

MINUTES

PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION

4:00 p.m. -- November 16, 2004

Time: Satarino called the meeting to order at 4:13 p.m.

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

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Berla, Berauer, DeLone, Reneaud, Riseng, Rodgers, Satarino

Members Absent: Cohen, Macomber

Ex-Officio Members Present: Henderson, Johnson

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Aeschbach, Woods

Staff Present: Bemish, Borneman, Clark, St. John

Others Present: Peter Allen, Scott Robertello, Bruce Upston, Luis Vazquez, Glenn Thompson, Karen Sidney, Doloris Gracia, Peter Stark, Leslie Morris, Andrea Mathus, Raquel Agranoff, Patricia Kempf

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Peter Allen provided additional information regarding locating a pathway on North Main Street and working cooperatively with the railroad regarding this pathway. He had three updates: (1) A meeting was held with Amy Kuras, himself and the Ann Arbor Railroad last week. He said the preliminary reaction from the Ann Arbor Railroad was (he and John Chapala walked tracks from Argo Pond to Huron) that it was good idea to have a walkway along the side of the tracks so that it would keep people off of the tracks and it could improve safety and keep the tracks cleaner. He said Mr. Chapala thought the pathway should be like the pathway located along the north end of Argo, which has fences on either side and is ten feet wide. Mr. Allen thought a pathway along the railroad tracks could be achievable in two to three years. (2) He noted that the Elks have listed their property for sale so a pathway through their site may now be feasible to access Bluffs Park. (3) He said very early discussions were occurring regarding locating a walkway along the west side of North Main Street. He thought it was achievable as there were fewer property owners along that portion of the road. He thought a pathway could be placed along the railroad, then along the west side of North Main Street, then through Kuebler Langford Park to Bird Park, by Newport Creek, and then over to Maple Road to the new high school. He thought having a system of bicycle paths that go from Pioneer High School, through downtown, all along the railroad tracks, picking up traffic from the adjacent neighborhoods, then going directly up North Main Street and due west

all the way out to Maple Road was achievable, and could make the new high school more accessible by foot and bicycle.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of October 19, 2004 – Moved by Berla, supported by Rodgers, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion was passed by voice vote.

REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT MILLAGE PROJECT UPDATE

None.

POTENTIAL PARKLAND ACQUISITION PROCESS

Satarino said the document regarding the process to be used to forward land acquisition recommendations to City Council was not finished and more modifications were coming and these would be discussed at another meeting in the future.

Berauer said she would like the report that would be presented to City Council to be written, not oral.

Berla wanted very explicit instructions about what things PAC can and cannot do before PAC's land acquisition recommendations go to City Council. He felt it was not clear now.

Berauer thought it was clear what PAC could do before a land acquisition recommendation goes to City Council. She was not at the last meeting where this issue was discussed at but said the minutes stated that staff could do an hour survey of the site, PAC could survey the site, and the requirements to bring it to City Council were providing the PAC rating sheet and staff and PAC comments to City Council; and not do anything that committed funds other than use of about 1-1/2 hours of staff time.

Johnson said that City Council would like to be informed earlier in process about parcels being considered but exactly when that should occur was still not clear and that was what was being worked out.

PAC COORDINATOR EVALUATION AND INTERVIEW TEAM

Henderson asked for one PAC member to be on the interview team. She said all the proposals are due back by December 6 and they would be forwarded to all PAC

members with comments from PAC due on December 9. She said a member of GAC, a member of PAC, and Jayne Miller would be on the interview team, and the interviews would occur on Friday, December 18 from 1:30 to 5:00 p.m.

Riseng asked who could apply for position and if former city employees could apply.

Henderson replied anyone could apply.

Johnson said an RFP was used since this position will not be permanent. He said a person, not a company, would be hired since they would be acting as an interface between GAC, PAC and city staff.

Henderson said Miller was drafting questions and would send those questions to PAC for feedback.

Satarino noted that if the ordinance was followed, there was the possibility PAC may purchase land outside the City, although the RFP just states that the coordinator would be only responsible for acquisitions within the city.

Johnson replied that might be an oversight that would need to be looked at. He said when the contract was written for the person hired, it should be made clear that they would do land acquisition wherever PAC could do land acquisition, including outside the city.

Satarino asked if there were any volunteers to be on the interview team. No one volunteered. Satarino said he was interested so he was selected the PAC representative on the interview team.

