



**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS
PARKS, TRAILS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 19, 2022, 6:30 PM
ARDEN HILLS CITY HALL**

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Marie Hinton called the April 19, 2022 meeting of the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Committee to order at 6:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Marie Hinton, Committee Members Jill Anderson, Paul Beggin, Mark Kelliher, Dan Dietz, Tim Nelson, Kristine Poelzer and Council Liaison Steve Scott

OTHERS PRESENT: Staff Liaison Joe Vaughan, and Public Works Director/City Engineer David Swearingen, Assistant Public Works Director Lucas Miller

ABSENT: Committee Members Micah Kiernan, Suzanne McGaugh

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Hinton asked to add new business after reports. The agenda was approved as amended by the Committee.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. March 15, 2022 PTRC Minutes

The Committee approved the minutes.

Committee Member Beggin noted that in the past there may have been things discussed as side notes that weren't included in the minutes.

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Trail Projects Update

Assistant Public Works Director Miller said the Snelling Avenue North project pre-construction meeting is coming up, the trail on the west side is part of the project. Heavy construction will probably start the first half of May and through the summer. The trail will be 10 feet wide, behind the curb. The road construction will be done in phases.

Assistant Public Works Director Miller reported that the safe route to school funds are still pending for the Mounds View High School trail. That trail will be from north of Valentine Park south to E2 on the west side of Old Snelling.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen added that pending receiving the state bond funding, construction will be in 2023. Ramsey County will link it to their mill and overlay project on Old Highway 10, pending funding. He clarified the trail would be from Old Highway 10 west to the high school, and E2 to Valentine Court.

Committee Member Kelliher wondered if the Minnesota Legacy Fund been considered as a source of funding. He thought it would be fitting.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen said they estimated the trail at \$850,000 which was the bond request, which includes construction engineering, site inspection, material testing etc.

Assistant Public Works Director Miller said the Lexington Avenue project will be from I-694 to County Road E. City water main will be replaced along with the road construction. Work will go on all summer.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen explained this is replacing the walk that is currently there and will be eight feet wide. There is no space on the bridge to add a walk on the Arden Hills side, so pedestrians will have to cross there, but there will be full intersection improvements to make it more pedestrian and bike friendly along the corridor.

Council Liaison Scott asked if it was the Shoreview side that was getting the trail and the Arden Hills side was getting the walk.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen said that was correct.

Chair Hinton said she heard they was talk about extending the sidewalk from County Road E to Harriet and adding a crosswalk.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen said he didn't recall that piece. Ramsey County did a mill and overlay a couple of years ago on that stretch of road. The Lexington Avenue project should have substantial completion by October 15.

Assistant Public Works Director Miller said the Parkshore Senior Living facility exercise trail is anticipated to not be completed done for at least a year.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen stated that where the exercise loop will be is city park, the area where the antenna is located is private property but there is right of way through it. There will be six exercise stations when it is complete.

Committee Member Beggin asked if there were any updates from Highway 96 along Old Highway 10.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen replied that they were waiting on soil borings to do the Geotech work. Once that comes back a report will be created which could be done sometime late June. This is an update to the feasibility study done in 2008 and adding on the

Geotech portion. It will include a rough estimate of costs so grant opportunities could be looked at. There will be a section in the report that will contain funding avenues.

Committee Member Beggin mentioned that the flashing lights near the County Road E2 trail by Valentine Hills Elementary are working better than anything that was there before.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen said they upgraded the system to the same as what is on Hamline Avenue.

Committee Member Beggin thought the lights were set lower and people were seeing them better, and the speaking system says when the lights are flashing.

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. Work Session Follow Up

Chair Hinton said she thought the joint meeting went really well and the work plan was well received. There will be some additional information regarding budgets and other items provided to the committee members.

Committee Member Kelliher said the meeting was interesting to him because it seemed like no one really knew how much the City spends on parks and recreation.

Assistant Public Works Director Miller said the budget is in the CIP and contains the rotation with structures and trails. A lot of efforts like cleaning parks aren't in the CIP as there is no budget item for that type of thing, they are more of operating budget costs.

Chair Hinton stated that the Mayor said staff and the Council Liaison could have a discussion with the committee about budgets at a later time.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen responded that Staff will talk about it over the next few weeks and present something more formal at the May meeting.

Committee Member Kelliher said he would like to know what work is already scheduled to be done so they can have a framework to know where to make suggestions for the future.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen indicated that he had sent the 2020-2026 CIP to the staff liaison with the pages broken out to easily scroll through to find the information. The dog park pad was done with donation money from last year, things like that aren't necessarily planned for. Things like that, installing grills, hot coal bins, etc. have been brought up in the past.

Committee Member Kelliher suggested staff bring a list of what they plan to do each month to the committee.

Committee Member Poelzer thought that it would be helpful for citizens to be driven to the website to find out information like the concrete pad being installed so they can watch for it, and to note that they were done with donations to possibly encourage others to donate. She felt it was

important to know when cyclical updates are happening. She further discussed trail improvements at Hazelnut Park that she thought were happening, staff was unsure of what she was referring to.

