summarized at this time. Barone listed the concerns to include.

1. Parking issues (circulation, number of spaces)
2. Future use of horse arena (revisit at a later date)
3. Projections for future participation in soccer, lacrosse and rugby
4. Adequate parking for soccer area if converted
5. Request not to pave trail unless needed for maintenance purposes
6. Appearance of electronic sign at entrance
7. Confirm need for bocce ball courts

Fiterman complimented staff and the consultant for their work on the project. She added that she intends to follow the project each step of the way.

Calkins moved and Fiterman seconded to approve the master plan with a strong recommendation that as much green space and natural space as possible be included, that attention be given to ensure tree survival, particularly in the disturbed parking lot areas, and that the concerns listed by the park board related to parking, future use of the horse arena area, athletic participation information, natural surfaces for trail, and the addition of bocce ball be addressed and brought back to the park board for further review; and that the decision to convert the horse arena to soccer use be delayed and that the horse arena continue to be shown on the master plan.

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
February 4, 2004**

Barone asked for clarification on what Calkins intended with respect to delaying the decision on the horse arena conversion to soccer. Calkins responded that his intent was for the use not to change on the master plan pending further discussion.

Woodrich pointed out that the issue of dealing with the horse arena was included in the initial motion. Calkins responded that the issue could not be resolved without further discussion. He added that the benefit of having two years to decide on the best use exists.

Barone asked Calkins to clarify if the intent of his motion meant that the master plan gets revised to show the horse arena remaining in place. Calkins indicated that it did.

Woodrich expressed concern about the process that evolved from approving the plan with recommendations for changes to replacing the green space for soccer back to horse arena use.

Calkins, Mills, Fiterman and Gefvert voted "Yes", Lehman and Woodrich "No". Motion carried.

B. Park Renewal Concept Review – Spring Hill Park

Vetter provided an overview of the Spring Hill Park master plan developed based on input from residents who attended two neighborhood meetings on November 13 and December 11, 2003.

Vetter introduced Jason Amberg, Brauer and Associates, Ltd. who reviewed significant park improvements. Amberg informed the park board that the Spring Hill Park residents who attended the meeting were excellent to work with and provided valuable input used to develop the plan. He added that those in attendance at the meeting came to a consensus on the plan forwarded to the park board. Amberg described three separate areas within Spring Hill Park including, the northern portion consisting of open green space and athletic field use; the central "activity" area with a basketball court, play equipment, court area for specialized games, a warminghouse for skating and shade, and a horseshoe pit; and the southern area which provided a hockey rink with paved surface for inline use, tennis courts, and the preservation of trees located in this area.

Amberg added that, as proposed, a loop trail would circle the northern two-thirds of the park and the parking area would remain as currently provided and is used primarily for hockey participant parking.

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
February 4, 2004**

Vetter added information regarding the Water Resource Study, previously prepared by the city which indicates that water is designed to go through the park as part of the storm water management plan. Vetter added that while the park is defined to collect water, it is staff's intent to manage water within the park to the highest degree possible. Vetter reiterated that water will be within the park when storm water management is needed. Vetter described the process of how water is intended to flow through Spring Hill Park to Purgatory Park.

Vetter presented a petition from Spring Hill Park area residents that was submitted to him by Tim Anderson, 5145 Clear Spring Drive, who needed to leave prior to this review. Vetter noted that the petition included 34 signatures.

Lehman opened the floor to park board member comments.

Mills noted that safety was listed as a high priority by residents who completed the surveys and asked for clarification. Vetter responded that his recollection from the neighborhood meetings was that this involved after hours use of the park in most cases. He added that to address these concerns, the warminghouse area will be lit to increase security.

Mills asked about the cost of the recommendations to move both the warminghouse and hockey rink to a new location. Vetter responded that the hockey rink in place was initially installed with too high of a crown making the maintenance conditions of the ice poor. To correct this, Vetter estimated that the cost was a "wash" between both locations because, in either case, the boards would need to be removed and the asphalt replaced. With respect to the warminghouse, Vetter noted that the condition is poor and needs to be renovated or replaced at either location.

