City of Inver Grove Heights Minutes of the Proceedings
Of The Park and Recreation Advisory Commission
Wednesday, July 8, 2009

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Vice Chair Dennis Schueller called the July 8, 2009 Park and Recreation Advisory Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present: Vice Chair Dennis Schueller, Commissioners: Willie Krech, Joe Boehmer, Tammy Johnson, Stan Johnson, Jim Huffman, and Marty Silvi
Absent: Chair Al Eiden, Commissioner Keith Joyce
Park and Recreation Director Eric Carlson and Recording Clerk Sheri Yourczek

3. PRESENTATIONS:

None

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

A. You can find information regarding the City of Inver Grove Heights by visiting our Web Site at: www.ci.inver-grove-heights.mn.us
B. The next Park and Recreation Advisory Commission Meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 12, 2009. Work Session 6:45 p.m.; Regular Meeting 7:00 p.m.

5. CONSENT AGENDA:

A. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Silvi, seconded by Commissioner Huffman to approve the Agenda as presented.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0 Motion carried.

B. Approval of Minutes from June 10, 2009

Motion by Commissioner Silvi, seconded by Commissioner Huffman to approve the Minutes from June 10th as presented.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0 Motion carried.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

8. REGULAR AGENDA:

A. Discuss Design Issues for Rock Island Swing Bridge Project

Park and Recreation Director Eric Carlson stated they have received a 1.3 million dollar grant to be used for a portion of the Rock Island Swing Bridge to be used as a recreational pier. Short/Elliott/Hendrickson, Inc. (SEH) was hired to assist with the project. Jeff Johnson from SEH is here this evening and will be giving a presentation.

Jeff Johnson, Structural Engineer for SEH, has worked in this type of business for 28 years. The two spans remaining are called spans 3 and 4. Pier numbers 2, 3, 4, and 5 are planned to be re-used if the condition is adequate. Pier #5 is at the end of the project.
There are two options for the bridge. The first is to evaluate the condition of the bridge to see if it can be used as a pedestrian pier. A new span would need to be constructed out to the existing span.
The second option to consider would be a new span to get out to the existing piers. If 3 & 4 show deterioration, they can continue with new spans out to span 5.
The bridge was evaluated via barge on the 15th of June. Mr. Johnson provided a detailed summary of those findings that included problem areas, as well as potential recommendations on how to use what remains.
When the bridge was removed the City acquired items from the bridge. One of the portals has the date stamped on it of 1894. The thought is to bring some of these items into the bridge design or the concept park plan.
The option they are recommending is that the truss is in suitable condition for re-use as a pedestrian access pier.

Commissioner S. Johnson asked if you could go 250' without any additional support?

Mr. Johnson responded they could.

Mr. Johnson is proposing that the spans be constructed of a box truss similar to the current existing truss system. Another option was for a more open truss with a railing. The rest of those trusses are below the deck. It was suggested that the end of the bridge cantilever out for more of an observation area.
Lighting and security on the structure are a concern. Lights could be done within the trusses and also at the end. On the approach they could put in one or two pole lights. The suggested option for fixtures is a vandal proof round fixture that casts light downward. If it gets broken, you are given a new one to replace it with. The cost estimate is based on this type of lighting.
Another option to consider is the railing treatments for both new and existing. The bridge had a wood railing. They suggest doing something similar but with galvanized steel which would make it more durable. The height of the railing would be 3'6" which meets pedestrian standards. Bike railings are a foot higher. They chose to stay with the 3'6" railing.
Their recommendation is to go with Option 1 at a cost of $1,680,018.90. This includes a 15% contingency of $219,132.90. They also looked at the annual maintenance that includes future work over the time period, inspections every two years, and an underwater inspection every five years. This also includes basic items such as graphetti removal, servicing of the lights, trimming of trees, etc. This does not include police surveillance. Option 2 is more expensive at $2,267,202.00. The service life on this option is longer at 40-60 years, where Option 1 is about 40 years.

Commissioner Krech commented they are more interested in saving what is there.