Committee Member Kelliher said If they adopt a park it would be nice to know what is on the schedule so they wouldn't have to bother letting staff know about an issue if it was on the list.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen responded that they would still like to be told.

Committee Member Beggin said it would be similar to what they've done with trails. Agreed that a sheet about what is being done at the parks would be helpful. But if things are on the schedule or the CIP they'd like to be told if they change. He is just getting an understanding of money donated from the Arden Hills Foundation and what it can be used for.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen said he could talk to the Communications Coordinator about putting information on the website where people could see what projects are coming up in the parks.

Committee Member Poelzer commented that she'd like to see pictures and information about what donated money is used for in the newsletter and on the website.

Committee Member Nelson said he'd like a schedule of general park maintenance, and specifically when crews come in to do things.

Committee Member Beggin discussed some funds that were donated for a particular bench and wondered who was keeping track of when money it is donated for a particular thing.

Council Liaison Scott explained that before the City can accept a donation the City Council has to accept the donation and it appears as an item on their consent calendar.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen said there is a formal resolution to accept the donations.

Committee Member Poelzer suggested that the Council liaison report to the committee when donations are accepted.

Staff Liaison Vaughan noted that he writes a thank you card and sends it to the donor after the money has been accepted by the Council.

Chair Hinton asked if there was a spreadsheet with outstanding donated funds listed. She asked if they could add this list to the July agenda.

Committee Member Poelzer felt the Council was complimentary of the work plan and appreciative of their work.

Council Liaison Scott said the Council was pleased with the presentation and work plan.

Committee Member Beggin said there weren't joint meetings during COVID, but wondered if they would continue.

Council Liaison Scott said they would most likely continue with joint meetings but the time of year might vary.

B. Spring Lake Park Donation Discussion

Chair Hinton said there was a \$10,000.00 donation to the City from the Spring Lake Parks Lions. The City Council would like recommendations and ideas from the PTRC as to how to spend the money. Ideas so far were a swinging bench at Cummings Park, and finishing basketball hoops.

Committee Member Poelzer would like to know what things cost.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen said if there is an amenity that they need to figure out an estimate on, they call the supplier, ask for a quote and ask if it includes installation.

Committee Member Beggin again asked about the money that was to go toward basketball hoops.

Staff Liaison Vaughan stated the they were around \$2500.00 for one hoop system, with 2 needed for a basketball court.

Committee Member Beggin wondered about the cost for pickleball lines on courts and nets.

Chair Hinton asked if they could add the costs of some things that have been done to the budget information meeting.

Committee Member Nelson would like to see the Chatham trails made more useable, there are areas you can't walk through during certain times of the year.

Committee Member Poelzer said there is a section of trail near Perry Park that is almost consistently under water.

Committee Member Nelson suggested they brainstorm and put a list together of how they'd like to see the money be spent. Staff can put together the numbers to see how many benches, bridges or trail developments \$10,000.00 would buy.

Committee Member Anderson suggested they go through the work plan to look at specific ideas. She noted the swinging bench, sledding hill, and pickleball.

Committee Member Poelzer thought they should add something specifically recreation related like a multi-generational dance, something else for trails like the Chatham trail, and something for parks like the swing or pickleball.

Staff Liaison Vaughan said he could reshare the wish list document that was created for the Foundation with the committee members.

Chair Hinton wondered if they should tell the Council that the things they recommend are the things in their workplan.

Public Works Directory/City Engineer Swearingen noted the Council had talked about shade and some kind of a shelter at the dog park.

Committee Member Kelliher said he'd like to see some of the money applied toward events that celebrate everybody in the community, like the Raptor Center coming, so they don't have to generate participation fees and be concerned about being budget neutral. He suggested having community engagement, education and entertainment events that don't have participation fees.

Chair Hinton said she didn't think they should worry so much about what the cost of things are, as the council will make the decisions, but they should give them some ideas as priorities. She noted the ideas so far as: no fee engagement activities, a swinging bench, Chatham trail improvements, and sledding hills.

Committee Member Kelliher suggested free music in the park.

Committee Member Beggin said they had talked about that in the past.

Discussion ensued regarding the costs associated with sledding hills. It was decided to leave sledding hills off the list.

A motion was made by Committee Member Kelliher and seconded by Committee Member Poelzer to bring the list of pickleball, no fee engagement activities, a swinging bench, Chatham trail improvements, and Lindsey's Park improvements such as volleyball, exercise stations and a back stop forward to the City Council. Motion passed unanimously.

C. Corrections Workers Update

Assistant Public Works Director Miller explained that the City has an annual contract with the Institution Community Work Crews (ICWC). Crews of six to ten people in some type of institution do work for the City along with a supervisor and an officer present. They work Fridays and Saturdays and someone from the Public Works staff has to be available to supply equipment. The City pays just under \$100/hour for the crew which includes work like removing organic debris from rain gardens, installing garden mulch, and buckthorn removal. They try to schedule one day jobs, more examples would be fence removal and installation, brush removal, and ditch cleaning.