Amberg noted that the recommendation to move the hockey rink is based on the resident's desire to provide as much green space as possible on the northern two-thirds of the park. He added that the existing location segregates the park. He added that the northern area of the park is also affected by utility lines that run through the center of this area.

Fiterman suggested that staff review options for providing vegetation that would assist the water management process. Vetter responded that this would be taken into consideration at the next step beyond the master plan process.

Amberg noted that the existing turf is in poor condition and plans would include regarding of the site. He added that while this would correct the turf conditions, wet conditions will still occur following a heavy rainfall.

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
February 4, 2004**

Calkins requested that the term “native ornamental grasses” be changed to “native grasses”. He followed with a question as to why the concept plan showing a revised parking lot were not selected by the residents. Vetter responded that cost was a minor issue, however residents expressed concerns related to safety citing concerns regarding how a circle drive might increase speed through the parking area. Vetter added that amenities are now proposed to be closer to the parking area.

Calkins asked if consideration was given to placing the basketball court inside of the hockey rink as is the case in other parks. Amberg noted that residents indicated a strong desire to have a basketball court. Johnson added that in-line skating was a popular activity at Spring Hill Park and would not be compatible to basketball use.

Lehman opened the floor to public comments regarding the Spring Hill master plan.

Steve Wagner, 5200 Birch Road, noted that he has missed both meetings regarding the park due to conflicts. He indicated that he resides next to the parking lot and next to the proposed hockey rink. He expressed concerns related to the need to replace the rink that was constructed in 1999, and also stated that the existing location impacts fewer homes. He noted that the rink would back up to his lot.

Wagner stated that he was concerned that the addition of the rink and promotion of in-line skating would bring in a different clientele that would not be desirable. He disagreed with the previous statement that the parking lot is primarily used for skating, noting other summer uses of the park as popular activities. He also stated that the relocated warminghouse will be in direct site of the view from his house. Wagner felt that too much emphasis was being placed on hockey at the park, an activity that he did not feel was as popular as other amenities.

Wagner stated that the existing hockey rink did not need to be reconstructed and that existing ice conditions were adequate.

Wagner expressed concerns related to the quality of maintenance provided at the park, noting that he often mows the grass adjacent to his house himself.

Ginny Wagner, 5200 Birch Road, added that safety issues exist due to parking for soccer games conducted at the park. She indicated that soccer participants have caused damage to her yard. She noted that she felt the desire to provide increased green space was to schedule more soccer within the park. She strongly opposed the use of the hockey rink for in-line skating noting that kids would use fireworks in the rink.

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
February 4, 2004**

Wagner indicated that soccer use generates 40-50 cars parking on the street on a regular basis. She expressed additional concerns related to poor maintenance of the park, hockey rink and warminghouse. She indicated that the park only gets mowed every 14 days and that she makes her husband mow a path into the park so that her kids can use it. Wagner accused staff of lying in their statement that the parking area was primarily used for hockey and skating purposes.

Lehman asked for clarification that both Wagner and her husband were unable to attend either meeting regarding Spring Hill Park but did receive a notice of the meetings. Wagner responded that both had conflicts and that she did not understand that the planning detail would go to this extent. She closed by expressing concerns again regarding park maintenance indicating that her park does not measure up to other parks in Burnsville.

David Maxwell, 5100 Birch Road, expressed disappointment that the Wagner's did not attend the neighborhood meetings noting that residents spent considerable time discussing the issues they presented this evening. Maxwell added that he understands that the Wagner's do not like the plan, however those residents who attended the meeting approved the plan as submitted. He closed by saying that residents worked hard to develop this plan.

Greg Sax, 5116 Birch Road, indicated that regarding parking, there were no problems at Spring Hill Park. He reminded the park board that a few years ago, the board changed the policy of scheduling organized games at Spring Hill and noted that since that time parking has not been a concern.

