



# PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION

Minutes of December 17, 2002

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Members Present:	C.Riseng R.Curry J.Satarino	S.Rapundalo J.Cohen J.D'Amour	
Members Absent:	P.D'Anieri O.Jansson	L.Langmore	
Ex-officio Members Present:	R.Johnson	R.Olson	
Ex-officio Members Absent:	W.Woods	S.Aeschbach	
Staff Present:	J.Miller A.Kuras N.Burghardt	D.Borneman J.Dehring	R.Nynard D.McGuire
Others Present:	Naela Jenkins Tracy Davis Matt Naud	1430 Dicken Dr. Ann Arbor News City of Ann Arbor	327-1051 994-6856 997-1596

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## **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m. by Chairperson Stephen Rapundalo.

## **SECRETARY CALLS ROLL**

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

## **PUBLIC COMMENTARY**

Naela Jenkins of 1430 Dicken Dr. addressed the Commission on behalf of the subdivision near Dicken Elementary School. There are currently 10 acres nearby that the owners want to sell and a developer is interested in it. The project was tabled by the Planning Commission, and there is indication that they will turn it down. They would like to raise funds in a joint effort to purchase this property, which contains three wetlands, woods, wildlife, etc. A study done by the developer states there are at least 13 landmark trees also on this property. The Master Plan calls for single-family usage if at all. There are currently a lot of dwellings there, with no children's facility; this would give them a large place to play with an open area, not just a swing set. It should be reserved as open space, with possibly a nature center, recreation area and running/biking hiking trail. The neighborhood is aware the City is looking at a lot of parcels and this may not be at the top. The effort is in its infancy stage. They believe it is a valuable piece of property

and want to fund-raise as much as they can. The owners are now in contract with the developer but the neighborhood has contacted them and they know what they want.

### **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

Acceptance of the minutes of Tuesday, November 19, 2002 moved by John Satarino, supported by Janet Cohen. James D'Amour noted that on page two, the NE Area Citizens Group should be Citizens Advisory Committee. Minutes approved, as corrected, unanimously by voice vote.

### **TOUR OF MACK POOL**

Dan McGuire and Jayne Miller gave Commission members a tour of the Pool area, explaining the renovations, which are scheduled for completion on January 6, 2003. Mr. McGuire will contact places if not complete to secure a location for specific programs until completion. Participants will also be notified.

### **PALL/GELMAN CLEAN-UP STATUS**

Steve Rapundalo stated that Gelman has two wells placed at Veterans Park already and a third one was requested. There is also a request to install a treatment facility on site, which is somewhat of a permanent construction. Matt Naud, Environmental Coordinator for the City advised that Gelman has known for a while that part of the contamination from the plume was under Veterans Park. The well located at Knights Inn is on private property and contamination has been zero. Knights Inn may not have been tested enough and Mr. Naud feels that four months ago they would have found contamination. After 15 years, we still do not know where the plume in its entirety is located. The initial location of the plume is no longer valid and it is larger than first expected. Gelman wants to put in an extraction well that would suck out water, put it in trucks and they would watch the wells to see if they go down. Gelman now wants a monitoring well close to the shelter between two diamonds and the DEQ concurs. He is talking with Washtenaw County and the first thing to do is a site investigation to find out where the plume is. We risk a judge telling us where to put the extraction equipment if we don't come to an agreement. Sampling wells are non-intrusive, like a house well, around 18" above the ground. Terry Rynard commented that the bigger problem is what the implication would be. It would be very intrusive if they want to do the actual treatment on-site and if we agree to this, it should be part of some sort of master plan for Veterans Memorial Park. Ms. Rynard added that Gelman is willing to talk about this; possibly a gym or ice skating area. Mr. Naud stated we would receive 48 hours notice before anything happens and we need to identify a specific spot in the area to put it. They will trench dig the well or horizontally drill it. Roy Curry asked what the ultimate fear is. Ms. Rynard responded that if they decide to do this and get what they want, it would be a 40' X 40' structure, 20' tall, with an access road. Mr. Rapundalo remarked that the public perception is that it may be contaminated. Janet Cohen inquired about any noise impact. Ms. Rynard responded there would be minimal with monitoring but she does not know what the impact of treating would be. The installation would be noisy. Ms. Rynard stated this is a huge policy issue if they go ahead and request it. Ron Olson advised PAC needs to be prepared to take a position and we must be ready with a plan if a judge forces this, to get the compensation we want, etc. This is not to say we want to condone it, but we need to be prepared. Residents may come out in force if this is permitted due to the fear of a pipe bursting, etc. Janet Cohen remarked that there are a lot of technical issues and

she would like to see the Environmental Commission take the lead and make recommendations. Ms. Cohen added that people always grab onto parkland because it is open and costs less than dealing with private parties. Steve Rapundalo advised PAC would discuss policy on this at the January 2003 meeting. The Environmental Commission will meet January 30, 2003. There will be a meeting with citizens on February 3. The status hearing is February 10. Matt Naud stated the only way we would think of using city land is if it was the only site to use. Ron Olson added that we are steward over the property.