Mr. Johnson stated that was his feeling as well. They had to put together another option in the event the other piers could not be saved.
The following options are add/alternate options in the bid:

Full cleaning and painting of the existing trusses	$350,000
Riprap placement at Piers 4 and 5	$75,000
Decorative lighting upgrade	$40,000
Replace bituminous deck on trusses with timber	$200,000

Commissioner Krech asked if they sandblast the paint off?

Mr. Johnson responded they would probably water blast. They can blow off loose material on the areas below.

Commissioner Krech thought Option 1 was the best direction to go.

Commissioner S. Johnson also liked Option 1.

Vice Chair Schueller thanked Mr. Johnson for his presentation. He felt the packet and presentation were impressive.

Commissioner Boehmer felt it was a great presentation. He liked Option 1.

Commissioner T. Johnson liked the boxed look all the way through.

Vice Chair Schueller asked if it could be used as a fishing pier?

Mr. Johnson said that there would be no restrictions. There are no amenities such as benches, but that can be added later.

Director Carlson stated Option 1 seems to be the favorable option. On Monday evening the City Council will hear a presentation from Mr. Jeff Johnson. There will also be an item on the regular agenda.

Motion by Commissioner S. Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Huffman that we recommend Option 1.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 1 (Silvi) Motion carried.

Commissioner Silvi didn't like the idea of having it halfway restored with ½ old and ½ being new. He would rather have the whole thing done. He wasn't comfortable with agreeing with the motion based on that.

Mr. Johnson stated that is why he suggested other options that can be added to it. Option 1 is the base bid. You can always add a complete painting to that.

Director Carlson said the City Council may want to add that if Grant money is available, or they could choose to use funds available to them through a variety of different sources. We are trying to develop a project that does a good job of making the bridge useable with the funds we have available.

B. Consider Approval of Comprehensive Trail Plan

Director Carlson stated back in October of 2008 the City Council held a public meeting regarding the entire Comprehensive Plan. In 2008 we updated the Comprehensive Plan which has to be submitted and approved by the Metropolitan Council. At that time the City Council wanted discussion on the trail portion of the plan. In June 2009 an open house was held to welcome comments regarding what the trail plan is proposing. There were a number of comment sheets that were filled out at the meeting. He has also received a few emails and phone messages. A lot of questions were asked regarding where the trail would go, how wide, what side of the street, etc. Those questions are not answerable through the Comprehensive Plan. It is a 20 year vision for the City. That type of detail doesn't exist at this time and cannot be answered with this type of plan.

Commissioner Boehmer asked who determines the route of trails?

Director Carlson responded it is a combination of City Staff, City Consultants, and the Park and Recreation Commission. In 2007 there was an open house that included the trail at the time. More recently people have become interested in the trail.
There have been two plans over the last two years that the Commission has been working on. One is this Comprehensive Plan. One of the 12 chapters is regarding Park and Recreation.

The City is also working on the Comprehensive Park Plan and Development Guide. It is similar to the Comprehensive Plan in that it has more detail, but it doesn't go into trail widths and side of the street, etc. After the October Council meeting, the plan was submitted to the Metropolitan Council for their approval. Since the open house we have received comments from people as well as from the Metropolitan Council. Those comments were:
With regards to the Regional Trail that is going in the Western portion of the City, they want to see a search area shown on our plan.
There are quite a few people in the audience this evening regarding the trail plan. The Commission's job is to make a recommendation to the City Council about the trail plan. You can keep it as it is proposed, add something, or take something away. They can then finalize what this trail plan might be.

Tim Sweeney, 9223 Barnes Avenue, asked if the Park Commission has ever added or taken away trails from the Comprehensive Plan in the last few years?

Director Carlson responded they have.

Mr. Sweeney asked if they evaluate, specifically Barnes Trail, the traffic plan and speeds?

Director Carlson commented that type of analysis has not been done yet.

Commissioner Krech stated the trail takes the danger away by taking people off the road and puts them on a trail.

Mr. Sweeney said he contacted the Police regarding Barnes Avenue and there have been 60 citations for speeding this year alone from July to July. That would be one thing they should consider. He asked if the County owns certain plots on either side?