DISCUSSION ON FIRST AND WILLIAM SITE

Satarino said the removal of hazardous waste at the site would cost \$450,000. He said if use of site was changed, the railroad might require a crossing be located there at a cost of at least \$300,000.

Rodgers asked if a railroad crossing would be required if the use were a park.

Satarino replied that the railroad said any use change would require a crossing, and he was not sure if that included a park use.

Berla would like to hear from both sides as to where a park or parking structure should be located. He did not feel PAC should promote park use when it did not have all the information regarding what uses could be located at the site.

Reneaud asked for the number of parking spaces being proposed at that site.

Berla thought it was about 600 spaces and they would replace parking from other sites and locate it all at one site.

Reneaud wondered if a trail could also be placed at the site if a parking structure were constructed at the site.

Satarino thought the site should be a part of a downtown Allen Creek trail system.

Johnson thought if this property were considered in isolation, it would be difficult to decide, but if it were thought of in the context of it being a part of a greenway system, PAC could form an opinion.

Berauer supported infill development in downtown, and also did not want to change the quality of life in downtown. She hoped PAC could pass a resolution recommending the city look at preserving the site for parkland, as she thought green space/open space in the downtown was important too. She realized further discussion was needed.

Rodgers supported both Johnson's and Berauer's opinions. He thought the greenway in the downtown was important and it also fit very well with alternative transportation initiatives.

Berla asked if a timeframe was known regarding a decision being made by City Council. He thought it was better for PAC to make a recommendation sooner rather than later in the process.

Johnson said there was time to make recommendations to City Council, as a decision was not imminent, but he thought sooner than later was better.

Riseng supported this area being used as a park. She thought it would be an important green space and felt a parking structure would encroach on the neighborhood. She thought further study of whether a parking structure was really necessary was needed as some existing parking structures were underutilized according to some studies done in the past.

Satarino suggested creating a standing committee regarding this issue.

Berauer volunteered to be on that standing committee if it was created.

Satarino said PAC needs to find out how to interface with the group studying this site.

Berla thought if Amy Kuras, someone from the DDA, and someone from the greenway group could attend the next PAC meeting and make short presentations, it would help educate him to make an informed recommendation to City Council.

Peter Allen announced that the next greenway group meeting would be held on December 7 at 3:30 p.m. at the JJR/SmithGroup offices.

DISCUSSION ON FULLER PARKING LOT

Berla asked if the status of the land was known yet.

Henderson replied that the Attorney's Office still had not been able to determine when the land was purchased. She said the RFP had not yet gone out regarding providing affordable housing at the site. She said Parks and Recreation Services receives funds from the parking lot that exists on the site.

Berla thought the site was not suitable for use as a park, and if development of the site occurred, it should not disturb the area closest to the river, as it was wild and undisturbed. He thought the site should be explored as a suitable site for affordable or any type of housing.

Rodgers had problem with the process used. He said, historically, this site had been treated as a part of Fuller Park. He said in 1993, PAC decided to allow parking to occur on the site. He said Parks and Recreation Services had always received the revenue from the lease to the University of Michigan for parking. He said all maps show the site as a park. He wondered why proposing the site be used for affordable housing had not come before PAC for its input. He would like to have a resolution from PAC that says that in the future, these sites should first come to PAC before being considered for development. He would like to have such a resolution passed tonight.

Satarino and Berauer agreed with Rodgers about the process used.

Rodgers said he would prepare a resolution for PAC to act on later in the meeting.

See the proposed resolution under "Commission Proposed Business."

CITY COUNCIL ITEMS UPDATE

Henderson said a fund explanation was handed out.

REPORT FROM MANAGER OF PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES

Henderson said a public meeting would occur on December 2, at 6:30 at Forsythe Middle School regarding improvements at Bluffs Park.

Berla hoped that demographics would be included in the next PROS survey.

REPORT FROM RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION

None.

REPORT FROM ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Riseng reported that the Environmental Commission held roundtable with the environmental management team to get to know each other to facilitate coordination. She said they lost member on Environmental Commission, Mary Beth Doyle, in a car accident.

REPORT FROM GREENBELT ADVISORY COMMISSION

None.

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Moved by Berla, supported by Berauer, to change the order of business. Motion supported by PAC.

