

MINUTES

PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION

4:00 p.m. -- August 3, 2004

Time: Satarino called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m.

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

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Berauer, Cohen, Macomber, Reneaud, Riseng, Rodgers, Satarino

Members Absent: Berla, DeLone

Ex-Officio Members Present: Henderson, Johnson, Woods

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Aeschbach

Staff Present: Borneman, Clark, St. John

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

None.

RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND TO CITY COUNCIL THE EXCHANGE OF
PARKLAND AT WURSTER PARK AND 803 EDGEWOOD PLACE

Henderson reported that the property owner of 803 Edgewood Place proposed an exchange of land between his property and Wurster Park to accommodate an addition to his home. She did not know if any other land exchanges had been proposed before and staff felt it should be PAC's decision whether to allow it.

Clark said there had been land exchange requests in the past, but unless it could be shown that the exchange was a net benefit to a park, it did not occur. He said, to his knowledge, no land exchanges had occurred because none proposed a net benefit to a park. He said easements had been granted for some kind of exchange, such as landscaping at a park, or a dollar amount.

Cohen asked if staff had a recommendation.

Henderson replied that staff did not support this exchange of land.

Berauer did not support the proposed land exchange. She did not feel it was a good precedent to start. She thought the amount of acreage being exchanged was not equal. She felt the installation of a hedgerow and replacement trees for the landmark trees to be destroyed because of the construction was not adequate for what would be destroyed. She did not feel that increasing the access area at the opening of park was a good reason to approve the land exchange.

Reneaud asked if park was purchased with trust fund monies.

Clark replied no.

Cohen agreed with Berauer and was most concerned about the precedent it would set.

Riseng thought if the property owner had offered more land, she might have considered it. She also was disturbed that landmark trees would be destroyed.

Rodgers thought approval of the land exchange could have the appearance of favoritism.

Satarino said the park had very large trees and that losing up to three landmark trees was not a good idea and agreed with what others had said.

Vote on resolution: All opposed. Resolution failed.

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Reneaud asked that two additional items be added to the agenda: Resolution appointing a task force to study and report to Council on park maintenance requirements and the proposed budget for FY2004-05 PAC parkland millage.

Woods thought the first Tuesday meeting was for PAC to discuss land acquisitions issues in a closed session, not to discuss general PAC business.

Satarino said each PAC meeting starts as an open meeting, and generally the first Tuesday meeting goes immediately into a closed session to discuss land acquisition issues, but at today's meeting, some general PAC issues needed to be addressed.

Woods thought PAC would just be discussing the items presented on the agenda, she did not realize PAC would be making decisions and voting on items like they do at the third Tuesday meetings. She thought more time should have been given before decisions were made on the two items that were added to the agenda at the last minute. She would rather the first Tuesday meeting be devoted only to land acquisition issues.

Riseng also would rather not address public issues at the first Tuesday meetings. She would rather devote those meetings to land acquisition issues in a closed session.

Berauer thought it was ok to discuss public items before a closed session at the first Tuesday meetings, but she did not want to spend a lot of time on these public items.

Satarino thought PAC should discuss the public items today but make its final decision at the next regular PAC meeting regarding selecting PAC members to be on the task force regarding park maintenance requirements.

Woods thought it was important for the public and PAC to know ahead of time if public items would be on an agenda.

Cohen thought PAC should discuss at its next meeting how it wanted to handle each meeting. For the first Tuesday meetings, she preferred that if PAC had to start the meeting as an open meeting, to make it short and move right into land acquisition issues.

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RESOLUTION APPOINTING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY AND REPORT TO
CITY COUNCIL ON PARK MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS

Borneman said he talked with Terry Rynard regarding the report to City Council needing to be done by January 1, 2005 and his thought that it was not enough time to do what was being requested of the task force.

Berauer asked if task force members would do all the work with no consultant help.

Borneman replied yes, all work would be done by the task force members only.

Satarino understood that mail surveys may be used to gather information and the task force's report may involve suggestions to City Council about areas that might need further cash infusion. He asked if there were any volunteers.

Riseng and Satarino said they were interested in volunteering for the task force.

Riseng said the Mayor told her that City staff had all the information needed for this task force and the task force would be focused on developed parks, not natural areas. She said the task force might be able to determine if more money would be needed in the future to maintain the developed parks.

Borneman said the task force would be trying to determine accurate cost numbers on what it cost to trim trees, mow lawns or restore natural areas. He did not know if the past cost numbers were available. He said staff was now trying to keep better track of cost numbers.

Clark said two or three-old data was available regarding the cost of trimming trees, etc.

Satarino thought PAC should talk with the members not here today to see if they were interested in volunteering.

At the next meeting, Cohen asked that Rynard provide what information existed already, whether staff were available to help with analysis, and if there was money to pay for surveys. After reading the memorandum, she thought the task force should be a staff or consultant function, not a volunteer effort. She felt to do it right; it would take a lot of work.

Satarino thought PAC was to serve as a sounding board.

Johnson did not think this task force was to ask for remedies but was to show how things stand right now.

Woods thought the goal of the task force was to determine how to keep the parks as wonderful as they are today and how to make them better. She felt having PAC members on the task force was important. She did not know if the January 2005 deadline was set or if there was any leeway.

Macomber did not think anyone on PAC could commit until more information was provided on what was expected of a task force member.

Henderson said she would ask Rynard to attend the August 17 PAC meeting to give more information.

Satarino suggested asking the Mayor to attend too.

Woods said someone had suggested to her that it might be a good study for a college student to do.

Henderson agreed with Clark's suggestion that someone from the Dean Fund be invited to be a part of the task force because of the forestry aspect.

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FY2004-05 PAC PARKLAND MILLAGE

Macomber asked if the budget information presented regarding Fund 24 was to be approved by PAC and GAC.

Henderson replied no. She said there had been questions about how much was in the fund, what was in the fund balance, and what was approved for this fiscal year so she gathered this information and prepared an example of a budget using the 1/3 to PAC and 2/3 to GAC distribution to give PAC an idea of how the fund distribution would work.

Borneman asked how the six percent administrative cost was calculated.

Henderson replied that the six percent administrative cost was taken from what was allocated for this fiscal year, which was \$1.941 million. She said the budget information she provided could be used as a benchmark on what would be available for City park purchases. She went through the handout line by line describing in detail what the proposed budget numbers represented.

CLOSED SESSION TO DEAL WITH LAND ACQUISITION ISSUES

Moved by Macomber, supported by Berauer, that PAC hold a closed session to discuss land acquisition issues. Passed by voice vote.

ADJOURNMENT

Satarino declared the meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Jill St. John, Secretary
8/12/04