



**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS
PARKS, TRAILS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, AUGUST 16, 2022, 6:30 PM
ARDEN HILLS CITY HALL**

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Marie Hinton called the August 16, 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, Dan Dietz, Mark Kelliher, Kerri Seemann, and Council Liaison Steve Scott

OTHERS PRESENT: Assistant Public Works Director Lucas Miller and Staff Liaison Joe Vaughan

ABSENT: Committee Members Suzanne McGaugh, Micah Kiernan, Kristine Poelzer and Tim Nelson

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Assistant Public Works Director Miller asked to add a discussion of potential names for the Parkshore exercise trail.

A motion was made by Committee Member Kelliher and seconded by Committee Member Dietz to approve the agenda as amended. Motion passed unanimously.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. July 26, 2022 PTRC Minutes

Committee Member Kelliher noted a typo on page 3.

A motion was made by Committee Member Kelliher and seconded by Committee Member Beggin to approve the July 26, 2022 PTRC Minutes as amended. Motion passed unanimously.

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Trail Projects Update

Assistant Public Works Director Miller reported that the trail on Old Snelling from Highway 51 to County Road E was complete, minus a small punch list. The feasibility report is still being

worked on for the west side of Old Highway 10 from Lake Valentine Road to Highway 96. The safe route to school from E2 to Lake Valentine Road to Mounds View High School is scheduled for 2023.

Committee Member Anderson asked if the City was planning a ribbon cutting for the Old Snelling trail.

Council Liaison Scott thought staff could arrange for one if PTRC suggested it. He also mentioned the speed limit reduction to 25 mph that the City Council is implementing will apply to Old Snelling.

Further discussion ensued regarding the speed limit changes in the city.

Committee Member Anderson reiterated that people have reached out to her asking if the City was going to hold a ribbon cutting for the trail. She would like the City Council to be aware that there is talk about it. She had talked to Staff so the desire was known.

Council Liaison Scott said that usually staff arranged that type of thing and invited the Council to attend.

Committee Member Kelliher felt it would depend on how much demand there would be, and others could also request it of City Staff.

Assistant Public Works Director Miller stated that Lexington Avenue is behind schedule and work will not be done on the Arden Hills sidewalks for the foreseeable future. Park Shore trail is paved, ADA ramps need to be put in and exercise equipment should be installed yet this year. The Lake Johanna trail study will be discussed at the Council work session on September 19. Crack sealing took place on trails around the city.

Committee Member Beggin asked if the City maintains the wood chip trail along the creek off of Venus Avenue to E2.

Assistant Public Works Director Miller replied yes, but with less frequency.

Committee Member Beggin said a tree had come down over the trail.

B. PTRC Item Update

Council Liaison Scott said the Council had discussed the Hazelnut Park proposals.

Committee Member Kelliher wondered if the rules on the sign on the tennis court at Floral Park could be changed to be more flexible.

Staff Liaison Vaughan clarified that one sign that says if there were people using the court and others waiting, you switched at the new hour. For example, if you start playing at 6:55 and someone shows up to play at 7:00 you have to leave. The other signs say if someone shows up you have 45-60 minutes to finish your play. The difference in signs has caused issues. He had mentioned the issue to the Public Works Director.

Assistant Public Works Director Miller made a note to look into it and possibly remove the older sign.

Council Liaison Scott added that at the last work session the City Council agreed to stripe courts for pickleball.

Committee Member Seeman said in regard to plants for Hazelnut Park, she found out prices at Landscape Alternatives are higher than what are listed on the website but they do have bulk wholesale discounts for cities.

Chair Hinton said they had also talked about possibly getting safety vests for volunteers.

Committee Member Dietz felt the vests would be for volunteers to use for a day but regular volunteers could have their own.

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. Pollinator Policy Discussion

Chair Hinton said that Committee Member Seemann put together a draft of a possible pollinator policy. Committee Member Poelzer wanted to give her comments: she agreed with pollinator policies and overdue for cities to move forward on the issue.

Chair Hinton asked if the Committee would like to pursue having a pollinator policy.

Assistant Public Works Director Miller said to keep in mind that some of the cities surrounding Arden Hills have much larger maintenance staffs so while some policies are good, they may not be realistic to maintain or follow through with. There are a number of rain gardens that are currently not able to be maintained. Herbicides are used sparingly but used when necessary, insecticides are used even less.

Committee Member Anderson suggested there be a general policy they are working toward, with guidelines and limitations on use of certain products.

Committee Member Kelliher felt having a policy philosophically aligned with the one presented would be admirable, but some of the specifics in the resolution probably weren't doable and they should discuss with staff to see if they could fit into their work flow or if not what would it take to get there.

Committee Member Anderson agreed and thought the goal from the committee could be more general without so many specifics.

Chair Hinton thought they should decide if they want a policy or not. The policy could say whenever possible don't use certain chemicals and educate the residents. The policy could explain why pollinators are important and be less specific and the language softened.

Committee Member Dietz said the responsible thing to do was to make sure it would work with the City.

A motion was made by Committee Member Anderson and seconded by Committee Member Dietz to begin work on a pollinator policy. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Hinton asked how they would like to move forward.