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PRESENTATION ON FARMERS MARKET MASTER PLAN

Jamison Brown, of Johnson Hill Land Ethics Studio, presented the draft Farmers Market Master Plan. He said several focus meetings were held with local residents, local businesses, users of the market, vendors of the market and a public charette was held at the market. He said a study was also being done by Peter Pollack addressing traffic issues in the area. He said pedestrian and auto circulation and vendor overflow were major issues. He said another issue to be dealt with was containing the storm water on site in underground tanks with a storm water feature visible at the middle of the site; it currently runs off the site into storm drains. This issue would be one of the major expenses of the proposed plan. He said the plan proposes the same number of parking spaces as exist today, 29 new vendor stalls are proposed to be added, the center aisle is proposed to be eliminated and the pedestrian traffic pattern is proposed to be changed to a circular pattern, Detroit Street is proposed to be closed and used for parking and additional stall space or another use, two sections of the vendor spaces on Fourth Avenue are proposed to have foldout canopies, the vendor space adjacent to the restrooms is proposed to be modified so it may be enclosed in the winter months, a pavilion space is proposed that could be used on non-market days to generate revenue, the electrical service is proposed to be upgraded, and the plan proposes to make the market visible and accessible from both Fourth Avenue and Detroit Street.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON FARMERS MARKET MASTER PLAN

Scott Robertello, vendor at the market and a member of the Market Commission, said that most of the vendors would like to see an extension of the center aisle to Fourth Avenue, not its elimination, to maintain the integrity and look of the market. He thought the storm water management system was an excellent idea. He thought the parking could be reconfigured to create more spaces. He thought closing off Detroit Street not a good idea. He said about 84 daily vendors would like to have permanent stalls. He said of the 84 vendors, no one has ever been turned away from the market, space has always been found for the daily vendors. He said the vendor proposed plan would add 18-20 stalls. He said there are 147 parks within the City of Ann Arbor and only one farmers market, so he wanted to keep it the best farmers market in the state.

Karen Sidney said the Farmers Market not only serves citizens, it serves area businesses. She said the vendor waiting list was a good indication that the market was successful and vendors could make a living. She said the businesses in Kerrytown depend on the market as well for customers. She thought it was important that the vendors were able to have additional produce available close by while selling what they have placed at their stall so increasing the number of stalls at the expense of being able to have additional produce close by was not a good idea. She did not think closing Detroit Street was a good idea.

Glenn Thompson said he had four videotapes available for PAC, which would become a CTN program, that demonstrated the citizen and vendor opposition to the plan that had not been addressed or considered. He said over 750 citizens had signed a petition opposing the circular pattern. He does not think 29 stalls can be gained with the proposed plan. He said if stalls were placed under the proposed awnings, fire lanes would be blocked. He does not understand how Detroit Street can be closed off and the same number of parking spaces still be provided. He thought the plan needed further study.

Bruce Upston, a vendor, was concerned that stalls would be placed along Fourth Avenue, which would close off those who enter parking lot in the interior of site on market days. He said that would prevent some vendors from arriving late or leaving early. He said the awning rainwater would fall off right at the stall, which concerned him. He was concerned that with a full time manager, the office could not be used by the vendor as a place to rest. He said the restrooms were not adequate, but no changes had been proposed to improve them.

Mary DeWan, a customer every Saturday, said the vendors and the public had suggestions, so she could not understand why this proposed plan was being jammed down their throats. She thought there would be parking jams if stalls were placed on Detroit Street. She said Detroit Street was currently used to get to the other parking lot at Community High School when parking was not available on Detroit Street. She thought the market was not broken so why fix it. She did not think the money necessary to accomplish the proposed plan could be recouped. She thought markets did not have to be pretty, just practical. She thought the market was accessible, usable, and the vendors were wonderful.

Andrea Mathus, a customer for 20 years, criticized the process and the proposed plan. She thought the process was moving too quickly. She said the August 25 meeting

generated much passion. She said the greenbelt could only exist if farmers actively use the land. She thought it was very important to listen to vendors because they work very hard to bring the produce to us every week.

Leslie Morris, a 35-year market user, thought it boiled down that any plan would not work unless all affected by this plan are on board. She said the Market Commission had not finished dealing with this plan. She felt it was vital that all perspectives be viewed. She felt respecting other citizen commissions' input was important. She thought the center aisle should be extended.