Commissioner Krech responded there is an easement. The trail was originally proposed to go through the backyards. People didn't want it there.

Mr. Sweeney asked that they consider the portion regarding Barnes Avenue to Rich Valley. Does it make sense to go that route? Who will be using the park? Bicyclists won't use it. He asked that they take that portion of the trail out. This trail has been on the plan for years. He asked if it is taken off, can they put it back on?

Commissioner Krech responded it could be put back on.

Director Carlson stated it isn't that simple to put it back on. Any change in the Comprehensive Plan has to go through a process. If the City Council adds or takes it off the map, it has to go through a public hearing process. A notice is published, the Planning Commission has to hold a public hearing, and then the City Council has to hold a public hearing.

Mr. Sweeney asked because it is a County Road, what is the County's influence on changing the road?

Commissioner Krech stated the trail could be included in a road upgrade.

Commissioner S. Johnson wanted to clarify that Mr. Sweeney wanted it pulled off now, knowing it could be added in again later?

Mr. Sweeney felt that when it was designed they looked at the shortest distance from Courthouse Blvd. to Rich Valley Park, yet it's the most dangerous.

Mr. Sweeney understands people will enjoy the trail, but wants this one removed.

Commissioner Silvi commented that if its 100 years from now and someone wants to develop the land, where do you show this? If you have it on the Comprehensive Plan now, then you can't say you were never warned.

Commissioner Krech suggested he go to the City Council meeting. They have the final say.

Mike Knapp, 87 Ann Marie Trail, has lived there for 22 years and is here tonight to ensure if there is a change, it happens now, rather than in the future. He bought the property for its benefits in regards to its surroundings. Not trails and sidewalks. He is against the plan, and wants it denied. He will ask the City Council to do the same. He asked if that can't happen, then at least change the plan. He pointed out a few inconstancies in the plan. One is on page 6-1A where it talks about the park, or future parks, exploring the greater use of pervious pavers in a park project. He considers this a park project. There is a proposal for a trail to go down Ann Marie for a bituminous trial that is 10 feet wide. That's an impervious surface. On page 6.11, it talks about the slope. The plan states the slope should be 0-3%. Ann Marie is about 0-15%. He didn't think anyone came out and looked at the road for the trail. The approach to Ann Marie connects Robert Street and Annalisa Trail. There are wetlands down either side. He didn't want to be a part of a trail to nowhere. He asked that they please remove Ann Marie Trail from your plan.

Mr. Knapp felt it was an invasion of his privacy and a reduction of value. His house is 300 feet off-set of the road. Others are at least 30 feet. Both sides of the street have the same issues.

Jerry Bretoi, 8365 Courthouse Boulevard Court, lives across from the United Property Development. They knew of the trail and discussed it last year. They know they are getting one there eventually. He had several questions. Where would the trail go? At what point can they say where to put it? Maybe they could put it on the other side of the road, as opposed to into the property. Why does it have to be a 10-20 foot strip?

Director Carlson said United Properties had in the legal settlement, agreed to pay a sum of money to construct a trail after a certain square footage was built on the site. The City is studying where a trail would be located. Those plans haven't been developed yet. When they are, they will be shared with the property owners.

Mr. Bretoi commented there are not many that walk out there.

Dawn Grimes, 2280 East 105th Street, stated it is part gravel at the end of 150th Street. Will that be redone? She didn't think a path was needed for walking.

Director Carlson responded the plan doesn't make that decision.

Trudy Weise, 10195 Barnes Way, asked why they needed a bike trail from Inver Grove Heights to get to Rich Valley Park? What's the point?

Director Carlson stated the idea of a trail plan is it provides people with an opportunity other than driving a vehicle, to bike or walk to get from place to place.

Ms. Weise stated the Rich Valley Park Athletic Facility is not a park that children who would be rollerblading or riding their bikes go out to, or have anything to do out there in the first place. She has already fought the City to have a ball field open to the children in the area. Small kids are not going to ride their bikes along the bike path to Barnes. It's too far, it's too hilly, and parents won't let their kids ride the road out there because of that. Kids won't carry their soccer gear, or ball equipment, to get there. The kids that will be out there are the kids that are not going to be using the facility. It will attract the kids to do vandalism out there. There are big groups of bicyclists that use Barnes. They won't use the bike paths. She didn't think this was a valid reason for this going in. Some people that bike the road as it is are off their bikes walking it.

