

**1. Roll Call**

Park Board members in attendance included, Patty Acomb, Kyle Gallagher, Bruce Gefvert, Tim Goodyear, Denny Lambert, Elise Raarup, and Patrick Robben. Staff members in attendance included Geralyn Barone, Jo Colleran, Elise Durbin, Dave Johnson, Perry Vetter and Julie Wischnack.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

Gefvert noted that the addition of Green Circle Park needed to be added to the update on trail surfaces noted in the park board member report on page 4. With that change, Lambert moved and Robben seconded a motion to approve the Minutes of April 1, 2009 as amended. All voted "Yes." Motion carried.

**3. Citizens Wishing to Discuss Items Not on the Agenda**

Benita Stelmachers, 13808 Inverness Road expressed her comments and concerns related to traffic flow on Minnetonka Boulevard from Hwy 100 to 494. Julie Wischnack, Community Development Director, explained that the Minnetonka Boulevard Corridor Study was completed by Hennepin County last fall and details planned improvements to the road to address issues like traffic control. She suggested that residents view the plan through a link on the city's website; and contact staff with any questions or concerns.

**4. Business Items**

**A. Review of improvement plans for Minnetonka Mills Park**

Perry Vetter, Parks and Trails Division Manager, provided an overview of Minnetonka Mills Park development process and reviewed the concept plans that have been developed by Barr Engineering. Vetter indicated that the most recent set of concept plans was developed based on feedback received from four public input meetings held in 2008, as well as input received at the April 2, 2009 park board meeting. Vetter reviewed concerns expressed by the public related to neighborhood trail connections, parking and safety/security.

Vetter proceeded with a review of the concept plans for Minnetonka Mills Park that is defined by the northbound 494 ramp on the park's western edge; Minnetonka Boulevard to the south; and Burwell Park to the east. Vetter noted the following features included in the concept plan:

(East end near Burwell)

- Enhanced parking on the east and west sides of Baker Road
- Realignment of existing bike path north of parking areas at Minnetonka Boulevard and Baker Road
- Defining crosswalk areas on Minnetonka Boulevard

- Extension of new trails going east and west on the north side of Minnetonka Boulevard at Baker Road
- The elimination of proposed parking areas on the north side of Minnetonka Boulevard (where homes were removed)
- ADA trail access
- The addition of a boardwalk between Minnehaha Creek and Minnetonka Boulevard from Baker Road to the east
- The addition of a bridge crossing to the Burwell property
- Improved canoe landing at Burwell
- Intersection improvements at Plymouth Road
- New trails on the north side of Burwell
- Additional plantings on the Burwell property (nothing else changes)
- Creek side restoration at Burwell with access to water
- Added shoulder parking on the south side of McGinty Road (north of Burwell)
- Addition of a permanent restroom facility at Burwell

(West of Burwell – North of creek)

- Enhancement of the existing Oak Savanna & addition of a butterfly garden
- Various crushed limestone trails and earthen hiking trails
- Construction of a creek overlook
- The construction of a restroom facility on the south side of the creek at the previous home sites
- Natural resources restoration work completed throughout
- Restoration of the creek channel (original location of creek)
- Addition of a crossing near the MNDOT culvert on the west end of the new park; also park sign and featured entrance
- Creek crossing with the option for a suspended bridge design on the west end near the northbound 494 entrance ramp
- Creek overlook on the south side of the creek (facing north)

(St. David's area)

- Planting of elm trees and new vegetation; and the addition of garden areas
- East/West crossing at Plymouth Road (possible underpass)

Vetter ended his presentation by noting that mailings had been sent to all residents and businesses in the area. He asked that the park board consider the questions included in the staff report and provide direction to staff.

Goodyear asked if the park board had any questions of staff prior to taking public comments.

Gallagher questioned if pedestrian bridges were considered for crossing Minnetonka Boulevard to get to the new park. Vetter indicated that both cost and lack of required ramping space were factors that would rule out above ground crossings.

Acomb questioned if there were any upgrades to the plans that addressed previous concerns related to the safety of crosswalks at Baker and Plymouth Roads. She asked if pedestrian crossing indicators were an option. Vetter responded that the indicators were contingent upon the speed limit on a roadway and indicated that he would check with the engineering staff to see what those requirements were.

Lambert complimented staff on the changes made to the plan since the initial concept was presented. He thanked staff for hearing residents concerns and responding to them with changes to the plan.

Gefvert indicated that safety was a concern of his and still is to a degree. He likes what he sees in the plan and noted that it seemed to require less maintenance than other city parks due to its design.