Committee Member Beggin felt it would make sense to have a subcommittee to work together with staff.

Committee Members Seemann and Anderson agreed to be on the subcommittee.

Committee Member Kelliher thought someone from City staff should be on the subcommittee to help decide if the items could be accomplished.

Committee Member Anderson felt it could be more aspirational; it could say the city will do its best and encourage, rather than be so specific.

Chair Hinton added that educating would be an important piece.

A motion was made by Committee Member Anderson and seconded by Committee Member Seeman to form a subcommittee to begin work on a pollinator policy. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Budget Discussion

Assistant Public Works Director Miller explained recreation goals are set to cover about 90% of the costs incurred. Donations are a separate form of usable income but generally earmarked for something. The Recreation Programmer manages the budget and each month they go through the report to make sure costs are covered by fees. Sometimes there is extra money that can be used toward free events like the Penny Carnival and Touch a Truck. There are about 100 programs that are tracked.

Discussion ensued regarding a spreadsheet that was passed out and employee wage payments.

Chair Hinton asked who the volunteers are.

Staff Liaison Vaughan said some come from local businesses, others are from the National Honor Society. If they need more volunteers he will ask previous volunteers, and certain businesses who look for opportunities. He would always accept help from the committee to find volunteers or volunteer themselves. He did see the summer playground numbers go up, but staff numbers went down leading to cancellation of one whole program.

C. Tree Locations at Perry Dog Park

Chair Hinton said Committee Member Poelzer sent her the comment that she disagreed with trees in the dog park because of concern of water trucks driving in the dog park creating ruts and trees can harbor ticks and they should wait for permanent shelters.

Assistant Public Works Director Miller explained the dog park is irrigated so there won't be any vehicles watering the trees. There are shade structures ordered and coming, but probably won't be installed until the spring of 2023. There have been requests by residents to add trees to the park. There will be four maple trees planted. Staff is asking for input as to where the trees should be placed, keeping in mind they need to work around irrigation and not right on the fence. The shade structure locations are also yet to be determined. Each tree will be 2 ½ inch caliper, costing roughly \$1,000 per tree to plant.

Chair Hinton felt they shouldn't be near the entrance, and they would be best spread out so dog owners don't need to necessarily be by each other under the shade.

Committee Member Anderson thought it might be nice to have a shade structure near the entrance. She thought it might be problematic to have trees on the fence line along the ball field, but it might make sense to have the other shade structure there.

Committee Member Kelliher thought they should wait until the shade structures are installed to decide where the trees are placed.

Assistant Public Works Director Miller said they would like to plant the trees yet this fall, and the committee members could go to the park to look around and see where they would like the structures placed.

Committee Member Kelliher said he takes dogs to the park on County Road I that is an open area with no trees or shade structures. He's like to see the money spent differently than on trees.

Staff Liaison Vaughan said the shade structures were for the dog owners and the trees would be for the dogs.

Assistant Public Works Director Miller stated there have been past discussions by the PTRC requesting trees.

Committee Member Anderson said people that frequent the dog park have requested shade and trees.

Staff Liaison Vaughan said he gets the request every year at Bark & Rec Day for shade, specifically for trees.

Chair Hinton thought she would probably like the shade structures closer to entrance with the trees where they are on the diagram, leaving an open area in the middle.

Committee Member Beggin thought the mud is at the park should also be taken into consideration.

Assistant Public Works Director Miller said he will reach out again once the contract is awarded for the tree planting and bring the item back to the next meeting.

D. Tree Request Program Discussion

Chair Hinton said New Brighton has a boulevard tree request program. She knew the Arden Hills was tagging ash trees and though they could discuss a possible plan for Arden Hills.

Assistant Public Works Director Miller stated there is an emerald ash borer program in Arden Hills, treatment and mitigation is sistered with a buddy tree program, and they will also work with residents when asked. There are tree budget projects where a variety of trees are being planted, 55 this year and more next year. In 1996 there was a tree project along Highway 96 and the City is required to maintain the trees even though it is a County road. Many of the trees have died or are infected so a large portion of the 55 trees this year are being planted along Highway 96. Staff will gladly take suggestions as to where residents would like to see additional trees.

Chair Hinton said Committee Member Poelzer submitted these comments: that she strongly disagreed with the City expenditures for planting trees along Ramsey County Roads, the middle of the cul-de-sac on Nursery Hill Lane would be a perfect place for trees surrounded with pollinator native plants, she proposed trees in neighborhoods not on County roads, and in Hazelnut Park.

Assistant Public Works Director Miller said the cul-de-sac on Nursery Hill is a rain garden and they don't plant trees in them. There will be approximately 80-90 trees planted between this year and next. He will take suggestions from PTRC as to where they would like trees planted.

E. Park Shore Loop Name

Assistant Public Works Director Miller stated the trail is finished but there is no official name for it.

Chair Hinton thought it should be named by having a contest and giving Arden Hills swag as the prize, providing engagement and awareness.

5. REPORTS

Assistant Public Works Director Miller reported there will be 2 pickleball courts striped at Hazelnut Park and one at Freeway Park. There is a study moving forward for Arden Manor playground with construction in 2023.

6. NEXT MEETING

The next PTRC Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 20, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.