Commissioner Krech commented that families do want to walk and bike.

Commissioner T. Johnson asked if the residents of the area wouldn't want to walk up and down the trail?

Ms. Weise responded most would probably say no.

Commissioner Boehmer stated he and his parents both live on Barnes. They have walked it for years as have a lot of people. There is no curb or shoulder. It's very dangerous.

Ms. Weise suggested they put more out at the park for that age group to do.

Vice Chair Schueller stated he teaches drivers education and sometimes drives out there. Very few do use the park during the day, but a lot do at night. Maybe the trail would get more usage there during the day.

Ms. Weise said they had to fight to have just one field open during the day. The Police would stop and tell the kids to leave. It is not welcoming to kids of that age. She felt the whole facility needed a change to accommodate the trail.

Commissioner Krech felt the softball fields should be open for use during the day.

Vice Chair Schueller commented that kids need to have more undirected play. Maybe we have to get back to that a little bit more.

Commissioner Krech stated the Comprehensive Plan is to connect trails to trails and parks to parks. He knows that road is not safe to ride on.

Lee Lindberg, 8965 Alcove Lane, suggested they look at the traffic on Robert Street. That is shown as a potential trail. What happens when it hits Sunfish Lake?

Director Carlson responded the goal is to eventually have it connect to the Big Rivers Trail.

Mr. L. Lindberg felt they should be realistic when making a decision. He asked if horses can be used on trails?

Director Carlson responded no, they cannot.

Tom Mahoney, 8555 Ann Marie Trail, has no problem with having Ann Marie Trail on the trail plan. He was concerned with the possibility of the Regional Trail not being put in on Robert Street. Right now the bikers ride up and down Robert Street and go up Ann Marie Trail. We are encouraging younger kids/bikers going down Robert Street.

Commissioner Krech said the only major trail in the area is one that comes down Cliff Road that hooks east to west. He doesn't see one put on Robert Street anytime soon.

Mr. Mahoney stated that if they do put in a trail he would like to see it placed on his side of the street so they can fix the poor drainage that was designed.

Ann Valente, 9047 Barnes Avenue East, has been a resident here for 20 years. She has attended, along with several others, several of these meetings. There is going to eventually be a proposed trail on Highway 3. Regarding the trail near Barnes Avenue, most of the residents don't want it. It doesn't lead to anywhere. She doesn't think there is a reason to put a trail in their area as the Regional Trail goes around it.

Gretchen Kessler, 10081 Barnes Avenue, has attended several meetings on the trail issue. She lives in one of the houses that is closest to the road. She doesn't want the City in her front yard. Her mailbox is smashed repeatedly. She asked who is going to keep track of the people who use this? Kids don't use trails anymore. She opposes this plan. Group bikers don't use the trail, they use the road.

Commissioner Krech stated the trail is shown on there only because the road is unsafe. He felt they would only get a trail if there was a road improvement project. He thought there might even be heavier development in the

area someday. He suggested they keep watching and checking information regarding this issue and try going to the City Council meeting.

Ms. Kessler said the County resurfaced about 30 years ago. When will it happen again?

Commissioner Krech suggested she check with the County.

Kurt Lindberg, 8799 Audobon Road, was concerned with what he was hearing. The bulk of the people here don't want the trail there. He asked how many people are really going to ride that far to get to the complex? A lot of people who use that facility don't even live in Inver Grove Heights. People are up here expressing their concerns but are hearing it is just going to happen anyway.

Commissioner Krech suggested they do a petition if you do not want a trail. Although it could still happen if you have one.

Jim Norton, 2694-96th Street East, asked that they pass along to the Council that 100% of people here this evening are against this. He asked that they be notified before the Comprehensive Plan is put together.