Hearing no further park board member questions, Goodyear opened the floor to public comments.

William Chapman, 13105 Lone Oak Drive, indicated that he was out of town for the previous park review and added that he was delighted with the concept presented this evening.

Tom Datusto, 4017 Tonkawood Road, voiced support for the concept plan in general and appreciated the elimination of parking from the location where homes used to be. He questioned the need for two restroom facilities, especially the building proposed on the former home site. He also questioned the need for a crossing where the suspension bridge is proposed, indicating that for most of the year you can cross at that location by foot due to low water levels. Vetter responded that the concept plan indicates that the restroom facility on the south side of the creek is a potential addition. He added that a facility at this site would be small in size and would utilize the water and sewer connections that already exist from the previous home on the site. Vetter explained that the primary users of this facility would be bikers and picnickers. Goodyear asked if this was a facility that could be added at a later time if the demand indicated a need. Vetter responded that it could. Regarding Mr. Datusto's questioning of the need for a bridge crossing the creek on the west end of the park, Goodyear asked if crossing the creek at the west end without a bridge was an option. Vetter responded that the grade at this location is extremely steep and crossing would not be recommended even if the water level in the creek was low.

Steve Robinson, 3304 Dana Drive, indicated that he walked the area on a daily basis and had three observations to share. First, he expressed concern about the pedestrian crossing from Burwell Park to Minnetonka Boulevard at Plymouth Road;

secondly he indicated that he liked the aesthetics of a suspension bridge but was not sure that the need existed; and lastly, he questioned if the existing restrooms at Sunrise Ridge Park (to the south west) would be adequate for trail users. Vetter responded that the restrooms at Sunrise Ridge are portable and only provided seasonally. He added that they are not in close proximity to Minnetonka Mills Park and are not easily accessible from the trail.

Missy Stein, 339 Plymouth Road, indicated that she was the Operations Coordinator for St. David's School and was very appreciative of the plan as presented. She asked if the creek would still be accessible in the area of the gazebo, noting that this was beneficial for school programming. Vetter replied that the creek banks would be restored; however access to the creek would be designed into the restoration. Goodyear asked if canoes would be able to land at the Mills Park area. Vetter indicated that they would, however the goal is to develop a more formal landing at the current location of the Mills Landing gift shop. Assistant City Manager Geralyn Barone added that the creek's current can be very strong at the Mills Park location, supporting the desire for an alternative landing further downstream.

Mark Rosenberg, 3429 Oakton Road, supported a previous concern regarding the safety of a crossing at Plymouth Road and Minnetonka Boulevard, adding that the signage to make a right turn from Plymouth Road to Minnetonka Boulevard is very confusing. He questioned if there should be a no right turn sign posted. Mr. Rosenberg also asked what the park hours would be and expressed concerns related to a recent newspaper article related to the use of chemicals at the Gray's Bay Headwaters and the impact to uses downstream. Vetter responded that the signs currently posted at Plymouth Road and Minnetonka Boulevard prohibits pedestrian crossings on the west side of the intersection. He added that to add any restrictions, a request would need to be made to Hennepin County. Vetter noted that the park hours for Minnetonka Mills Park would be 5 a.m. to 10 p.m., the same as all city parks other than Big Willow. Regarding chemicals used for treating the creek, Vetter was not aware of the chemicals being used at the Headwaters. Natural Resources Division Manager Jo Collieran indicated that the chemicals were likely being used to treat Milfoil and other exotic vegetation, and that all chemicals used must be approved by the DNR.

Peter Hill, 13212 McGinty Road, complimented the plan in general and noted only one concern related to parking proposed on the shoulder of the south side of McGinty Road on the north side of the Burwell House. Hill noted that the grade is very steep and would be very costly to add the 12 spots indicated on the concept plan. He added that these parking spots would also impede the view of the Burwell property from his home. Vetter acknowledged that extensive fill would be required, along with negotiating underground utilities at the location. Goodyear asked if parking at this site was considered practical. Vetter indicated that he felt it still was.

Steve Robinson, 3304 Dana Drive returned to the podium and added that the area proposed for shoulder parking also serves as a rainfall catch basin; as well as a popular location for people to park and receive internet access. He added that he

was also concerned about the tree loss that would be needed to accommodate this parking.

