



PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION

Minutes of May 15, 2003

Members Present:	C.Riseng O.Jansson J.Satarino P.D'Anieri	S.Rapundalo J.Cohen J.D'Amour	
Members Absent:	L.Langmore	R.Curry	
Ex-officio Members Present:	R.Johnson	R.Olson	
Ex-officio Members Absent:	W.Woods	S.Aeschbach	
Staff Present:	J.Dehring T.Rynard	J.Miller A.Kuras	K.Bemish D.Borneman
Others Present:	Jim Crosby Michael & Nina Homel David LeRoy	800 Sunset Rd., Ann Arbor 3473 Wooddale Ct., Ann Arbor 716 Sunset Rd., Ann Arbor	761-2789 369-2499 761-6142

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:15 p.m. by Chairperson Stephen Rapundalo.

SECRETARY CALLS ROLL

The secretary called the roll, with results as shown above.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Michael Homes, Woodcreek Subdivision – Re: South Pond Project. Comments: Thanked Commission for supportive response via resolution for Planning not to move on it until PAC reviewed it. He has a petition for entire VanCurler property to be parkland bit if a choice has to be made, the current formula would result in 7.25 acres. They surveyed what residents would like to see for the neighborhood park. The results of the survey include: nature trails, walking path, playgrounds with child-oriented play equipment, traditional swings, climbers, handicap accessible, possible picnic tables and shelter, open space (unstructured) and there is some interest in softball or baseball field oriented toward local use. The wetland will be dedicated to the city and they believe south of that, if we have to make a choice, it would make sense locate the park in the middle of the property. They have done a canvass and now have \$26,000 in pledges. This matter is moot if Planning and City Council approve the plan as is, with 315 units for the site.

David Leroy, Sunset Brooks – Re: Sunset Ridge Property. Comments: There is some investigation going forward to see if the owner is willing to sell, They are committing to raise approximately \$100,000 as a subsidy of the acquisition and have established an agency to collect the pledges (fiduciary). They expect to have pledges in-hand by mid-May or first part of June and would like to be able to stipulate that the purpose is for the acquisition of the property for natural area preservation. They have approximately \$78,000 pledged so far, with 300 signatures (3/4 of which pledged money). The majority of the pledge will come from 20-30 people who have more at stake. They would like the park located centrally with an access point but are open to anything at the northern edge. They are also willing to do easements from adjoining properties.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Acceptance of the minutes of Tuesday, March 18, 2003 meeting moved by Steve Rapundalo, supported by James D'Amour and passed unanimously by voice vote.

At this time Steve Rapundalo asked that the FY 2003/2004 Budget, South Pond, Bandemer Park Pathway and Televising PAC Meetings be added to the agenda. All members present agreed.

BANDEMER PATHWAY – Amy Kuras comments – Ms. Kuras went to the Planning Commission with the project and it was tabled, asking that we explore not paving the path and not cutting down a couple of landmark trees. The Master Plan envisioned handicapped accessible and use for bicyclists; something besides feet and mountain bikes. We cannot move the path due to the railroad R.O.W. and wetland on the other side and can't wiggle the trail through the trees. There needs to be some compromising. This has been approved by City Council via the Master Plan. The resolution adopted in 1992 relates to the path. The width of the path is 10' in the park and 8' by the R.O.W. Grants are through Transportation Enhancement MDOT and Greenways of Michigan. The two landmark trees are Cottonwood. It is a better design not to narrow the path at different points. The total cost of the project is \$258,000 and the grant is for \$78,000. John Satarino commented that he wishes we could keep the landmark trees. Ms. Kuras stated she is trying to look beyond personal feelings and meet everyone's needs. If we are trying to get people to use alternative transportation, then we have to provide a means. Owen Jansson remarked that the 8' wide paths in Gallup Park are really inadequate for the use that they get. Ms. Kuras advised that the wetland is next to a building on the southern part of the property and it is not high quality from a plant prospective. Ms. Kuras would also like to continue the path at some time to Longshore Dr. North of the railroad overpass there's a gate the Utilities use and she would like to alter that for a path. Ron Olson advised that the process for approving the path took 6-8 months and included numerous public meetings. At the time they were concerned about the path not coming close to the river. Catherine Riseng asked if there is a way to link further up M14 where there is an underpass. Ms. Kuras stated yes, if you go out on the road and then back in. Jeff Dehring added that the 10' width of the path is much more accommodating to maintenance issues. Catherine Riseng and Janet Cohen stated they like the project and that it is an excellent opportunity to provide alternative transportation means and handicap accessibility.

