

City of Inver Grove Heights Minutes of the Proceedings
Of The Park and Recreation Advisory Commission
Wednesday, November 9, 2016

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Eiden called the November 9, 2016 Park and Recreation Advisory Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present: Chair Al Eiden; Commissioners: Patrick Farley, Kathryn Bauer, Willie Krech, Mark Freer, and Deb Tix

NOTE: Commissioner Huffman has resigned for health reasons.
Parks and Recreation Director Eric Carlson

Absent: Vice Chair Kevin Sethre: Commissioner Joe Boehmer: Recording Clerk Sheri Yourczek

- **PRESENTATIONS:**

None

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

**A. You can find information regarding the City of Inver Grove Heights by visiting our web site at:
www.invergroveheights.org**

B. Find us on Facebook at Inver Grove Heights Parks & Recreation

C. Follow us on Twitter at @IGHParks

D. Next Meeting: December 14, 2016. Regular Meeting 7:00 p.m.

5. CONSENT AGENDA:

- **Approval of Agenda**
- **Approval of Minutes of October 12, 2016**

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda by Commissioner Farley, seconded by Commissioner Bauer.

Aye: 6

Nay: 0 Motion carried.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

8. REGULAR AGENDA:

- **Consider Park Dedication for Pulte Homes of MN – Case NO 16-49SZV**

Parks and Recreation Director Eric Carlson stated Pulte Homes is proposing to do a small subdivision in the western part of Inver Grove Heights/Eagan border. Some of the sub-division would be located in the City of Inver Grove Heights and some would be located in the City of Eagan. Within Inver Grove Heights they are talking about a 10-lot single family sub-division located at 3790-3800 Dodd Road. Our Comprehensive Park Plan doesn't call for a park in this general area, so we are recommending Cash Dedication at \$2850 per single family residential lot, so that equals \$28,500. The Mendota/Lebanon Regional Trail planned to hit the northern tip of their subdivision, so we want to make sure we set aside enough right of way to accommodate for future construction of that trail. Tree preservation is not a Park and Recreation issue, but they are asked to follow our Tree Preservation Ordinance. Any trees that are a part of the landscape plan, we would not want them to be Ash trees due to the Emerald Ash Borer epidemic.

Commissioner Farley asked about the approximate trail location. Has all of that land been allocated?

Director Carlson responded the Lebanon Regional Trail is the reddish line on the map. The Commission should be more aware of the area in the Blackstone Vista area where the trail has actually been constructed. In the long term the trail will have a path through Inver Grove Heights that will look something like what is pictured on the Master Plan. The land will be secured as people that own the land are proposing to make development. We are working with the County to help accomplish the goal of the Mendota/Lebanon Regional Trail.

Commissioner Farley commented that the building of the trail is proposed, but proposed predicated upon the acquisition of land as people become or get to a point of wanting to develop their property. That's when acquisition of their property comes into play.

Director Carlson said the trail is a County project, they have planned it. The County is responsible for the land acquisition, construction, and the operations and maintenance of the trail once the trail has been constructed. As for us, we are helping the County from the acquisitions standpoint. When developers propose subdivisions or Commercial or Industrial property for development. We assist the County when we can. There are going to be pieces along the route that the land owner may not be proposing any type of development, if that's the case it's the Counties responsibility to work with that particular land owner to gain land control in the form of an easement, right of way, or purchase of the property, to allow them to construct the actual trail.

Motion by Commissioner Krech to accept the money for Land Dedication as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Farley.

Chair Eiden is glad to see that this proposal includes that we are recommending that the developer put sidewalks in the development and be responsible for them. That the developer agreed to put the right of way to connect with the trail, and that it was our recommendation that trees should be preserved. He likes those commendations and criteria in this proposal.

Aye: 6

Nay: 0 Motion carried.

- **Consider Park Dedication for Xcel Energy – Case NO 16-43SV**

Director Carlson stated this is a Park Dedication request from Xcel Energy. They own land in the southern part of Inver Grove just north of 117th Street. On that land is a small tank farm that Xcel Energy doesn't have a use for anymore. They are proposing to do a lot split, 15 acres, to sell to someone that can use the tanks for whatever business they may be in. According to our City records, the 30 acres that Xcel owns has never paid Park Dedication. Our ordinance would call for a lot split that would trigger the requirement to pay Park Dedication. This is industrial property so that would be \$5,000 an acre, for 15 acres, for a total of \$75,000 in Park Dedication. Xcel Energy is asking for leniency in the Park Dedication rate. They are saying this doesn't

increase the burden on the park system and they don't feel they should have to pay full Park Dedication. He would argue since they have never paid it in the past, they should pay the full Park Dedication as recommended. The City Administrator had a meeting with them today and asked that if they can show that they have paid Park Dedication in the past, then you don't have to pay Park Dedication now as we can only collect it one time. Then if they can't, we are recommending they pay \$75,000 that would follow our ordinance.