Doloris Gracia, a vendor, thought taking the middle aisle out would be a shame. She said the proposed grassy area was where the farmers now unload their products, so she did think it made sense to place a green area there. She said the market, as it was today, was counted as the seventh greatest market in the United States.

Luis Vazquez, 20-year resident of the city, a frequent shopper at market, a citizens representative on the Market Commission, and a parent of a Community High School student. He supported this master plan and urged PAC to approve it. He said the plan would have the potential to bring in more revenue, no loss of parking within market space, and adds drop off and pick up areas, making it more convenient to shop. He said the proposed updates to the electricity, and water and data lines, would bring the market up to date. He thought the plan would benefit area merchants, and the amount of business would increase to the vendors. He thought the plan would provide many benefits to the community, providing a gathering place when it was not used on market days. He said at a special meeting on November 5, the Market Commission voted on the plan, but some commissioners wanted more information on the interior parking and so the Commission decided to hold another meeting on November 18, at 4:00 p.m., in the Council Chamber, where he thought there would be another vote on the master plan. He thought the Market Commission was very close to concluding its action on the proposed master plan.

DeLone asked if the Market Commission was not representing the vendors.

A vendor who is also a member of the Market Commission replied that if the Market Commission votes to support the proposed master plan, it was his opinion that the Commission would represent the majority of the vendors.

An organic produce vendor since 1980, thought retail was very competitive today. He felt the new plan would give the vendor an opportunity for free advertising. He liked the proposed changes. He said the further away his stall was located from Detroit Street, the less money he made. He thought the market needed a diversity of vendors, because the more diverse the vendors, the more diverse the clientele. He thought the proposed changes would revive the area and allow the site to be used by others on non-market days.

Raquel Agranoff, Chair of Market Commission, said she voted against master plan. She felt all of the farmers should be listened to. She said most vendors want changes, but just minor changes, such as repairing the lighting, painting, and extending the center aisle. She did not think there was a need to hurry into changing anything. She thought

the only group that supported the proposed master plan was the Park Advisory Commission because it wants to be able to use the area on non-market days for other activities/events.

Peter Pollack, who has lived at 515 Detroit Street since 1980, had difficulty with the proposed plan since he thought the site was owned by the thousands that live near it, come to it, and sell goods at it. He thought the complication comes from all these different points of view. He said more than economics should be considered because the farmers market was a place where people come and have social life and bring character to the place. He thought it should not become a circle of sheds surrounding a parking lot, as that configuration would disrupt the human dynamic. He thought having Detroit Street dead end was a bad idea. He said the site should be thought of as a farmers market that was used for parking on non-market days, not a site for multiple uses.

Patricia Kempf, a vendor who has lived in Ann Arbor since 1960, had her first stall in 1967. She said between 1975-78, a plan was proposed to change the configuration of the farmers market into a donut shape, similar to what was proposed today. She said a second plan (1982-83) proposed to keep the central aisle. She said neither idea was approved. She thought rushing into this plan was a bad idea as everything that happens at the farmers market happened slowly. She felt more time was needed for others' opinions. She thought the cost of plan was too high for the numbers of stalls that would be added to the site and considering that three-quarters of year the stalls would be empty.

RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND ADOPTION OF
THE ANN ARBOR FARMERS MARKET MASTER PLAN

Jamison Brown said there would be 16 stalls located under the proposed awning areas and all the new stalls would be 10-foot by 10-foot in size with a 15-foot wide aisle. He said the existing stalls are 8-foot by 5-foot in size. He said if a vendor wants to park their truck in the interior parking lot, the truck must stay there until the market closes for the day, since the exit would be blocked with vendors under the awnings.

Berla asked if Detroit Street was proposed to be closed all the time.

Brown replied yes. He thought there was a better use for the street, such as parking and temporary daily stall space. He noted that new parallel parking was also being proposed on Fifth Avenue, which would calm traffic and provide additional parking for the market users.

DeLone asked if any vendors were involved in developing this proposed master plan.

Brown replied that three members of the Market Commission worked on the Farmers Market Steering Committee and had participated since the beginning, nearly two years ago. He said the Farmers Market Steering Committee signed off on the proposed plan and directed him to take the plan to the Farmers Market Commission, the Downtown

Development Authority, the Park Advisory Commission, and the Planning Commission to show them what the Farmers Market Steering Committee recommended. He said PAC's recommendation and would then be forwarded to City Council and City Council would then make its decision.

Rodgers stated that he was not ready to vote and asked if there was a rush for PAC's resolution to be acted on today.

