

MINUTES

**PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION**

4:00 p.m. – June 15, 2004

Time: Satarino called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m.

Place: Council Chamber, Second Floor, 100 North Fifth Avenue, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

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ROLL CALL

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Members Present: Berla, Macomber, Reneaud, Riseng, Rodgers, Satarino

Members Absent: Berauer, Cohen

Ex-Officio Members Present: Henderson, Johnson, Woods

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Aeschbach

Staff Present: Borneman, Dehring, Kuras, Rynard, St. John

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PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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None.

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MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

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a. Minutes of May 18, 2004 – Moved by Rodgers, supported by Macomber, and passed as presented by voice vote.

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RESOLUTION TO NAME STAPP NATURE AREA

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Satarino read a letter from Bill Martin who proposed naming the Traverwoods parcel after Dr. William B. Stapp, PhD, naming it the Stapp Nature Area.

Woods supported resolution and stated that she knew Professor Stapp. She said he truly cared about environmental issues and education.

Johnson agreed. He said he had met him once. He felt it was a terrific dedication to him.

Riseng supported it too. She said he made an important contribution to education for all grades.

Rodgers supported the resolution and proposed that the word “Emeritus” be deleted in first sentence.

Satarino also proposed that in the second paragraph that the word “Education” be added between “Rivers” and “Environmental”.

Wayne Say, a resident for 30+ years, said he had known both Bill Martin and Bill Stapp. He said he was asked by Bill Martin to represent him today. He invited all to come on September 17, 2004 for the dedication and reception at the site. He said it was good to recognize Dr. Stapp’s continued global impact and that he had represented the city and University of Michigan very well.

The resolution, as revised, was passed by voice vote.

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#### BUHR PARK WET MEADOW II PROJECT

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Jeff Dehring provided an update on the project. He said it was the second step to implementing the storm water management plan for Buhr Park. He said the goal of the project was to have zero runoff from the Buhr Park site, to capture and retain rainwater on the site.

Andy Brush, president of Buhr Park Children’s Wet Meadow Project, thanked the City’s support of the project. He said the newly developed 1-acre wet meadow area was planted by over 150 volunteers. He said 5,000 plants were planted from seeds collected last fall and grown over the winter by volunteers. He said funding had come from the City and from several foundations. He said it was a great project and invited all to come and look at it.

Riseng asked how much impervious service drained to this area.

Brush replied approximately about 4-5 acres of land, but not all of it was impervious. He said the wet meadows served the entire park plus some yards on Manchester and north to the fruit tree orchard.

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#### UPDATE ON SWIFT RUN CENTER

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Henderson stated that she had copy available for all to view of the proposed Swift Run Center PUD from Pittsfield Township that showed where the active and passive areas of recreation were located.

Satarino asked if the PUD was approved by the Township, would the location of the recreation areas be frozen. He wondered if the different composting operations were conducive to being adjacent to nature preserve areas.

Berla also wondered if the PUD could be altered after the Township approves it.

Henderson said the plan could be altered but would have to go through the planning process again. She said the active recreation areas had been reduced a lot because of wanting to preserve the natural habitat.

Rynard said if the PUD was approved by the Township planning commission on June 17, site plans for the components of the PUD could start their approval processes.

Berla wondered if a dog park at this location and other things that were discussed in the past would be considered or if the plan had been finalized.

Henderson replied that the dog park was not identified on the PUD plan. She said the PUD lists options for active recreation and passive recreation on the plan. She thought the Township wanted to finalize the PUD plan to start the site plan process for the maintenance building. She said City staff would like to bring the sports complex, the dog park, and whatever was decided on as the active recreation at the service center together and present them all at public meetings to gather feedback from the public.

Rynard said the PUD was a general overall plan and any part on that PUD plan that does not have a site plan associated with it would be utilized as it was today.

Berla asked if approval of the PUD would make it harder to make changes to the uses identified on the PUD.

Rynard stated that to make changes, the PUD would have to be revised. On the currently proposed PUD plan, she said the active recreation area was not large enough to place a sports complex.

Riseng asked what uses were included in the PUD.

Henderson said the PUD described two types of recreation, composting, recycling, a maintenance facility, and a waste transfer/material recovery facility.

