

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
September 7, 2005**

1. Roll Call

Park board members Jahn Anderson, Tim Goodyear, Denny Lambert, Paul Lehman and Cathy Rude were present. Attending staff were Geralyn Barone, Dave Johnson and Perry Vetter.

Chair Lehman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes- August 3, 2005

Lambert moved and Goodyear seconded a motion to approve the Minutes of the August 3, 2005 meeting as submitted. All voted "Yes". Motion carried.

3. Citizens Wishing to Discuss Items Not on the Agenda

No requests.

4. Business Items

A. Park Renewal Concept Review – Groveland Park

Vetter provided an overview of the process to date, noting that neighborhood meetings were held on August 2 and August 23, 2005, and they were well attended by interested residents. Vetter explained that based on input received at the first meeting, three initial concepts were prepared for review. Residents then approved a Master Plan of the August 23 meeting.

Jason Amberg of Brauer & Associates, Ltd. reviewed the Master Plan approved by residents. Features of the plan included:

- Combination of natural areas and open green space
- 6' wide trail system around the perimeter
- New play equipment
- Four workout stations
- Neighborhood access trails (2)
- Landscape enhancements
- Shade structure/shelter
- Games court

Amberg opened the floor to park board member questions.

Lehman requested a more detailed summary of the neighborhood meetings. Vetter indicated that approximately 13 residents participated in the first meeting with many of the same residents attending the several meetings. He noted that primary requests centered on keeping open green space for informal play, the

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use of natural colors in play equipment amenities, seating areas and workout stations.

Lehman noted that he had attended the neighborhood meetings and added traffic issues around the park as an additional item of discussion. He asked how staff planned to address traffic issues. Vetter responded that plantings and berming would be used to restrict traffic from the park.

Lehman inquired about drainage problems that occur in the park. Vetter indicated that staff would work closely with the engineering department to correct any drainage problems that exist.

Hearing no additional park board member questions, Lehman opened the floor to resident comments.

Jim Gleason, 16814 Cottage Grove Avenue, commented that he was surprised and very pleased that all the resident input was placed into the plan. He added one suggestion, realizing that the trees indicated on the plan, are only conceptual, he suggested adjusting the southern trail connection to prevent tree loss.

Lehman thanked Gleason for his comments and noted his suggestions for changes to the plan would be incorporated at a later stage. Lehman added that the preservation of quality mature trees was a high priority of the park board and city.

Delaine Nelson, 16605 Cottage Grove Avenue, expressed approval of the plan. She asked that the location of the backstop on the informal play field be moved from the center of the park to the northeast portion of the field. Nelson also asked for a description of the play equipment planned for the park. Vetter responded the backstop could be relocated, however, staff was concerned about the proximity of the backstop to residential homes if moved to the northeast. Regarding the play equipment, Vetter explained that three containers are proposed in the Master Plan, one for children ages 2-5, one for children ages 5-12, and the third is for swings.

Hearing no additional requests for public comments, Lehman asked for park board member comments.

Lambert asked if the relocation of the backstop as proposed by Ms. Nelson would create the potential of balls being hit into the play equipment areas. Vetter agreed that this was possible, adding that the play area will not be scheduled for formal use so the likelihood of older children using the area for practice is low.

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Goodyear noted that the desire for a small basketball court was indicated at the first neighborhood meeting but not included in the Master Plan and wondered why. Vetter responded that the inclusion of the court was weighed against the neighborhood's desire for open green space and was taken out of the plan.

Lehman closed by voicing support for the Master Plan. He added that by attending the neighborhood meetings, he felt that the plan matched the neighborhood's interests.

Goodyear moved and Rude seconded a motion to approve the Master Plan as submitted, taking into consideration relocation of the backstop and southern trail connection during the design development phase. All voted "Yes". Motion carried.

Vetter informed the park board and those in attendance that a meeting notice would be sent to interested residents when a council review date is determined.

B. Park Renewal Concept Review – Westwood Park

Vetter provided an overview the process to date, noting that two neighborhood meetings for Westwood Park were conducted on August 4 and August 25, 2005. Vetter indicated that attendance at both meetings was low, with only one resident attending both meetings. Vetter noted that three initial concepts were prepared with a master concept they developed at the August 25th meeting.

