



PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION

Minutes January 27, 2003

Members Present:	C.Riseng L.Langmore J.Satarino S.Rapundalo	J.D'Amour R.Curry O.Jansson	
Members Absent:	J.Cohen	P.D'Anieri	
Ex-officio Members Present:	R.Johnson	S.Aeschbach	
Ex-officio Members Absent:	W.Woods		
Staff Present:	D.Borneman C.Smith	KC Bemish J.Dehring	A.Kuras T.Rynard
Others Present:	Nina Homel Cheryl Zvellig Tom Covert John Marsh Kevin McGraw Connie Dimond Myra Larson Peter Allen Darleen Boynton	34373 Wooddale Ct., AA Smith Group, JJR Atwell-Hicks Atwell-Hicks 314 Mac Ave., E. Lansing Smith Group, JJR 3575 E. Huron River Dr., AA 2224 Applewood, AA 2876 Whitewood, AA	369-2499 669-2715 994-4000 994-4000 (517) 336-4400 669-2765 971-6274 769-1578 973-9791

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

Nina Homel of 3473 Wooddale, addressed the Commission, requesting that the land being considered for development in South Pond be purchased for park land. The area should be greenbelt along US23. Ms. Homel stated the current unmet need for park land for active recreation in that area is 4.5 acres. Woodcreek Park was never developed. The northern part has numerous natural features. Ms. Homel stated the purchase fits with PROS Plan, F19 #7 with the need to obtain park areas there and #8. James D'Amour added that he wishes the City Planning Department had paid better attention to the PROS Plan. Amy Kuras advised that when Woodcreek was being developed, Tom Raynes, former Manager of Park Planning, tried very hard to get parkland dedicated to the City.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Acceptance of the minutes of Tuesday, December 17, 2002 moved by John Satarino, supported by Roy Curry and passed unanimously by voice vote.

INTRODUCTION TO HURON HILLS GOLF COURSE

Colin Smith, Facility Supervisor welcomed PAC members. Mr. Smith explained that in the winter the facility has cross-country when there is snow (need about ½" to be open for it) but the winters haven't been kind lately. They rent out equipment, provide ski lessons and groom about 12 trails. The rest of the year is golf, beginning in March through November, but they will open sooner when possible. The facility runs a large instructional golf program, with 600 adults and 300 children. These are group lessons and are very successful. The average approval rate is 4.75 on scale of 1-5 for instruction. The Herb Fowler Tournament is one of the biggest events in the state for youth. The facility offers golf everyday during the season; walking only on the course, with carts are available if it is required for you to be able to play. Owen Jansson asked about the geese problem. Mr. Smith responded it is much less of a problem and they still use dogs to run them off. James D'Amour added this course is his most favorite place in Washtenaw County. Wendy Woods commented she knew Herb Fowler personally and is glad the facility has the tournament.

LOWERTOWN PLAN

Connie Dimond, with Smith Group, JJR, addressed the commission, stating that since November they have had their first official meeting with the Planning Commission and some things have changed. The definition of floodplain needed to be revisited. They needed to recalculate so there would be no net loss in flood storage. She presented drawings showing proposed native plants. The benefits offered to the Parks Department are a donation of the portion along the creek, which eventually connects to the river and \$250,000 for park improvements. They also want to still donate the park in the middle of the development but Parks staff reacted that it would not have impact so now they would offer a conservancy easement, which would provide access to the public, and the developer would maintain it. Roy Curry asked how the \$250,000 would be dispensed. Kevin McGraw of Smith Group responded it would depend on the Brownfield approvals, but their plan would be to earmark a certain amount for future maintenance and the other part would go to the City. Ron Olson added that it would be put in a special fund for endowed maintenance. Linda Langmore asked if it included maintenance of the pedestrian bridge. Mr. McGraw answered that the bridge isn't in their idea and is not in their plan. There will also be a water feature, which the developer will maintain. They are working with DTE and MichCon, and Phase II might be a better time for discussion of this. John Marsh explained the recalculating of the floodplain. Owen Jansson if there were other changes besides moving the bikepath. Mr. Marsh responded that trees would need to be removed and landmark trees replaced. Steve Rapundalo commented that there are at least six very large trees in the area. Mr. Marsh explained they would not remove the playground. They would be removing volume of earth, a depression, about 2- 2/12 ft. – 5 ft. deep. Jeff Dehring stated that the area north of the play area is one of the only open level area spaces in the park. Mr. Marsh stated they are proposing