### **PAC/RAC OPERATING AGREEMENT**

James D'Amour reported that a meeting was held on December 12 to discuss overall issues, a valid operating agreement, and structure of a blue-ribbon panel for combined recreational meetings. At that meeting, Jayne Miller, with the City, presented a table, comparing operation and costs. Some of the overlap is problematic and needs to be replaced. Ron suggested looking at other college towns and communities that have a combined recreation and education and Parks Department. We need to look at what the guiding principles are going to be. For example, new programs would be low cost and affordable to users. Steve Rapundalo outlined a new blue-ribbon panel and its mission goals and issues and presented it at the meeting. They discussed whether a representative should be demographic, a soccer representative. etc. The blue ribbon panel will be suggested to Mr. Rapundalo and presented at the next meeting.

RAC Report – Mr. D'Amour stated that one of two issues he became a member of PAC is because of his personal use of swimming facilities as a master swimmer. When Slauson School was made available while Mack was being renovated, they discussed how their group could stay there and it appears there would be some drawbacks, so for the time being they will be back at Mack Pool.

### **REORGANIZATION**

Terry Rynard gave a PowerPoint presentation of a reorganization plan. Staff are working on reorganizing and tightening but the budget keeps getting tightened more. Managers listened to everyone and now propose a positive plan to deal with what is coming. There are currently 13 vacancies, representing 17% of the previous workforce. They propose three service areas, with another reduction of 5.3 FTE's. The service areas would be Recreation Facilities, Natural Area Preservation and Park Operations/Forestry. Administration would be absorbed into these service areas. Ron Olson added that one theory was for one of the staff in Park Planning to work more closely with Park Operations and one more closely with Recreation Facilities. Steve Rapundalo asked who would do site plan reviews. Ms. Rynard responded reviews would tie into the Forestry/Park Operations and Natural Area Preservation. It is a burdensome task and will involve teamwork. Some site plans are very complicated and get involved with lots of issues. Janet Cohen stated there are a lot of members on PAC who worked on this and they felt that the Planning section is very important and we can't let things drop through the cracks. PAC didn't want to see this lost; it's too important. Mr. Rapundalo agreed that it's too important, and asked staff to look at this closer. Mr. Olson remarked that there is opportunity to spread the burden better and we need to team up together and focus on the outcome. Jeff Dehring remarked that Planning is a key component; working with the public directly, finding out what the citizens want, they are liaisons between the public and the department. Amy Kuras added that she and Jeff

Dehring could use additional hands to do the things they do. Ms. Rynard responded that the goal is to move park maintenance closer to the public. Mr. Dehring also felt that Park Planning needs to be located at City Hall to deal with City attorneys, Purchasing, and the public expects them to be there. Janet Cohen reminded everyone that the group that previously met thought we need someone to focus on the future, not what is happening now. Mr. Rapundalo stated he strongly encourages staff to have further inclusive discussion on this.

### **COMMISSION PROPOSED BUSINESS**

James D'Amour asked if PAC needs to take action on the field selection policy. Ms. Rynard responded that they would need this in January. It's a field allocation policy. RAC has approved it already. John Satarino asked if it only involves certain fields. Ms. Rynard advised it involves only the SE Area Park and Fuller Park fields. Resolution moved by James D'Amour, supported by Linda and passed unanimously by voice vote.

John Satarino asked about Gerry Clark's role as a contracted employee.

Catherine Riseng advised that after PAC's last meeting she was contacted by JJR, asking if the PAC chair would write a letter in support of the Lowertown Project and she let her know that we cannot do that. Roy Curry asked when PAC will get project updates. Ron Olson responded that we want to do them quarterly and are figuring out what format would be the best. Mr. Curry added that his concern is whether projects are still on the books. Mr. Olson advised that nothing has been dropped off the radar screen. Jeff Dehring reported that NE Area Park was bid out one time and came in \$400,000 over budget. It is a combined project with Washtenaw County. They are working with the consultant and the county to restructure the project scope and will rebid the project after the first of the year. In the process of bidding they ran into unsuitable soils at the site and will accommodate to take care of that. 4 of the 5 neighborhood parks projects are completed, with the last scheduled for completion in the spring. PAC would like a project update report every two months. Mr. Satarino stated it would be nice to review some of the future projects. Bob Johnson felt that a quarterly report is more than enough. Ron Olson commented that the reports can be blended; when there are defining moments they will be verbalized.

The next PAC meeting will be January 21, 2003, 4:00 p.m. at Huron Hills Golf Course and Ski Center.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.