Steve Fuller, 13515 Minnetonka Drive, questioned why a restroom facility was needed on the Burwell grounds, especially in the location adjacent to the parking lot. He suggested that the restroom facility be relocated and the lot expanded so that the McGinty shoulder parking could be eliminated. Vetter responded that the restroom facility proposed at Burwell has restrictions as to where it can be located due to the site's historical status. Vetter indicated that the design of the building would reflect the design of other buildings on the property. He added that the proposed area is approximate and that the parking area shown on the concept plan has already been enlarged.

Hearing no further requests, Goodyear closed the floor to public comments and asked for park board member comments and questions.

Raarup expressed parking concerns related to both the addition of more parking at Burwell and the shoulder parking proposed on McGinty Road.

Gallagher expressed his desire to pursue an underpass at Plymouth Road.

Robben asked what the next step in the process was if the plan is approved by the park board. Vetter responded that the plan would be forwarded to the city council and possibly the planning commission for review and approval. He added that aspects of the plan might also require DNR or Minnehaha Creek Watershed District approvals.

Lambert moved and Robben seconded a motion to approve the concept plan presented, with the elimination of the proposed restroom facility at the location designated to the north of Minnetonka Boulevard (former home site); and with further consideration and study to be completed related to shoulder parking on the south side of McGinty Road. All voted "Yes", motion carried.

Gefvert asked if the park board would be consulted if construction of a restroom facility was considered at a later time. Vetter indicated that the park board would review any additions.

## **B. Review of design plans for Glen Lake Plaza Improvements**

Vetter introduced Julie Wischnack, Community Development Director, and Elise Durbin, Community Development staff member who were in attendance to receive park board input related to the design for a renovated Glen Lake Plaza.

Vetter provided a summary of meetings and actions taken on the planning process for Glen Lake Plaza since June of 2008. These included the following:

June 2008	Resident meetings to gain business and resident input
Summer 2008	Two concept plans developed
August 2008	Neighborhood meeting to review the concept plans
Fall 2008	Development of a hybrid concept plan based on public comment
April 2009	City Council review of hybrid concept plan

Vetter explained that the city council forwarded the plan to the park board to receive feedback on certain items including the water feature and performance areas. He added that since the council meeting, SHE consultants have been hired to review the hybrid plan and provide new ideas. Vetter then reviewed a revised plan prepared by SEH that included the following features:

- Seating areas (benches with backs)
- Decorative concrete and crushed stone walkways
- Informal lawn amphitheater
- Open lawn area
- An entrance pergola
- Flagstone pathway
- Seating walls
- Sidewalk connection to the bank
- Water feature
- Plantings including native shrubs, flower beds and trees
- Performance plaza with brick paving
- Picnic area with tables (small)

Vetter noted that park board feedback on the water feature was a primary need; along with feedback on the performance area; location of tables & benches; and the amount and layout of pergolas, arbors and seating walls. Vetter closed by reviewing four options for possible water features that were included in the staff report on this item.

Goodyear asked for park board member questions prior to receiving public input.

Raarup referred to a water feature in the Duluth area that was similar to option one (ground water feature). She noted that the park she was referring to allowed for the option of kids playing in the water feature.

Hearing no further park board comments, Goodyear opened the floor to public comments.

Audrey Tolberg, introduced herself as the Beacon Hills Council President and a facility that serves a large number of senior citizens. She asked for more clarification as to the walkways and benches included in the plan; and also

questioned how the green area would be utilized. Vetter reviewed the aspects of the plan related to her questions.

Linda Carlson, introduced herself as a representative of First Minnetonka City Bank and the area business association. She thanked Wischnack for the work done on the concept plan to date and noted that she was supportive of the plan due to its usability by residents of all ages. She closed by indicating that previous concerns she had related to maintenance and opening the space up had been addressed.

Goodyear asked staff to review what changes had taken place with the plan since the initial concept was developed. Wischnack responded that the water feature was pulled back from the roadway to reduce the possibility of it being a distraction to drivers. She added that the amount of structures proposed was reduced to save on cost; and the hill leading up to the bank was utilized in the latest concept plan. Goodyear commented that he felt the water feature needed to provide a signature to the site.

Goodyear suggested a review of the discussion points included in the staff report beginning with input on the water feature. Robben suggested that cost of design and maintenance should be a key factor in any decision. Gallagher added that the feature will only be in operation for a few months and needed to look like an added feature even when it was not in use. Acomb indicated that she preferred option #4 or a hybrid of options #1 and #4. She added that she viewed Glen Lake Plaza as a town square, feeling that it was not important for it to be seen from the roadways.