a gradual cut, then replacement of the flat area. Mr. Rapundalo asked if they have explored alternatives outside the park. Mr. Marsh answered that there are some options, which would be on-site solutions, but they might have some utility issues. Mr. Rapundalo asked what would happen if the park wasn't touched. Mr. Marsh answered the storage would be on-site or somewhere else along the watershed. Mr. Rapundalo asked if the proposal had been presented to the neighborhood. Mr. Marsh stated they are looking at other properties up stream, some private and some public. Mr. Rapundalo stated he finds it very troubling to see this kind of impact and could not be supportive, in absence of showing other alternatives. Connie Dimond asked what was seen as the impact. Steve Rapundalo stated he feels this sets a bad policy. Catherine Riseng commented that the area will be flooded every time the creek goes over the bank and we would hear about it. Mr. Marsh commented that since there were changes on Traver Rd., more water backs up. James D'Amour asked if the neighborhood had seen the proposal. Connie Dimond responded they have a meeting scheduled for tomorrow night at 5:30 with the neighborhood to discuss this. Linda Langmore remarked that she would be more comfortable seeing more options than just this option. Mr. Marsh stated there are other options they are looking at. This is hydraulically unique. It is a nice area because it's already ponded. Wendy Woods asked staff to determine what this would mean in terms of the park being useable. Jeff Dehring added that Park Operations may also be able to give us insight into that. John Satarino commented that he doesn't see the greenway being possible along the property due to legal issues, so he wonders about the value of accepting that as parkland as compensation for the cut in Plymouth Park. Peter Allen stated they have talked with the property owners there and they are very cooperative. There are some spots that might be narrower at some points. Amy Kuras added that we need to get what land we can get. Catherine Riseng stated it would be helpful to have a cross section that shows the cut. Steve Rapundalo asked if improvements to that part of Traver Creek have been suggested, such as the banks, or corrosion issues that could be addressed. They are proposing native plant material that would minimize soil erosion. Robert Johnson asked if they could please tell PAC the difference in square feet usage in the park. Wendy Woods asked how children would be kept out of the 5' cut and who would be liable if it flooded. Mr. Marsh responded it would be no deeper than 2 ½ ft. and it is not rushing water. Ron Olson stated that with this new information, staff from the City need to meet and look at other opportunities because we were looking at strip of land only, not the larger piece added. Mr. Olson stated it may be better to look at Leslie Park. The Planning Commission will also look at this. Mr. Olson remarked that it seems like this is rushing too fast and we need time to sort out these type of things and define what is good policy. Kevin McGraw responded that they are not trying to rush and they have extensions on the purchase of some of the properties. Mr. McGraw asked for a subcommittee they could talk with prior to PAC's next meeting. Mr. Rapundalo responded that PAC will meet, if necessary, before anything goes to Planning and/or City Council. Amy Kuras would like a record of what is said at their public meeting tomorrow. Wes Vivian, who stated he has been very involved in Mallets Creek asked what change there would be in the runoff as more and more impervious surface is included. Ms. Dimond answered that the impervious surface Kim Groome, 1st Ward Councilperson added she has heard from concerned neighbors. Ms. Groome asked if the need for the detention comes from the size of the development and would it be less if the proposal was smaller in scope. Mr. Marsh stated there are existing buildings, so any type of project would have to do this; compensate, in addition to the underground. Peter Allen asked that if he understood correctly that because they put the culvert in on Plymouth it created this problem. Mr. Marsh responded yes.

PAC WORK PLAN

James D'Amour noted that some topics are already done or momentum has been built.

The edited list and calendar are attached or enclosed and are included as part of these minutes.

LAND ACQUISITION MEETING

The next Land Acquisition meeting will be February 6, 4:30 p.m. in the 4th floor conference room of City Hall.

ADDITION TO AGENDA

Owen Jansson asked about the Parks Department staffing. Steve Rapundalo responded that it will come up in the budget, but there is a plan that is coming from Roger Fraser, who told them today that the Superintendent's position will be posted. Mr. Rapundalo stated Mr. Fraser is aware that there is a need for constant focus of someone for the department (a superintendent). Mr. Fraser is supportive also of the RAC/PAC blue ribbon panel. James D'Amour added that a new definition of the "Blue Ribbon" panel is needed. The mandate of the "panel" is to look at the recreational needs to the Ann Arbor School District and make recommendations.

PROPOSED BUSINESS

John Satarino would like discussion of attendance of commissioners. All agreed that members should acquaint themselves to the PAC bylaws as related to attendance.

The Next PAC Meeting was scheduled for February 11, 2003, 4:00 p.m. at the Leslie Science Center.

REPORT OF SUPT. OF PARKS AND RECREATION – RON OLSON - No Report

REPORT OF DIR. OF SCHOOLS/CITY REPRESENTATIVE SARA AESCHBACH - No Report

REPORT OF RAC REPRESENTATIVE – James D'Amour

Mr. D'Amour reported they are still working on the PAC/RAC relationship. They are also looking at goals and a not so reactive agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Dave Borneman stated that Wes Vivian asked that he relate that he thought the South Pond issue would be on the agenda and would like for PAC to think about a Master Plan for that area.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.