PRESENTATION BY NATURAL AREA PRESERVATION – Dave Borneman - Mr. Borneman handed out a fact sheet and described volunteer opportunities. NAP rents at Leslie Science Center. Mr. Satarino asked what areas are our natural areas. Mr. Borneman responded they will go out with GPS and do mapping, delineating pristine natural areas from not so good areas. We have 180-200 acres of nice natural areas, located mainly at Furstenberg, Bird Hills, Sugarbush, Gallup, Barton, South Pond, Brown and Marshall Parks. James D'Amour remarked, in terms of making an area as natural and native as possible, the fact is we have building, roads, etc. that will not go away. Mr. Borneman responded that the last 5,000 years have had stability in the ecosystems and weather and they would like to try as best as best they can to restore areas.

FIELD USE POLICY – Rescind Current Policy – Terry Rynard advised she took a process to the Recreation Advisory Commission a couple of weeks. James D'Amour moved to rescind the previous resolution, seconded by Owen Jansson and passed unanimously by voice vote. PAC will get feedback on the future plan.

FY 2003/2004 PARKS AND RECREATION BUDGET – Ron Olson Comments – Mr. Olson handed out a packet of information. The budget has been under discussion and it looks like it will be around May 1 when council and staff will be back to discuss budget issues. The subcommittee will continue to meet. There has been no public hearing date set but it should be approved by late May. There are two scenarios, 5% and 10% reduction. To achieve this, the City would have had to layoff 38 employees so they had to go back and revisit the budgets to change the way we do things so no one would need to be laid off. Ms. Cohen asked how the current year's budget looks, being as we have had vacancies. Mr. Olson responded that there has definitely been savings in the current year; a little over \$400,000 in the General Fund. There was some movement of golf course staff to maintenance staff. The City went from 940 to 867 FTE's. A PAC work session was scheduled for May 1, 4:00 p.m. at City Hall.

TELEVISIONING PAC MEETINGS – Comments:

Steve Rapundalo - There is a council member who feels since there are three millages PAC meetings should be accessible to the public. This could be done from Council Chambers, the Public Library or the Detroit Edison Building. There is an immediate effect of contacting members by the public once they are televised.

Ron Olson - Meetings used to be televised from the Fire Hall but members got tired of parking issues and wanted to meet at facilities. There would be no charge for doing it at City Hall as long as it did not involve overtime, as he understands it. There would be charges to do remote recording.

John Satarino - Members gain something from visiting facilities, especially for new members. Mr. Rapundalo stated visits could be done outside of PAC meetings. Mr. Satarino suggested doing a televised meeting every 2nd or 3rd time. Mr. Rapundalo responded that he feels it would confuse the public and suggested a trial period through the end of the summer. Mr. Satarino asked if PAC would still get good work done and interact as well. Mr. Rapundalo responded that he has no doubt that it would work.

Robert Johnson – This is not a Council request, only one member of council.

James D'Amour – There are a lot of facilities he hasn't seen before but he also sees Steve's argument that it brings greater public involvement.

Catherine Riseng – It has been a lot more valuable to visit the facilities and she would feel much more uncomfortable with meeting at City Hall. Ms. Riseng also asked if they would have to restrict what is said if the meetings are televised. Mr. Olson responded that they would, especially with dollar amounts.

The decision on this was delayed to a future meeting.

SOUTH POND – James D'Amour and John Satarino advised they met with a group of the neighbors and walked the property. There are some people who are set on trying to get the entire site but what PAC heard today in public commentary is the compromise. PAC discussed the various scenarios for placement of the park site. John Satarino stated that the residents are concerned about having parking lots that would encourage people to stay later. Catherine Riseng remarked that noise next to the expressway would not make that location such a great place for a playground. James D'Amour commented that Greenbrier Park is close to his residence and it abuts the freeway but people use it a lot for field sports. Dave Borneman stated that staff met there to review the options. They want to protect as much as possible the north end of the property. The access for emergency vehicles would be from the backside of Arborland. Ron Olson asked members to keep in mind that we don't want to tuck a park back so far that people may get in trouble. Owen Jansson added that with youth soccer, parents have other kids to keep satisfied when the other child is playing. Mr. Olson has talked with the developer previously and discussed what all they would agree to. James D'Amour asked if the City can condemn a portion of the parcel itself for parkland. Mr. Olson responded it has only been done with the Fellowship Bible Church and is a very difficult process. We can't make a developer donate parkland. There is no ordinance or State law. Mr. Rapundalo suggested figuring out how much land we would need and then sit down with the developer and see how that could be accommodated. Mr. D'Amour added that he sees a lot of problems with the proposal in terms of density and traffic issues.

The remainder of the agenda was postponed to the May 2003 meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.