Jason Amberg of Brauer & Associates, Ltd. reviewed the Master Plan in detail. He noted that Westwood Park includes a preserve area on the northern half of the park with the active area to the south being the main focus of the park renewal process. Amberg noted the following proposed improvements:

- New play equipment
- Shack shelter
- Perimeter trail loop (paved)
- Horseshoe pit
- Ornamental fencing
- Landscape enhancements
- Pull-off parking on Westwood Road (existing)
- Informal green space

Lehman noted that the Post Plan considered a basketball court and backstop at the park and questioned why these amenities were not included in the Master Plan. Amberg responded that resident concerns expressed were related to conflicts that may occur with activities for both young and older children in such a small park. The decision was made to not include a basketball court or informal

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play field. Vetter added that an athletic field and two basketball courts are located at Oberlin Park located just west of Westwood Park.

Anderson questioned if any development plans or uses were proposed for the north portion of the park. Vetter responded that this area is defined as a preserve, limiting possibilities. He noted that a future nature trail is included in the plan, but nothing else.

Lehman opened the floor to resident comments and received no requests.

Lambert moved and Anderson seconded a motion to approve the Master Plan as submitted and send it to the city council for consideration. All voted "Yes". Motion carried.

Vetter informed the park board and those in attendance that a meeting notice would be sent to interested residents when a council review date is determined.

C. Park Renewal Concept Review – Wilson Park

Vetter provided an overview of the process to date. He noted that neighborhood meetings conducted on August 4 and 25, 2005, were well attended. Vetter indicated that as a result of these meetings, three concepts were reviewed at the August 25th meeting, from which the Master Plan was developed.

Amberg reviewed the Master Plan concept and highlighted the following improvements:

- Three separate play containers
- Internal trail system
- Renovated tennis courts (existing location)
- One-half basketball court
- Sand volleyball court
- Informal green space with backstop
- Shuffleboard court
- Picnic/shade shelter
- Parking lot (existing)
- Portable restroom enclosure

Amberg noted that input received at the neighborhood meetings was excellent, and the involvement of the neighborhood was very beneficial. He added that the grade changes within the park present several challenges, especially with handicap accessibility.

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Rude noted that she attended the meetings and was somewhat concerned about the distances between the three play equipment containers. She noted that a parent could have a difficult time observing more than one child at the same time. Amberg responded that the southern container that included the swings could be moved closer to the center container, however, the other two containers may be difficult to move due to elevation changes.

Rude followed by noting that an option for the basketball and shuffleboard courts to be placed on the tennis court surface was opposed by the neighbors. Amberg agreed and indicated that the amount of use the tennis courts receive would not make this a viable option.

Lambert questioned if seven parking spots was adequate considering the new amenities being proposed. Vetter replied that Wilson Park was a neighborhood park and drew heavily from residents within walking distance of the park.

Rude questioned if the shuffleboard court was cost effective considering that residents would need to provide their own equipment.

Lehman opened the floor to public comments.

Mary Richards, 4116 Victoria Street, voiced support for the plan and requested that parking stay as proposed with the seven stalls.

Mark Eliason, 4327 Highland Road, indicated that he was unable to attend either neighborhood meeting, however, he was very pleased with the plan developed. He asked if the center play container would interfere with the "unofficial" sledding hill. Amberg responded that in order to place the container in the proposed location, it would need to be elevated and would not interfere. Lehman asked Mr. Eliason if he felt the play containers were spaced at too great of a distance. Eliason indicated that he felt they were fine.

John Winterhaffer, 15716 Lake Street Extension, thanked staff for the excellent work done in expressing the neighborhood's desires. He voiced support for the shuffleboard court, indicating that the shuffleboard equipment and tennis equipment is comparable.

Judy Winterhaffer, 15716 Lake Street Extension, voiced support for the shuffleboard court noting that it is an activity for older adults to enjoy.

Mike Richards, 4116 Victoria Street, voiced support for the plan and asked if trees could be trimmed around the tennis courts to provide better conditions. Lehman responded that tree trimming and required maintenance would be performed.

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Lambert asked if any other city parks offered shuffleboard. Vetter replied that none did. Lambert followed by asking if other parks provided equipment for use. Johnson responded that only Lone Lake Park, with attendants scheduled from Memorial Day through Labor Day, had equipment for use. He added that volleyballs, basketballs and horseshoe equipment were available through the attendant.

