

## MINUTES

### **PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION**

4:00 p.m. – July 20, 2004

Time: Satarino called the meeting to order at 4:10 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, Berauer, Cohen, DeLone, Macomber, Reneaud, Riseng,  
Rodgers, Satarino

Members Absent: None

Ex-Officio Members Present: Woods

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Aeschbach, Henderson, Johnson

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

Others Present: Julie Kruze, 2144 S. State, Suite C, 761-8500  
Eric Meves, 1706 Cambridge Road, 769-0565

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#### PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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Julie Kruze, president of Canine Social Club, local attorney, asked if there was further information on the proposed park uses at the Swift Run Service Center plan such as if a dog park was proposed.

Satarino referred her to the proposed plan, stating that nothing had been finalized yet.

Macomber asked her what size and what amenities were needed for a good dog park.

Kruze replied that about ten acres total would be ideal, with a covered area, park benches, and pick up areas.

Enter Cohen.

Satarino asked if she had read the study done regarding dog parks.

Kruze replied yes.

Berla asked what was the smallest dog park size she had encountered and asked if she thought staff was needed to monitor a dog park.

Kruze replied that ½ acre was the smallest she had encountered. She felt no park staff was needed to monitor use. She thought the users might develop a “friends of the park association” to help with clean up and appropriate behavior at a dog park.

Eric Meves reported that Douglas Park had been used as a staging area for construction occurring at 1600 Washtenaw Avenue for a sewer line. He said it had been two months since its use as a staging area and it still could not be used as a park because grass had not grown back yet. He thought it was a poor decision to use the park for a staging area. He also thought the neighbors should have been notified that this disruption would be occurring.

Dehring noted that the reason the park was chosen was timing and the need to close Washtenaw Avenue to do work sewer work. He said he was working with the contractor to return the park to a usable condition and that five trees were also added to the park as part of its restoration. He acknowledged that the extremely wet spring weather during construction did cause much damage though. He said the contractor, as part of the reconstruction, had re-graded the park to help with its existing drainage problem. He said Mr. Meves could contact Terry Rynard as well for more details.

Cohen asked why restoration was taking so long.

Dehring replied that because of the wet weather at an already wet site, it was taking longer than usual. He said the park’s restoration work was being done and paid for by the contractor of 1600 Washtenaw Avenue.

Satarino asked if Mr. Meves could be informed about the status of the restoration from now on.

Dehring said he would inform him.

Satarino thought PAC should be informed by staff about impacts to parks in the future.

Woods thought staff could address this request if PAC could receive a status of parks report once or twice a year. She also thought citizens would accept such disruptions if they were informed ahead of time.

Berla asked if the list of park projects from staff that PAC currently received could include this information.

Dehring replied that staff could print out a list of upcoming millage projects for PAC.

Borneman thought a once or twice-a-year report would be good at capturing the information about long-term projects, but information on small, short term projects would more likely be better included in the regular reports already presented in the PAC packets.

Woods felt it was important to know this information and encouraged staff to figure out a way that other small projects do not fall through the cracks.

Cohen agreed with Woods.

Borneman said staff would discuss this issue further and return at the next PAC meeting with ideas on how to handle this.

Satarino felt it was important that PAC be informed prior to projects such as this occurring.

Berla thought this information should be placed on the website so citizens did not need to attend a meeting or contact PAC or staff to know about upcoming projects affecting their neighborhood park.

Enter Riseng.

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#### MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

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a. Minutes of June 15, 2004 – Borneman requested that on page 3, in the second to last paragraph, the first sentence be revised to read “Borneman replied that the birds were not that sensitive, especially if visitors stay on established trails during the 2½-month breeding season.” Moved by Macomber, supported by Riseng to approve the minutes as revised. Motion was passed by voice vote.

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#### RECOGNITION OF PAST PAC CHAIR, PHILIP D’ANIERI

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Cohen and Riseng presented a plaque to Philip D’Anieri honoring his service on PAC, including being chair.

Cohen and Riseng expressed their appreciation of D’Anieri as a PAC member.

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#### RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND CITY COUNCIL PURCHASE LOT 108 OF EVERGREEN SUBDIVISION

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Satarino read the resolution.

The resolution was moved by Berla, supported by Macomber, and approved by voice vote.

#### UPDATE ON PROS PLAN

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Kuras said she had met with the consultants to go over scheduling and go through the existing plan to see what needed to be updated. She said there would be a kickoff meeting of the steering committee on July 29. She wanted to conduct a focus group with PAC at a special meeting in August. She asked PAC to discuss this and decide on a date in August. She added that the telephone survey would start in about a week. She thought the larger, public workshops would occur in the fall after information was gathered from the focus groups and the telephone survey.