Berla thought bobolinks needed open undisturbed nesting areas so neither passive nor active recreation areas would work to promote nesting. He was concerned that bobolinks would not nest in passive recreation areas if people were allowed to walk in those areas.

Borneman replied that the birds were not that sensitive, especially if visitors stay on established trails during the 2½-month breeding season. He thought the PUD plan was wildlife friendly/nature friendly.

Macomber asked if a dog park was considered active or passive recreation. Henderson replied that it was considered active recreation.

Macomber asked if the airport site was good for soccer field use.

Henderson replied that a meeting occurred last week with Jim Hawley, Airport Manager, regarding if there would any issues using the airport site for a soccer field complex, and the possibility of either leasing or purchasing the land.

Satarino said a letter had been received from the Sierra Club. He said they supported preserving more of the natural areas at the Swift Run Center. He thought PAC could not support a specific type of recreation use at any particular area within the PUD at this time, without further discussion.

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#### UPDATE ON SCHOOLS/CITY PROPERTY

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Henderson said a meeting was held with school district staff regarding some of the properties the school district considered parkland that they may consider swapping for a City site they could use for something they need, such as garage space. She said both sides identified several pieces of property they were interested in.

Borneman added that, regarding the Greenview Park next to Pioneer High School, the school district was ready to move forward to talk about a master plan for the site. He said the school district would allow the City to continue to work with neighbors to put together plans so they may continue restoration projects on site.

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#### UPDATE ON CHAPTER 40

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Borneman stated that as of June 1, enforcement of Chapter 40 had been transferred to Community Standards Enforcement. He said vegetation height on lawn extensions would be enforced. He said the proposed amendments to the Chapter would not occur until next year and hoped for input from citizens this summer to help identify the important issues.

Woods thought safety concerns related to how tall vegetation was on lawn extensions would be identified.

Riseng asked how wide were lawn extensions.

Borneman replied that the lawn extension was between the sidewalk and the street, all of which was within the street right-of-way, which is usually 60 feet wide. He said some people use rocks or bricks within the lawn extension and that may create problems for City access to utilities.

Satarino asked when Borneman would become involved with a permit application.

Borneman replied about eight or ten out of the 200-300 notification of violations issued are interested in applying for a permit to rectify the situation. He said some people apply for a permit without a violation occurring in anticipation that what they are proposing could violate City ordinances.

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#### UPDATE ON MOWING CYCLES

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Borneman said staff had been more systematic in asking why we mow where we mow to determine if mowing should continue. As a result, he said they might return some areas to more natural vegetation.

Johnson added that the only complaints he had received were regarding the lawn extensions when they plant flowers and get a ticket for it.

Woods asked if Borneman was planning on talking with any neighborhood groups regarding mowing cycles.

Borneman said some areas that they may discontinue mowing are away from residents and may not get noticed but in the areas where residents are near, he welcomed input from them.

Riseng asked if mowing cycles have changed yet.

Rynard replied that mowing cycles have changed from 14 days to 15 days. She said they now have eight seasonal staff (down from 16 last year) to handle the mowing.

Satarino asked Borneman if he was able to carry out his typical duties as well as the newly assigned duties.

Borneman replied that so far it was working ok.

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#### REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT MILLAGE PROJECT UPDATE

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Henderson said the three reports were consolidated into one report. She welcomed PAC's feedback on the new format.

Satarino noticed that the Allen Creek Greenway had emerged on the list.

Kuras thought that the updated PROS plan should have an extended chapter regarding greenways. She said the reason it has become a bigger project was because not only was the City looking at it but a citizens group was as well. She said staff had met with the citizens group. She said it would be a long-term plan.

Satarino asked to be kept informed so can PAC members could sit in on meetings. He asked about the study for a railroad underpass.

Kuras replied that eventually a bike trail would go from the Gallup Park trail and go through the lower road of the Arboretum. She said a long-term goal for the Huron River greenway would be that people are able to access both sides of the river. She said grants and help from the City and University would be needed.

Satarino asked about an underpass at Bandemer. He asked if headroom of the existing railroad bridge was enough to place a tunnel there.