Motion made by Commissioner Krech to accept the money as presented. Motion seconded by Commissioner Freer.

Chair Eiden stated he will vote no on this for a number of reasons. If we are grandfathering, he doesn't know how far back Park Dedication fees go and how long they have owned the land. He felt it meets the letter of the law in the ordinance but not the spirit and intent.

Commissioner Farley asked if this existed before the incorporation of Inver Grove Heights?

Commissioner Krech felt this was here in the 1960's. They probably didn't have Park Dedication back then.

Commissioner Farley asked if the ordinance existed for this cost?

Chair Eiden stated that's what he doesn't know. The City was incorporated in 1965.

Commissioner Farley isn't against collecting the money. If the ordinance didn't exist and Xcel goes and does this, and we come in retroactively, it sounds like we are being less than a genuine transaction.

Director Carlson said if they were not doing a lot split then we wouldn't be asking for any Park Dedication. Any other land owner in Inver Grove Heights and for example, the landowners in the northwest area, for however long they have been around, they own that land, and it's going to be developed now, and we are charging them Park Dedication. It's the same thing going on here. They are doing a lot split, our ordinance says we charge a Park Dedication.

Commissioner Farley doesn't see it that way. He looks at it as if he bought a hundred acres of farmland many years ago, and isn't going to be a farmer anymore. He still owns it, but it's just farmland. Now he decides to change the whole character of it, then you have to look at the circumstances under which those changes are occurring. Which would be the current policies of the Township or City that you are operating within. Then this would then come into play. If we are looking at Xcel, they were a tank farm, they are a tank farm, and will continue to be a tank farm.

Commissioner Tix commented not exactly though. They are a tank farm looking to sell to someone else to use it to be a tank farm, but that's like selling farmland to someone who is developing. It's the developer that's paying the money.

Commissioner Farley felt she responded by saying you crossed over to the point in saying that if you sell the farmland to be used as farmland, then why do I have to pay a fee?

Commissioner Tix stated you don't, the buyer does.

Commissioner Farley said in this case, the buyer is buying the farmland, do they have to pay a Park Dedication fee?

Commissioner Tix responded you do when your developing.

Chair Eiden responded that is if there is a development.

Commissioner Farley stated in the example as farmland wanting to continue to use it as farmland, he isn't going

to do anything as far as the character of the ground is concerned. Maybe once he decides to develop it, then he should pay the appropriate fees. He doesn't see in this instance why Xcel should have to pay this fee. He doesn't see the premise with which it's being assessed.

Commissioner Krech commented in that every piece of land he has sold to be divided he has paid Park Dedication. He assumes they have to pay the same thing. You sell a parcel or do anything with it, someone has to pay Park Dedication. If you buy land in Inver Grove, you wouldn't have to pay Park Dedication because you are buying it, but once you change something on it, then you pay Park Dedication.

Commissioner Farley commented then that following that same logic, what is Xcel when they sell it? What's going to happen? Director Carlson stated it would be sold to another tank farm user.

Director Carlson responded the new users would use it as a tank farm. He understands his premise, but he is applying what the ordinance says.

Commissioner Farley understands what the ordinance says. But are we applying the ordinance retroactively to a piece of ground that should in a sense be grandfathered in as far as the transaction serves?

Director Carlson responded it was his understanding that that can't happen based on how the ordinance is written.

Commissioner Krech stated they own the land, so they shouldn't have to pay it. The purchaser would have to pay it.

Commissioner Farley stated it says here that Xcel pays it as that is how the ordinance is written.

Chair Eiden stated the Motion here is to charge a Dedication fee on 15 acres at \$75,000.

Aye: 4

Nay: 2 (Eiden, Farley) Motion carried.

9. ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENTATIONS:

A. Department Happenings

Director Carlson will stand by for any questions.

Commissioner Krech heard there was a leak and that you may have to tear up the floor in the spring?

Director Carlson responded that roughly two weeks ago, they started to experience a leak along the header in the east rink. They hired a Contractor to fix it. They turned it on, and one of the connections right next to the leak that was repaired started leaking. At that point they had to take the ice out and they came back out to fix the second leak. Once they fixed the second leak and it held, they put the ice back in. We have brine in our system. There was some corrosion and the header they have is steel. Due to that corrosion, we are going to have to replace the floor to prevent something like this from happening again.