Berauer suggested the PAC focus group occur after the August 17 PAC meeting had adjourned.

Berla and Reneaud said they would not be able to attend the August 17 meeting.

After discussion, PAC selected August 17 at 5:30 p.m. with August 3 as a backup date.

Reneaud said if the consultant's questions were available before of the meeting, she could respond even though she would not be able to attend on August 17.

Cohen also thought written questions were good to have ahead of time and wondered if individual interviews would be appropriate as well.

Kuras said she would talk with the consultant regarding if the questions could be made available prior to the focus group meeting and if one-on-one interviews would be appropriate.

Satarino asked if PAC could review the telephone survey questions being used.

Kuras said she would copy them and distribute the questions to PAC tonight.

Enter DeLone.

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#### UPDATE ON GREENVIEW PARK

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Borneman said he met with the Public Schools and the neighbors regarding restoration activities at Greenview Park. He said the Public Schools were happy that the neighbors used NAP to coordinate the restoration activities. He said the Public Schools did not want the neighbors to use power tools on the site and herbicides also were not allowed on school property. He said the Public Schools made it clear what areas they would be working in what NAP would be doing.

Cohen noted that some neighbors thought a playground at that park would be good.

Dehring said, since the land was owned by the Public Schools, the Schools have asked that no play structures be located at the park. He said the City has no funds earmarked for the development of a playground at this park. He said this park could be identified in the PROS plan. He said what the Public Schools and City determined as appropriate equipment in a playground was very different. He said whatever was resolved regarding ownership of property would determine what occurs on the site. He said more discussions would need to occur. He said with the update of the PROS plan, there would be public meetings where the neighbors would have opportunities for input regarding this park.

Cohen thought Dehring's meeting with these neighbors would be a good opportunity for him to inform them of their opportunities for input regarding this park in the PROS Plan update process.

Berla asked if there were any City-owned playgrounds on school properties?

Borneman and Dehring replied no.

If a playground was found to be necessary at this site, Berla thought the schools should sell/swap the site to the City.

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#### REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT MILLAGE PROJECT UPDATE

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Berauer asked if mountain bikes were allowed in Bluffs Park and if regulating which trails they can use had been considered.

Dehring said bikes were allowed in Bluffs Park. He said that meetings had occurred with NAP regarding mountain bike use in the City. He said the goal was to identify appropriate locations for mountain bike usage. He said some of the key issues identified were signage, maps, and identifying places that would be appropriate for that use. He said they had identified some trails that need to be closed to be eliminated as a trail and restored. He said the goal was to work together with the user groups, the neighborhood park steward, and NAP. He thought site accessibility was another issue.

Borneman said they were working on developing a more comprehensive plan related to biking. He said mountain bikes are banned in only a few parks: Bird Hills, Argo and parts of Furstenberg. He said NAP had been meeting with the park steward, some members of the Mountain Biking Association, and the park maintenance staff to try to put together a better, more sustainable trail network at Bluffs Park.

Satarino thought there was an opportunity to open up a stream that was put into a pipe years ago at Bluffs Park.

Dehring reported that the Farmers Market Master Plan Concept was being shared with the general public at a meeting on July 26 at Cobblestone Farm from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. He encouraged all to attend and to provide comments and feedback. He said the Master Plan Concept was also on the consultant's website: [jhle-studio.com](http://jhle-studio.com).

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CITY COUNCIL ITEMS UPDATE

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None.

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REPORT FROM MANAGER OF PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES

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Borneman reported that over 2,000 people attended Huron River Day on Sunday, July 11. He reported that on Saturday, August 14, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., the Farmers Market would be celebrating its 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary with kids activities, giveaways, live music and ice cream sundaes. He reported that the Swift Run Service Center PUD was unanimously approved by the Pittsfield Township Planning Commission and next it would be submitted to the Pittsfield Township Board of Trustees for its action.

As was discussed in the last LAC meeting, Satarino asked that a resolution regarding the Huron Parkway extension property being moved from Transportation to Parks and Recreation be included in the packet for the next PAC meeting.

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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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None.

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PUBLIC COMMENTARY

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None.

