



PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION

Minutes July 15, 2003

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- Members Present: C.Riseng J.D'Amour
R.Curry P.D'Anieri
J.Satarino O.Jansson
L.Langmore J.Cohen
 - Members Absent: S.Rapundalo
 - Ex-officio Members Present: R.Johnson R.Olson
W.Woods
 - Ex-officio Members Absent: S.Aeschbach
 - Staff Present: J.Dehring D.Borneman
J.Miller K.Bemish
T.Rynard A.Kuras

Others Present:

- John Held 3145 Baylis Dr. 971-0746
- Julie F. Kruze 120 E. Liberty #320 761-8500
- Erik Stalhandske 2140 Stephen Terrace 769-1498
- David LeRoy 716 Sunset Rd. 761-6142
- Margot Mehringer 303 Detroit St. 996-3591
- Jill Ferrari 10448 Citation Dr., Brighton (810) 225-2800
- Kristin Whitcomb 1632 Kirtland 769-0504

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m. by Vice Chairperson Phil D'Anieri.

SECRETARY CALLS ROLL

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

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

John Held, of 3145 Baylis Dr., addressed the Commission regarding his neighborhood effort to join with the City's water supply. The 12 households currently are on wells. The DEQ, township and City are making the effort, but it is taking awhile. He is recommending, in the long-term, to convert the area where the wells are into a city park. The township has indicated they are willing to sell it to the City.

Margot Merringer, Director of the Kerrytown Association addressed the Commission to follow-up on the Downtown Entry Parks Project that involves removal of two gas stations. A packet was presented at last month's PAC meeting, along with support letters and a maintenance plan. The key piece Ms. Margot addressed is funding to help this project and introduced Jill Ferrari, ASTI, Attorney, who is helping to find funds for redevelopment projects such as these. Ms. Ferrari indicated that as part of the Brownfields project, grants are available, in particular for these sites because they are non-buildable. There are several grant opportunities through the County or State, through EPA. The County can give loans or sub-grants from the County. The Coordinator of the program at Washtenaw County is aware of the project and just needs to figure out what we need to do to get funding for these sites. It is likely that tanks are still in the ground and cost to remove those would be from \$50,000-\$100,000 per site.

Erik Stalhandske addressed the Commission regarding Dicken Woods proposed acquisition from the Catholic Diocese. The neighborhood group has provided a plan to the Catholic Diocese. First 8 pages of it run through the outline of why this makes a good park location, page 9 starts letters of support from Huron River Watershed, Allens Creek Watershed, Sierra Club, Ann Arbor Public School Systems, local Dicken School, PTO and they will be getting a letter of support also from Representative Chris Kolb. They have been in contact with Walden Management regarding the 5 acres contiguous to this parcel, and they are interested in preserving the 5 acres as a conservation easement. They will not build on that property. The Friends of Dicken Woods are now 501C3 status. Their first funding-raising effort was successful. The group wants to reiterate that their commitment is for the next 10 years to maintain the trails and do semi-annual cleanups. This increases the sense of ownership and decreases the cost to the City. They have pledged to have \$50,000 toward this purchase effort.

Dave Levoy, President of the Greater Sunset Brooks Association addressed the Commission, stating they established a fund for donations and has 85% of the pledges in toward the Sunset Brooks property acquisition. They have confirmed pledges of \$72,000 and a potential of about \$87,000.

Kristin Whitcomb, of 1632 Kirtland, addressed the Commission regarding the need for a park near Pioneer High School and hoping that PAC might consider the area behind the high school for this purpose. They don't have a playground in the area and they have to go across Stadium to get to Allmendinger Park. There is a lot down the road they think is owned by the City and feel it would make a very nice neighborhood playground. There are 20-30 children in the area.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES OF JUNE 17, 2003

Acceptance of minutes moved by Catherine Riseng, supported by John Satarino and approved unanimously by voice vote.