Vice Chair Schueller stated we are here to take comments. What one Commissioner says is not the opinion of all. He appreciated everyone's comments. This is what the process is supposed to be doing.

Mr. L. Lindberg said he would like to see statistics on how many people use these trails. Can we use money for this? He just doesn't see the traffic there.
He asked if an Engineer has even seen this area?

Director Carlson didn't know how we could accomplish the statistics.

Mr. L. Lindberg commented you can have someone on the Staff count people. He asked what happened to the Courthouse Blvd. trail?

Director Carlson responded it is with the Engineering Department. It's not a pressing issue and hasn't been at the top of their workload.

Mr. Knapp asked if they are going to convey the message to the Council? It is being said that nothing will change. He felt a trail on Robert Street was impossible. He doesn't want something on a plan that he has to watch for constantly. He is asking that Ann Marie be removed.

Vice Chair Schueller stated Director Carlson said that we can keep, add, or delete things in the plan.

Commissioner Silvi stated the Comprehensive Plan is a sort of wish list to look in to the future. The map states it ties into the Northwest Quadrant for when that whole area gets developed. The Rottlund Development, for example, turned out about 50% is the way it was drawn. The rest has been changed or moved around to the point that it doesn't even look like the same plan anymore. He understands everyone's concerns.

Commissioner Huffman agrees with the majority of people here regarding the trail. He is going to leave it up to the Council.

Commissioner Krech stated Ann Marie Trail is tough and can probably be taken out. Courthouse Blvd, Annalise, and Ann Marie are all probably not necessary.

Commissioner Boehmer recommends that Ann Marie be taken out too. There's also the Regional Trail to consider. 96th and 105th and Barnes are cross sections. He recommends you take those out too. There are at least half a dozen houses that are close to Barnes Avenue.

Commissioner S. Johnson thinks they need to rethink how we do going south and then west. There is not room on Barnes Avenue. There has got to be another way to go south and then west on Cliff to get over to Broadmoor and Southern Lakes where it goes down to Rosemount.

Commissioner Silvi stated nobody wants the trail on Barnes. If the County wants to do the road, they may put a trail on there regardless as to whether we have it on the plan or not.

Motion by Commissioner Silvi, seconded by Commissioner Krech to recommend to Council that Barnes Avenue and the connecting trail from Highway 3, Ann Marie, Annalise, and Courthouse Blvd. be removed from the Comprehensive Plan.

Vice Chair Schueller thinks Barnes is a dangerous road. People who drive on it are at risk as well as bikers or walkers. There has to be a method for people to move across the City in a safe manner. Speed bikers will go on the road anyway. Hopefully we can make that park more user friendly during the day. He understands the point people here are making but liked the idea of a trail on Barnes Avenue. There was a time they were going to put a trail around Simley Pond, on his property. Nobody wanted that. The people we hear from tonight are the people that are along the road. We need to think of the people who are not here that might use the trail. A trail here would make the movement of people safer. If the people who designed this plan, believe that trail is feasible and needed, he has no reason not to believe it. He supports the plan that is there.

Commissioner T. Johnson agreed with Vice Chair Schueller. Trails that are put in are put in based on a safety issue and to get from Point A to Point B. We are unsure what will happen 30 years from now. Some trails may go in, some may not.

Commissioner Boehmer asked if it was feasible to table this and have people drive to Barnes and Ann Marie so they know what it looks like. He has been on Ann Marie, but others probably have not.

Vice Chair Schueller felt it's been a process for quite a long time. They should make a decision

Mr. L. Lindberg asked if the people who drew the lines on the map have gone there? Did they see it?

Director Carlson responded they probably did not.

Mr. Knapp agreed with Commissioner Boehmer. The plan for the trail on Ann Marie doesn't meet the criteria the plan states for a trail.

Mr. Norton also agreed with Commissioner Boehmer. When the development went in with Manley, City Council went out and walked the property. Based on what they saw they made changes to the plan.

Ayes: 5
Nays: 2 (Schueller, T. Johnson) Motion carried.

Director Carlson said this item is scheduled for the City Council on Monday evening. He will give a similar report to the Council, as well as the Commissioners recommendation. They can modify it, ignore it, etc.