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COMMISSION PROPOSED BUSINESS

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Reporting on the Environmental Commission meeting she attended, Riseng stated that on the City's website there was an environmental index with links to many environmental groups and issues. She reported that there was a public meeting on Wednesday, July 28, at Slauson School at 7:00 p.m. regarding the Gelman groundwater contamination. She reported that City Council instructed staff to develop an anti-idling ordinance, which

would be designed to limit and control the amount of vehicle idling. She reported that a greenfleets resolution was discussed, which would set goals for having green vehicles in the City. In the future, she thought her report from the Environmental Commission should be added as a regular item on the PAC agenda.

PAC agreed and requested staff change future agendas.

Berla thought athletic fields were being ignored. He wondered why more discussion and decisions had not been made yet. He said that now that the athletic fields were not being considered at the Swift Run site, he was concerned that it would years before fields were developed at other locations. He wondered if there was more that he could do to move the issue along.

Satarino said in the past, PAC had been told that there were support groups and organizations willing to take over running the operations of the fields or even providing funds to build fields and had been told the townships were interested in supporting athletic fields, but the City had not seen any funds yet from the townships. He said the City had only about a quarter of the funds necessary and no location yet. He said PAC was told that because they had to move and refigure where the municipal garages would be located on the Swift Run site, it impinged on the space that would be available to locate athletic fields such that there may only be space for two fields.

Dehring added that the Swift Run PUD was a concept plan and as more detail was determined, the space available for soccer fields had been reduced. He said other sites were still being considered for fields, such as at the airport on Lohr Road. He said Henderson, representing the City, and the townships, the County and soccer associations were involved in discussions; and existing field complexes around southeast Michigan had been examined for ideas. He said that until some of the details were worked out with land requirements for athletic fields, only concept plans were available. He assured PAC that staff was actively working on the development of new athletic fields.

Berla hoped a report would be available to PAC outlining options when the details are worked out. He wanted to make sure a proposal was presented to City Council for its action rather than the athletic fields issue being discussed and not acted on. He asked if there was anything PAC could do to help the process. He asked if a timeline had been determined yet.

Dehring said a timeline had not yet been developed.

Satarino said there was no assurance that new fields would be built and that other options might have to be considered, such as re-using an existing baseball field as a soccer field. He felt a more regional approach was needed, involving the townships and County because more than City residents would be using the fields.

Cohen thought that involvement by all the local governments would help the process to a positive conclusion. She thought if the residents of these jurisdictions were encouraged to push their jurisdictions to participate in a financial way and identifying available land, the new athletic fields could be accomplished.

DeLone added that the Ann Arbor Soccer Association had about 2,000 children and there were about 6,000 children total playing in the Ann Arbor area. He said the Association had been told in the past there was money set aside to build soccer fields. He said the Association had offered to help maintain the fields. He said the Concordia fields that the Association had been using will no longer be available to them soon so about 2,000 more children will need another location to play.

Macomber thought staff was going to present to PAC typical expenses related to building a athletic field complex, in addition to the land cost.

Satarino noted that staff had not yet generated that information, and also felt it was important to know.

DeLone said he was told it typically costs \$35,000-\$50,000 per field to construct a soccer field.

Riseng said the soccer associations have said that putting a field here and there does not help when competitions between several teams occur. She said the associations want a complex of fields located at one site. She felt working with the surrounding townships and County was necessary on this issue and thought staff was progressing well.

Cohen thought this issue was now getting attention on the political level. She thought the Mayor was interested and was pursuing it with his colleagues in surrounding areas.

Woods informed PAC that residents in the fifth ward were getting together to propose a park at First/William instead of a 500-space parking structure being proposed by the Downtown Development Authority. She said there would be a "picnic for a park" on Sunday, July 25, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Berauer wanted a more detailed update on the golf course issue.

Satarino also wanted additional information.

Borneman said he would talk with Henderson about this and bring additional information at the next PAC meeting.

Cohen thought what had happened was relevant, but she wanted to see a business plan for the golf courses because it would show what could happen in the future.

Berla was upset that Greenbelt Advisory Commission (GAC) held its meeting at the same time as today's PAC meeting and wondered how to prevent this from happening in the future.

Satarino said he had talked with two people about this and determined that it was unavoidable this time and that it would not happen again.

Riseng was dismayed that the GAC membership did not include a PAC member. Cohen thought a PAC member could attend GAC meetings, at least for a while.

Satarino said GAC had not yet set a regular meeting schedule, but agreed that when it did, having a PAC member attend the meetings was a good idea.

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CLOSED SESSION TO DEAL WITH LAND ACQUISITION ISSUES

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None.

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ADJOURNMENT

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Satarino declared the meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Jill St. John, Secretary  
8/18/04