RESOLUTION RE: ADOPTION OF THE LESLIE SCIENCE CENTER TASK FORCE'S CAPACITY GUIDELINES ADDENDUM

Jayne Miller, Kirsten Levinsohn and members of the Advisory Board were present to answer any questions. Lisa Brush explained there are two changes they are proposing. The current policy doesn't allow any flexibility and was formed six years ago. They would like to be able to development a more flexible schedule. This issue was instigated

by Tidy Tots, a new program this year that drew in a lot of children. The other change would be the three stages of review, to take out “prior to being established.” John Satarino asked if this is cost-centered, as well as service-centered. Ms. Brush responded that they also look at the cost. Resolution moved by Owen Jansson, supported by James D’Amour and approved unanimously by voice vote.

RESOLUTION RE: SUPPORT FOR PURCHASE OF TRAVERWOOD PROPERTY

Ron Olson explained that the purchase price is \$650,000, plus any additional for closing costs. Resolution moved by Janet Cohen, supported by Catherine Riseng. Mr. Olson added that First Martin also owns the two acres south of this parcel and it would be a potential dedication through the site plan process. John Satarino asked if there is a time limit on developers producing a site plan for the two acres. Mr. Olson responded there is not, but he has the impression it will be somewhat sooner than later. Janet Cohen asked if the owner would allow us to manage the two acres and Mr. Olson responded that they would. Wendy Woods asked David Borneman to describe the Traverwood parcel and the kinds of things we are discussing doing there. Mr. Borneman advised that the 8.1 acres includes what we initially wanted in 1994. It has an old hickory woodland; nice big trees. There are a lot of invasive species there but are fairly new, so it will be easy to control. It also contains a small pond. We would put in a loop trail and will be doing a prescribed burn. The parcel will connect to Leslie Woods also. John Satarino commented that an important aspect is how sensitive this area is. It is very visible area and any development around it would make an impact. He hopes we could speak with the Library Board to see what their intention is. Mr. Satarino added he supports and appreciates the effort of Parks staff and to the owner of the Traverwood property for the fair offer to the city. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

RESOLUTION RE: PAC’S REVIEW OF PROPOSED PROJECTS WITHIN THE REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT MILLAGE

Resolution moved by Phil D’Anieri and supported by James D’Amour. Mr. D’Anieri advised that the resolution intends to provide guidance to PAC and staff in terms of projects that come to PAC for review and in what form. Staff and Commission members had a meeting and talked about practicalities and substantive changes in the parks. Some felt that if a project is going before City Council, it should go to PAC first. The projects will be presented in spreadsheet form at each meeting so PAC can keep tabs on projects. A trigger for major projects is if it is capital improvement that will be using Rehabilitation and Development millage funds. If we are replacing equipment in a park PAC will be able to review the design. Mr. D’Anieri stated we don’t want to gum up the works of staff too much. PAC could try this procedure first and if we feel we’re not getting enough information, we will revisit it. Owen Jansson indicated he agrees with the proposed review process. Mr. Jansson stated he initially had concerns that if the resolution were not drafted properly, staff would lose some authority. Catherine Riseng questioned Item #3 of the resolution, commenting that she isn’t sure what the three year statement means. Mr. D’Anieri explained this means PAC’s review and offered a friendly amendment to change the wording to PAC project review. Wendy Woods commented that citizens often have concerns and want to know what is going on if it’s been three years. Janet Cohen asked about Item #1 – if it means a member of PAC should attend the public meeting. Mr. D’Anieri responded yes, that staff indicated it would be helpful to them to have a member present at the public meetings. Robert Johnson remarked that one question is who should comment on projects and felt that

neighbors and user groups should be defined more clearly. He would like people that actually use the park on a regular basis. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

SUPERINTENDENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION REPORT

Ron Olson explained through the City reorganization there are five service areas to consolidate and make more efficient. Parks and Recreation falls under the Community Services “bubble.” However, Park Operations and Forestry will move under the Public Services “bubble.” Terry Rynard has been working with Public Services on the design process to figure out how these areas will work. Mr. Olson explained his role is the “bubblehead” for the Support Services “bubble.” The design processes are still evolving. He moved his office last weekend and Jayne Miller will now manage the elements of the Parks and Recreation Services, all but Park Operations and Forestry. In relationship to PAC, the objective is to have a seamless process and not have PAC worried about how this will work. Jayne Miller, Dave Borneman and Terry Rynard will actively participate in this. Six or twelve months out we may learn things and modifications may be needed. For him personally, it’s a big change that has been mounting over the last few months. John Satarino asked if this will affect the budget and if there is still going to be a Parks budget. Mr. Olson responded, yes, and in those areas where they are connected to the millages, it will have to be very clearly kept in mind. Bob Johnson remarked that Field Services is currently assigning soccer fields and felt this should revert to Parks and Recreation Services. Jayne Miller responded that she and Ms. Rynard have been working on this. Janet Cohen asked if the person that sets Ms. Miller’s priorities is different than Ms. Rynard’s. Mr. Olson responded they are. Ms. Miller added that they are committed to continuing to provide services. Mr. Olson remarked that we don’t want the decision to be made whether to repair a pothole or work in a park. Some employees have begun to help out in areas where they previously hadn’t been involved. A lot of things are visible, such as mowing grass and picking garbage up. So far we haven’t had a surge of complaints. The intent is to keep priorities strong and out front. John Satarino thanked Mr. Olson for his efforts and remarked that he and the knowledge he carries with him will be missed. Mr. Satarino also thanked Stephen Rapundalo, who is serving as Chairperson, but his term is ending. Mr. Rapundalo has done a wonderful job and has been very dedicated. Vice Chairperson Phil D’Anieri advised PAC will more formally thank both in the future. Roy Curry also commended Mr. Olson on a job well done, adding that PAC has benefited greatly by his knowledge. Robert Johnson added that, from the point of view of City Council, Ron Olson is an excellent person to work with, has a basic sense of decency, is knowledgeable, and appreciates him. Wendy Woods also thanked Mr. Olson; stating she appreciates the fact he has so much information on the tip of his tongue.

REPORT OF RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE

James D’Amour reported that RAC will be meeting in August or late July to discuss a resolution to ask the City to look further into a fieldplex. The resolution is still being prepared. Mr. D’Amour announced he is confirmed as a Planning Commissioner, so this is one of his last meetings on PAC. RAC will elect a new chair and new representative to PAC tonight.

PROPOSED BUSINESS

Wendy Woods asked about the proposed Dicken Woods property acquisition and residents having a 10-year maintenance plan. Ms. Wood questioned what happens after 10 years. Mr. Olson advised that we have had others come in and say they would take care of a park. Along Eisenhower Parkway and Stone School Rd., residents wanted increased landscaping and agreed to take care of it. Some of the residents moved and there was nothing in their deeds that stated future owners would take care of it so we ended up having to take it on. In the Dicken Woods case, we will need to see what would happen, as an undeveloped park space. Ms. Woods remarked that this might be the kind of thing that would be on PAC's plate so we keep up with the parcels and how we take care of it. Bob Johnson asked that the piece of property near Pioneer High School, which the public referred to earlier be checked out. Mr. Olson responded that staff will follow through with them. There is a parcel that the school owns, but has an agreement with the City that it could be used for a park until the schools might want it back. There is nothing in the millage for it.

John Satarino asked if there has been any recent appraisal information. Phil D'Anieri indicated there has and PAC will discuss this in closed session after adjournment of the regular PAC meeting.

Ms. Woods asked if any of the Parks buildings fall under facility maintenance service. Mr. Olson explained these are City buildings to create some economies of scale, to maintain the infrastructure. Janet Cohen requested a list of parks with information on facilities at each. Jayne Miller responded she can look on the City's website for this information. Ms. Cohen indicated she is speaking toward tennis courts and would also like to know the condition of the courts. Terry Rynard advised that a field evaluation of the courts and bike paths is in process and should be completed by the end of this summer, with hopefully some spring construction. Janet Cohen remarked that it would be helpful, as services provided are being looked at, to give an update on the status of.

PAC adjourned to a special closed meeting to discuss appraisals at 5:20 p.m.