Commissioner Farley asked if we have the funds to do that?

Director Carlson responded they have not developed a way to pay for the repairs which would be between \$700,000 and \$900,000.

Chair Eiden asked if we would make it through this season? And then do it in the spring?

Director Carlson responded it is their hopes to make it through the main hockey season, which runs late February or early March. At that point we would have to take the ice out. A Contractor would be hired to take

out the existing floor and then replace the new floor. We hope we will not experience another leak during the hockey season.

Commissioner Krech mentioned that they changed that brine from glycol to salt brine. Didn't they realize there was steel pipe in there? Maybe they should have had the glycol.

Director Carlson responded there are plastic irrigation lines throughout the floor, but the header is steel. We knew that it was steel when we put the brine in. The brine has better heat transfer than the glycol and is more efficient. The floor that we have is a 25-year floor, we are now at 20 years. We are right at the stage to replace as it is. We are using the same type of pipe that they are using at the golf course so it will be a 40 to 50-year floor.

Chair Eiden asked if there was any update about River Front Park? He was concerned about the changing hours.

Director Carlson said they met with residents on River Road regarding the activity at River Front Park. They are concerned with what happens in the park after hours. They are wanting the Police Department to enforce the after-hour activity in the park. We have done a few things to aid with that in terms of signage and tree trimming to try to make sure signage stand out. Residents have requested the park hours not be until 10:00 p.m., but to be from sunup to sundown, as they felt it would be better than it being 10:00 p.m. all of the time, especially in light of daylight savings time changes. We would need to have a neighborhood meeting regarding that. You would also have to be made aware of that possible recommendation and then the City Council. Another thing being explored is the possibility of the park not being a park and having it be private property. We are having the City Attorney take a look at that and are waiting to hear the results.

Chair Eiden commented on from what he has seen and heard, you should complement yourself, and staff on the job that has been done with the Golf Course renovations. The golfers that he has spoken with are happy with what has been done there. They have done a nice job.

Director Carlson agreed the staff has done a great job there, as has the Contractor.

Chair Eiden wanted to say that nature being agreeable to us, the three outdoor rinks are scheduled to be open on December 19th.

He also asked about an issue he had heard about with security. He had heard that it was handled promptly and efficiently, and that you have taken steps to prevent it from happening again at the Center.

Director Carlson responded unfortunately we are not immune to people breaking into lockers. From time to time we experience issues where that happens. Based on conversations from other facilities, those kinds of things do happen. We are trying to take some steps to alleviate that. We don't know that we can completely alleviate it, short of staffing someone in the locker room to monitor that all the time, and even then, you can't completely prevent that from happening. We are going to be installing some wallet lockers in the hallway as you go into the locker room, so that men and women can use these type of lockers that kind of resemble a mailbox. This way people can lock up their wallets and keys with that lock, and keep that key with them. We hope that will be less easy to break into as it's in a more visible location. When these break in occurs, there are times that there is only one person in the locker room. Those that do mischievous things take advantage of those opportunities and then they move on. While we hope to do this change with the new lockers, we always advise our members and guests that they should protect their valuables.

10. COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Commissioner Freer had no comment.

Commissioner Farley had no comment.

Commissioner Krech felt that kids are waiting for the cold so they can get the rinks flooded. They said the 19th, but do they try earlier than that? If it got cold right after Thanksgiving, would you put ice in then?

Director Carlson responded first you have to wait for the ground to freeze. As soon as we feel the ground is in a spot to start flooding, they will adjust their schedules to begin flooding.

Commissioner Tix said some of us are waiting for Softball to start again. You can have your hockey, she wants softball back. Otherwise she had no comment.

Commissioner Bauer had no comment.

Chair Eiden asked if Director Carlson could run down the list of all the good things that are coming up in December.

Director Carlson responded with the following:

- The Holiday in the Heights event. If you look on our Website, you can find out more information.
- Family Video Bingo
- Tree lighting
- Candy Cane Hunt
- Breakfast with Santa
- Youth Basketball
- Outdoor skating rinks
- Indoor Pickleball at the Community Center
- Holiday Fitness Challenge. A way to stay healthy over the holiday season.

That's just a few to highlight. There are many more things going on. You can find more information on our website at www.funatthegrove.com.

Chair Eiden asked those watching to please visit our Website to get more details so you can participate.

11. ADJOURN

Motion by Commissioner Farley, seconded by Commissioner Tix, to adjourn the meeting at 7:31 p.m.

Aye: 6

Nay: 0 Motion carried.