Kuras said she had asked the consultant to locate the most feasible and cost effective site.

Berla asked if access under the new Broadway Bridge would be made on all four corners.

Kuras replied that there was access on three corners and there had been talk about creating an access on the fourth corner.

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#### CITY COUNCIL ITEMS UPDATE

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Henderson stated that the contract with Johnson Hill for the PROS Plan would be placed before City Council on June 21.

Kuras added that the telephone survey would not be conducted until Johnson Hill was on board.

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#### LAND ACQUISITION AND DONATIONS WITH PARK PURCHASES PROCESS RECOMMENDATION

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Rodgers described the proposed changes to the form. He said the form separates the quality criteria from the cost criteria and so would end up with two ratings: one for quality and one for cost.

Macomber was confused as to where on the form the socioeconomic data would be considered; was it under quality or cost?

Rodgers replied that it was considered as part of the cost evaluation.

Riseng thought the form could be made easier to understand if a line were added under "Criteria" that read "Quality Criteria" and then again add a line before the cost criteria section started that read "Cost Criteria." She thought the "bonus points" line under both sections should be changed to read "Quality Bonus Points..." and "Cost Bonus Points..."

She thought adding those lines and changing the text would help keep the two sections separate and clearer.

Satarino wondered if the staff report could also include if the site was a grant target and if it was owned by a single person, corporation or other type of owner.

Rodgers did not think the form made explicit the type of donation given.

Satarino said maybe an information sheet was needed. He thought an asterisk could be added next to the word “donation” on the evaluation form, and then a form attached that explains the donation in more detail.

Woods thought if PAC applied the new form to a recent park purchase, it could see if the same recommendation occurred as with the previous form and determine if the new form worked well.

Berla thought the form was still lacking. He would like an additional form signed by a potential donator that stated what the donator expects to receive for their donation, and that the City Attorney would review and accept this additional form.

Johnson agreed.

Satarino suggested that, with the staff report, a document be included showing what the donator expects for his/her donation.

Johnson thought this requirement should be added.

Riseng thought requiring that information with the staff report was too early in the process of acquiring a site.

Berla thought the staff report was an important document that was used by PAC to help it determine if a site should be purchased for parkland and the staff report was forwarded onto City Council for its use as well.

Riseng thought that when information was sent to City Council, donation information could then be included.

Rodgers thought the quality assessment could be done at any time; even long before the cost and donation parts were determined. He thought cost could be added when it was known.

Berla thought Rodgers’ idea made sense.

Rodgers thought that when PAC came up with an overall plan, the two parts could be kept separate.

Johnson thought the form did not need to be revised; instead, place the two parts on two separate pages and complete the parts separately.

REPORT FROM MANAGER OF PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES

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Henderson noted that some changes were made to the City's budget that was approved by City Council. She said the Graphics Specialist position was put back into the budget and Matt Horning was hired as the financial supervisor for the Community Services Area.

Riseng asked about the Ann Arbor News articles regarding the golf courses.

Henderson said the City Administrator had asked staff to look at how the golf courses were functioning. She said the courses would remain open for this season. She said marketing of the golf course was being done differently to try to increase revenues. She said they would be waiting until the end of the season to see if the financial situation improves before making any decision regarding closing a golf course.

Riseng asked if one time costs contributed to the existing deficit.

Henderson replied yes, but other factors had contributed also.

Satarino reported that a special PAC meeting on June 27<sup>th</sup> had been planned and to give any agenda items to Rodgers to include in this special meeting. He congratulated the new members of Greenbelt Advisory Commission (GAC) and that the GAC roster be placed on the Parks website.

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REPORT FROM COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND RECREATION

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None.

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REPORT FROM RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION

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Berla reported about recouping the costs of field maintenance by the City. He said the resolution was still being negotiated between the City and RAC regarding these fees.

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PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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None.

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COMMISSION PROPOSED BUSINESS

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None.

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CLOSED SESSION TO DEAL WITH LAND ACQUISITION ISSUES

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Moved by Riseng, supported by Berla, that PAC hold a closed session to discuss land acquisition issues, and passed by voice vote.

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ADJOURNMENT

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Satarino declared the meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Jill St. John, Secretary  
7/19/04