Johnson informed the park board that a resident, Wayne Harkness, 5216 Birch Road, was unable to stay for the meeting but asked that his comments be provided to the records. Johnson informed the board that Mr. Harkness' property backs up to the proposed hockey rink location and did not concern him. Johnson indicated that Mr. Harkness did prefer the revised parking area.

Hearing no further requests, Lehman closed the floor to public comments.

Fiterman asked if there were options to the hockey rink other than the existing location or proposed locations. Amberg responded that the existing rink is located approximately 10-12 feet from a property line. As proposed, Amberg noted that the proposed property line ranges 32-40 feet from the property line with enhanced screening. Amberg added that the location of utility lines within the park further limits areas that a rink could be located.

Lehman asked for staff's recollection of concerns related to the existing rink. Johnson responded that initially, one neighbor did have concerns about the

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
February 4, 2004**

location, however to his knowledge no concerns have been reported to the city regarding use of the rink since the paving occurred. Johnson added that at no time during the neighborhood meeting process did any resident ask for the existing rink to be relocated due to concerns related to its use.

Gefvert voiced support for the master plan as presented. Gefvert moved and Woodrich seconded a motion to approve the plan as presented and forward it to the city council for consideration. All voted "yes". Motion carried.

C. Park Renewal Concept Review - Purgatory Park

Vetter provided an overview of the planning process for the park noting that neighborhood meetings were conducted on November 13 and December 11, 2003. Vetter summarized the requests of residents in attendance, noting that the strong desire exists to keep the park as a natural preserve. Vetter indicated that proposed improvements include correcting trail areas in disrepair, evaluating the condition of existing bridges and continued management of the natural areas.

Lehman opened the floor to park board member comments.

Fiterman expressed her desire to not pave the trails. Vetter acknowledged that trails would remain unpaved unless required for maintenance purposes.

Calkins asked about the status of the natural resources stewardship program at Purgatory Park. Mark Simenson, City Forester, responded that the program has been very successful to date, adding that deer continue to be a concern in generating new growth of vegetation.

Lehman opened the floor to public comments.

Al Richie, 18420 Spring Crest Drive, indicated support for the plan. He asked for clarification regarding trail improvements and tree plantings. Mr. Richie also requested consideration of a drinking fountain in the restroom facility and the possibility of an archery range in the park. Johnson responded that the drinking fountain would be added to the plan. Regarding archery, Johnson noted that the cities of Minnetonka and Hopkins share the responsibility of providing facilities and in the case of archery, Hopkins provides a range at Valley Park. He offered to provide Mr. Richie information if so desired.

Hearing no further requests, Lehman closed the floor to public comments.

Lehman moved and Fiterman seconded a motion to approve the plan as recommended, with a request by the park board for the development of a long-

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
February 4, 2004**

range management plan for the park, and the placement of a “bubbler” in the restroom facility. All voted “Yes”. Motion carried

D. Consideration of the 2005-2009 Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

Barone provided an overview of the 2005-2009 CIP. She noted that projects total \$2,578,000 over the five-year period, with funding allocated from several funds including the Park Dedication Fund, Capital Replacement Fund, Park and Open Space Referendum, and Community Investment Fund.

Woodrich moved and Mills seconded a motion to adopt the 2005-2009 CIP and forward it to the city council for consideration. All voted “Yes”. Motion carried.

E. Consideration of 2004 Park Board Action Steps

Johnson provided an overview noting previous requests from Board Members Calkins and Mills for specific items.

Calkins moved and Fiterman seconded a motion to adopt the 2004 Park Board Actions Steps as prepared by staff. All voted “Yes”. Motion carried.

5. Park Board Member Reports

Mills reported that she attended the first park renewal neighborhood meetings for Woodgate and Boulder Creek Parks. She added that she was pleased with the process.

Fiterman reported that she attended a neighborhood meeting regarding natural resources management plans for Hilloway Park.

6. Information Items

No additional items provided.

7. Upcoming Park Board Agenda Items

No changes made to the schedule provided in the meeting packet.

8. Adjournment

Calkins moved and Gefvert seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:40 a.m. All voted “Yes”. Motion carried.