Committee Member Kelliher said they have been very productive with buckthorn removal. He felt the cost was a great bargain for the work that is done.

Public Works Directory/City Engineer Swearingen added that they have a full schedule this year, through October. They can let the committee know where the crews are working once they know the actual activities being done, usually a couple of weeks in advance.

Committee Member Beggin discussed another program through Tree Trust where kids do work under other city's public works departments as a training program.

Public Works Directory/City Engineer Swearingen said he didn't think they would have the resources to supervise those crews, as they are already supervising seasonal employees, and regular employees are tied up with routine maintenance activities.

Committee Member Beggin said he believed the Tree Trust would send people to be trained under public works to then supervise the kids.

D. Scoops for Troops

Chair Hinton said the Scoops for Troops event was coming up the last Sunday in May at the National Guard Readiness Center and would be good for the committee members to attend. Funds raised go to the Troops Fallen Heroes Children's Education Fund. Portions of the Arden Hills Army Training Site that you would normally not get to go to will be open. You are guaranteed a t-shirt if you register for a walk or run by May 10, and there will be ice cream.

Council Liaison Scott added that the event started in Eden Prairie but the outgrew the venue and moved it here. The Arden Hills City Administrator has even entered the 5K race. It's a great event for kids plus there is a silent auction, media celebrities, and ice cream. There is a group of area Gold Star families that gather for this event. The trails in AHATS will be open for everyone to use.

E. PTRC Point Person(s)

Chair Hinton said she wanted to discuss people volunteering to be the person to go to various parks and look at them with a critical eye for issues, and to keep a good inventory of amenities. She put together a list of parks and amenities, mostly from the City website, and would like to keep it updated. She would like to have at least one name next to every park of someone willing to look at that park somewhat regularly.

Committee Member Kelliher felt it was a good idea and should actually be their responsibility. To have each person assigned to a park gives them more proximity to what the issues might be.

Chair Hinton said her hope is that you would notice things by going regularly. There are organizations that also might officially adopt a park and clean it on a regular basis, but that would be a separate discussion.

Committee Member Kelliher said he would like to see the parks looked at monthly at a minimum.

Committee Member Poelzer said each park could be on the agenda each month so a report could be made.

Committee members went through the list of parks and offered to volunteer as follows:

- Arden Manor – Marie
- Arden Oaks – Mark
- Chatham Trails area - Tim

- Crepeau – Marie
- Cummings – Dan
- Floral – Dan
- Freeway – Jill
- Hazelnut – Micah
- Ingerson – Marie
- Johanna Marsh – Jill
- Lindey's – Jill and Mark
- Perry – Mark
- Royal Hills – Dan
- Sampson – Kristine
- Valentine – Paul and Tim

A short discussion ensued regarding the expectations for providing feedback about the parks.

A motion was made by Committee Member Poelzer and seconded by Committee Member Kelliher to accept the park assignments. Motion passed unanimously.

Assistant Public Works Director Miller commented on the topic of additional volunteering opportunities.

Chair Hinton stated that the City has received questions from residents and local businesses about volunteering in the parks. She asked if a PTRC member would be willing to act as the coordinator to assist in managing this effort.

Assistant Public Works Director Miller said that Gradient, for example, has reached out to the City and that use of additional coordinated volunteers could be a monthly effort.

Staff Liaison Vaughan indicated two groups from Boston Scientific have reached out about volunteering and that the most recent resident applicant to the PTRC, Kerri Seemann, has volunteered her time. He stated a church that is coming to Minnesota in July for a conference has also reached out about volunteering during the week of the conference.

A discussion ensued regarding examples of potential various projects additional volunteers could perform.

Committee Member Poelzer volunteered to be the point person that will coordinate volunteers.

A discussion ensued about Triangle Park.

A motion was made by Committee Member Poelzer and seconded by Committee Member Nelson to further investigate adding Triangle Park to the City's park system listing. Motion passed unanimously.

Council Liaison Scott confirmed the City owns the parcel and asked if Triangle Park is irrigated.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen said irrigation is provided by the City at this location and asked for guidance regarding bringing this topic forward to the City Council for consideration.

Council Liaison Scott suggested bringing this topic to the City Administrator for further discussion with the Mayor, with the potential for the item to be added to an agenda as a Consent item.

Committee Member Poelzer indicated she would then claim this park as one of her assigned park locations.

A motion was made by Committee Member Anderson and seconded by Committee Member Dietz to appoint Committee Member Poelzer as the point person for organization the volunteer groups. Motion passed unanimously.

F. Funding Sources Discussion

Chair Hinton stated she provided the information regarding funding possibilities on to the City and relayed that the City appreciates the input. She encouraged members to continue to forward ideas.

G. Park Maintenance

Not discussed.

5. REPORTS

Chair Hinton stated that she appreciated the term expirations being added to the agenda.

A discussion ensued regarding status of current terms of the PTRC members.

Chair Hinton requested the term number be added to the PTRC agenda.

6. NEXT MEETING

The next PTRC Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 17, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.