Robben agreed with Gallagher regarding the look of a water feature outside of its operating season and noted that option #2 could look out of place during the winter months.

Goodyear asked if there were any staff concerns related to maintenance of any of the features presented. Vetter responded that there were no apparent concerns and liked the fact that all options utilized natural materials and did not include pooling of water.

Lambert summarized what he was hearing from the board and noted that options #1 and #4 seemed to be the preferred options.

Vince Bangasser, a resident of Beacon Hills, questioned if all of these features would make it through the winter months without needing significant maintenance. He indicated that he felt that the shade trees, plantings and seating areas were appropriate; however he questioned the value of the performance areas.

Hearing no further comments on the water feature, Goodyear summarized the park board's input as preferring options #1 or #4; or a hybrid of the two.

Goodyear asked for input related to the performance areas.

Robben asked if there was adequate parking for the functions that would take place at the Plaza. Wischnack responded that parking could be accommodated in the area business lots and the Glen Lake Activity Center's parking lot. Barone added that the First Minnetonka City Bank parking area could also be used.

Raarup asked if bike racks would be provided. Wischnack indicated that they were not on the plan but could be added.

Goodyear questioned the need for a formal paved performance area. Vetter noted that the current plan includes fewer hard surfaces but was still accessible. Wischnack added that at the council's review of the performance space, there were varied thoughts about who might use the space. She added that the goal of the space is to provide options for all ages so that use was not limited.

Goodyear noted that skateboarding has been a concern at this location in the past and asked how that would be monitored. Vetter indicated that the skateboarding problem has been reduced since the Glen Lake Skate Park was developed, however added that natural barriers can be put in place to reduce the ability to skateboard on the site.

Linda Carlson, representing First Minnetonka City Bank, returned to the podium and indicated that she liked the performance space as proposed, noting that it does not look out of place when not in use.

Gefvert indicated that he supported the performance areas as designed, noting that the plan is versatile and simple. The park board indicated in general that they preferred the performance areas as proposed in the concept plan.

Goodyear asked for input related to the orientation of tables and benches include on the plan and opened by asking if lighting was included in the plan. Vetter indicated that night lighting of the area would be consistent with the overall plan for the Glen Lake area and would consist primarily of up lighting in the walking areas with accents on trees and other amenities.

The park board expressed their general approval of the placement of tables and seating areas throughout the concept plan.

Goodyear asked how the improvements proposed would be funded. Wischnack responded that funding would come from a variety of sources including available grant opportunities, TIF allocations from the redevelopment project, possible future development of the area and park dedication funding from the redevelopment. She noted that the projected cost was \$500,000 to \$600,000.

Gefvert moved and Gallagher seconded a motion to approve the concept plan for the Glen Lake Plaza as presented and forward to the city council for consideration. All voted "Yes". Motion carried.

## **5. Park Board Member Reports**

Gefvert reported that he attended the Bennett Park field dedication ceremony on Saturday, May 30. He noted that the primary attraction was the dedication of the Miracle Field, adding that attendance was excellent and celebrities included former Twins players Harmon Killebrew and Tony Oliva.

Gefvert also reported that he had an opportunity to play the Disc golf course at Bryant Lake Regional Park, noting that the course is excellent and is another example of the need not to duplicate city and regional park amenities when they are in close proximity such as Lone Lake and Bryant Lake.

## **6. Information Items**

Dave Johnson, Recreation Services Director, reviewed an informational item included in the meeting packet related to 2008-2009 Glen Lake Ski Trail operations. He reported that while season pass sales increased from the previous year, total attendance was down due to the shortened season of approximately 15 days due to poor snow conditions. Johnson noted that the park board will be considering operations for the 2009-2010 season on a later agenda.

Barone noted that the city council will be conducting two public hearings to consider use of the Community Investment Fund for the new Minnetonka Mills Park. She indicated that the two scheduled dates are June 22 and August 3, 2009.

Vetter reported that city crews recently worked on improvements to the paved trails in the Opus area, including Green Circle Park.

Johnson informed the park board that a trails booth will be provided at this year's Minnetonka Summer Festival on Saturday, June 27 from 4 – 8 p.m. He requested that any park board members interested in working a shift from 4 – 6 p.m. or 6 – 8 p.m. contact him.

## **7. Upcoming Park Board Agenda Items**

The board reviewed their upcoming 6-month schedule and noted that there is no meeting scheduled for the Fourth of July holiday.

## **8. Adjournment**

Gefvert moved and Robben seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:47 p.m. All voted "Yes." Motion carried.