Henderson replied that City Council wanted to act on this master plan on December 20 and suggested that if PAC was not ready to vote on the resolution today, that they continue this discussion at its December 7 meeting.

Berauer asked why it was important this proposed master plan go to City Council in December.

Henderson replied that in order to seek funding/grants an approved plan must be in place. She added that input had been sought by citizens at various meetings and from several commissions and staff felt, after two years of development, the proposed plan should be presented to City Council for its action.

Brown said the farmers market was a dynamic space, it meant a lot more than its physical structure and there were many groups with a serious vested interest in this project. He said the DDA, local businesses, Kerrytown District Association, the neighborhood, Community High School, citizens at large, Parks and Recreation Services, and the vendors -- daily, artisan, and annual growers -- all had a different vested interest in the farmers market; how it looked and how it functioned. He said he would never be able to present a plan that did not have at least 12 people that did not like it, but he thought a lot of homework had been done, with a major public open process, much more so that occurred in most communities. He said at some point the plan had to be presented to City Council for its approval or denial.

Riseng recognized that a lot of work had been done. She supported some parts of the plan, such as the storm water management, providing water and electricity, and upgrading the stalls. She did not think input from the citizens had been incorporated in the plan. She did not think removing some parking was a good idea. She could not support the plan.

Berauer asked for the composition of the Market Commission.

Henderson replied the Market Commission was composed of one annual vendor, one daily vendor, one artisan vendor, one customer, one resident of the Kerrytown neighborhood, and four at large members.

Satarino asked if the fund for the farmers market could used to make the changes to Detroit Street.

Brown replied funding for this project would come from not just the market fund, but also DDA funds, buy-a-brick program, and grants.

Satarino asked how much of the \$475,000 market funds for this project were generated by the vendors. He also understood that downtown developments could make a monetary contribution in lieu of providing onsite detention for storm water. He wondered if that would be good idea for this site since the cost of providing onsite detention would be high.

Henderson replied that \$300,000 of the total funds was generated by the vendor fees.

Jessica Black, the new market manager, said she had met with vendors who would be directly affected by the proposed master plan (those with middle aisle stalls) to tell them where they would be located in the new plan. She said their biggest concerns were where their stalls were going to be located, how the stalls were going to be reallocated, and that no parking be removed. She said the survey of the vendors revealed that they wanted additional stalls, not to take parking away from vendors and to allow vendors to park near their stalls. She said the proposed plan would bring 29 new stalls to the market and would not take any parking away from the vendors. She said some who initially were against the plan have now changed their minds. She said the daily vendors and the artisan vendors support the plan, and the annual vendors support the plan to an extent, but they would like to see the extension of the middle aisle, which would eliminate 12 parking spaces. She said the “move-up” process showed that vendors located in middle aisle would move to another location away from the middle aisle when they were allowed to do so. She said it was hard for her to understand why extension of the middle aisle would be something vendors wanted.

Satarino suggested that PAC continue discussion on this resolution at its December 7 meeting. PAC agreed.

COMMISSION PROPOSED BUSINESS

PAC continued discussion on Fuller Parking Lot. Rodgers proposed the following resolution:

**Resolution Asking that All Proposals to Modify the Use of City Parkland
First Be Considered by the Park Advisory Commission**

Whereas, the Park Advisory Commission has historically and by City Council resolution been given the responsibility for oversight of the maintenance and enhancement of city parkland;

Whereas, the land south of Fuller Road and across from Fuller Pool, and now leased in part by the University of Michigan for a parking lot, is labeled as part of Fuller Park;

Whereas, this land has in the past been overseen by PAC;

Whereas, the lease arrangement with the University of Michigan was negotiated by PAC in 1993;

Whereas, the annual rent paid by the University of Michigan for the use of the land has gone into the Parks and Recreation Services fund;

RESOLVED, before any proposal for an alternative use is taken up by City Council for this or any other area commonly considered parkland, PAC is given the opportunity to evaluate that proposal.

PAC decided to further discuss this proposed resolution at its December 7 meeting.

CLOSED SESSION TO DEAL WITH LAND ACQUISITION ISSUES

Moved by Berla, supported by Berauer, that PAC hold a closed session to discuss land acquisition issues. Approved by all PAC members.

ADJOURNMENT

Satarino declared the meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Jill St. John, Secretary
12/16/04