Lehman questioned what the cost of the shuffleboard court construction was. Amberg indicated that the cost would be between \$2,500 – \$3,000 for a concrete surface, less if asphalt was used.

Rude thanked the residents for their comments and indicated support for the shuffleboard court.

Rude moved and Lambert seconded a motion to approve the Master Plan for Wilson Park with a request to consider moving the southern play equipment further to the north, and forward the plan to the city council for consideration. All voted “Yes”. Motion carried.

Vetter informed the park board and those in attendance that a meeting notice would be sent to interested residents when a council review date is determined.

D. Park Renewal Concept Review – Glen Lake

Vetter provided an overview of the process to date. He noted that neighborhood meetings were held on August 2 and August 23, 2005. Following a review of two concept plans on August 23, a Master Plan was developed for review by the park board.

Amberg reviewed improvements included in the Master Plan highlighting the following:

- Enhanced park entrance off of Woodhill Road
- Improved trail accessibility
- Improved spectator seating
- Relocation of batting cages
- Improved baseline fencing for safety
- Safety fencing/netting for foul balls
- Expanded concession plazas on fields #2 and #3
- Landscaping enhancements
- New parking area north of field #1

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Goodyear asked what changes were made to the concept plans. Vetter responded that the changes were minimal and mainly dealt with accessibility. Amberg added that changes were also made to the seating areas and the location for future batting cages.

Goodyear asked what was proposed for height on the foul ball netting fencing. Amberg replied that the cost goes up with height, however, a 20' height was his initial thought.

Lambert asked about placement of the lighting systems that were previously approved. Amberg noted that he was working with the association regarding this.

Lehman indicated that he was concerned about the use of chain link fencing for foul ball protection and instead favored the use of netting.

Lehman opened the floor to public comments.

Tom Mooney, 5128 Woodhill Road, noted that his request for an informal "hotbox" play area for children was not included. Amberg responded that the area proposed for future batting cages could be utilized for the purpose of a "hotbox" area for the time being.

Mark Gregg, Glen Lake Mighty Mites Organization, agreed with Lehman regarding the preferred use of netting for foul ball protection. In addition, he thanked staff for the preparation of the Master Plan.

Lambert moved and Goodyear seconded a motion to approve the plan for Glen Lake Park as submitted and forward it to the city council for consideration. All voted "Yes". Motion carried.

Vetter informed the park board and those in attendance that a meeting notice would be sent to interested residents when a council review date is determined.

E. Consideration of Outdoor Ice Rink Volunteer Pilot Program

Johnson provided an introduction of the item and reviewed an informational flyer, volunteer application form and volunteer agreement form developed by staff. Johnson noted that a minimum age of 25 was included as a requirement for interested volunteers.

Rude asked if this program could be expanded to offer ice rink locations. Johnson responded that the park board may wish to expand the program, however the initial plan was to test the program at Spring Hill Park where considerable interest has been expressed by residents.

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Lambert asked if the use of volunteers was intended to supplement or replace employees. Vetter responded that the intent was to supplement existing staff and provide additional warminghouse hours currently not scheduled.

Goodyear added that he prefers that the schedule be flexible for the volunteer.

Lehman indicated support for the materials prepared and presented by staff.

Goodyear moved and Anderson seconded a motion to approve the materials prepared by staff and implement an outdoor ice rink volunteer program at Spring Hill Park for the 2005-2006 skating season. All voted "Yes". Motion carried.

Johnson noted that information would be mailed to residents in close proximity to Spring Hill Park in mid-October.

5. Park Board Member Reports

Goodyear noted that the bridge in Kelly Park is in need of repair.

Lambert noted that while visiting Big Willow Park, he came across Kare 11 filming a "Perk at Play" episode involving crossing of the creek.

6. Informational Items

No new items to report.

7. Upcoming Park Board Agenda Items

No additional items were added to the 6-month calendar. Barone noted that the joint meeting of the park board and city council will be held on October 5 at 5:30 p.m. prior to the regular park board meeting.

8. Adjournment

Lambert moved and Anderson seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 p.m. All voted "Yes". Motion carried.