C. Consider Conceptual Approval of Berm between Heritage Village Park and the South St. Paul Gun Club

Director Carlson stated this is to consider the approval of a berm between heritage Village Park and the South St. Paul Gun Club. Late in the approval process we learned of a statute to protect gun clubs. There are certain noise restrictions that can't be violated. One of the issues that was discussed was noise from the gun club and would it exceed the allowable amounts for people using the trail or park. It is an allowable amount, but a potential concern. The proposed berm would be built partially on Gun Club and partially on park property. The berm would be built by the agreement we have with Bolander and Sons through the filling and grading

agreement at no cost to the City. The County would contribute up to $10,000 of the project which is estimated to be $22,000. That is the cost of the fence, seed, fiber blanket, and tree removal. The City would also contribute $6,000 and the Gun Club would contribute $6,000.

Commissioner Krech asked where the fence would go?

Director Carlson said it would go on the property line, or wherever the gun club would like it. He will hear more specifics by July 27th.

Motion by Commissioner Silvi, seconded by Commissioner Krech to approve the Berm between Heritage Village and the Gun Club as outlined.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0 Motion carried.

D. Consider Appointments to the Inver Wood Operational Assessment Committee

Director Carlson stated the City Council authorized an RFP for a potential operational assessment of the Inver Wood Golf Course. Seven proposals were received. There was a small group made up of the Mayor, Council Member Grannis, Vice Chair Schueller, the City Administrator Joe Lynch, and himself. They have narrowed it down to four. That same group will be interviewing them next Thursday. They will need to recommend one of the four to the City Council for their consideration on July 27th. At different stages through the process a group of Council Members, Park and Recreation Commissioners, Inver Wood Golfers, Resident non-golfer, the City Administrator, and himself, would participate with information, ideas, questions, as well as things for them to look at and review as it is developed. The Commission is asked to select two of its members to serve on this group.

Commissioner Krech asked if Vice Chair Schueller would be on it?

Vice Chair Schueller said it hasn't been determined that he be on that phase of the process. He has to be appointed from this Commission to be on the committee. He would volunteer to do it.

Motion by Commissioner Silvi, seconded by Commissioner S. Johnson to recommend Vice Chair Schueller to be on the committee.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0 Motion carried.

Vice Chair Schueller would like to nominate Commissioner Silvi to be on the committee. He stated he has worked on this before and thought he would like to be on it again.

Commissioner Silvi respectfully declines. He is pretty comfortable with the golf course. He didn't vote for the audit in the beginning and doesn't feel comfortable being on the committee based on that.

Vice Chair Schueller urges Commissioner Silvi to do it because they want people with all viewpoints.

Motion by S. Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Krech that Commissioner Silvi be on the committee because of his interest, but also because of his opposing views as well as the fact that he is a golfer.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0 Motion carried.

9. <u>ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENTATIONS:</u>

A. Department Happenings

Director Carlson asked if anyone had any questions in regards to Department Happenings.

There were no questions or comments at this time.

10. <u>COMMISSION COMMENTS:</u>

Commissioner T. Johnson had no comment.

Commissioner Boehmer had no comment.

Commissioner Huffman is glad we are going to get things going on the Swing Bridge.

Commissioner Silvi had a comment regarding Barnes Avenue. He was surprised to find out that the residents can't use Rich Valley Park. If that is the case, he wonders why they need a trail to the park if nobody can use it.

Commissioner S. Johnson had no comment.

Commissioner Krech agreed with Commissioner Silvi. He didn't realize the residents couldn't use the fields anytime. He felt one softball field and one baseball field should be open. He thanked the two Commissioners who will be serving on the committee with regards to the golf course. He also thanked Commissioner Huffman for his follow up on the bridge. He felt Mr. Johnson did an excellent job with the presentation.

Vice Chair Schueller believes the process was followed here tonight and done in a constructive way. Comments were listened to and we had our own comments and voted. He appreciated the efforts of the people on the Commission. He also appreciated the participation of the residents.

11. <u>ADJOURN</u>

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.