

**PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

MONDAY, MAY 24, 2021

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Peterson called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Committee Members present: Kristi DeCamillis, Ken Halverson, Scott Marotz, Jack Merwin, and Doug Peterson. Committee Members absent: Scott Creighton and Laura Talvitie.

Also present: Recreation and Communication Coordinator Corrie Scott, City Planner Lucinda Meyers, and Streets, Parks, and Fleet Superintendent Norm Michels.

3. ADOPT AGENDA

Committee Member Merwin motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Committee Member Marotz, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Committee Member Merwin motioned to accept the April 26, 2021 Parks Advisory Committee minutes as presented. Seconded by Committee Member Marotz, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

5. BUSINESS

5A. REQUEST FOR CONCEPT PLAN REVIEW FOR PRAIRIE MEADOWS 3RD ADDITION

Meyers reviewed that JP Brooks Builders submitted a Concept Plan for a single-family residential Planned Unit Development (PUD) featuring 60 lots, 4 outlots and dedicated public right of way. She asked the Committee to review the proposed concept plan and provide feedback to the applicant on parkland dedication and open space.

Halverson asked about the portion of the parcel that is required to be open space. Meyers stated that 50% of the west portion of the lot is required to be open space. She stated that there can be an overlap between the open space requirement and parkland. Marotz stated that at the Planning Commission meeting, it was suggested to have a greenway on the western portion of the parcel that could be used as a trail. He stated that the neighboring

undeveloped parcel would also be encouraged to expand the greenway in this case. Halverson asked why previous proposed developments fell through. Marotz stated that previous applicants were townhomes that ran into the same issue as the current applicant because of the shoreland overlay putting such a large burden on the developer.

Peterson asked if the shoreland requirement is from the DNR or City. Meyers stated that the DNR sets the requirement and that the City has to uphold the requirement. Halverson asked about the other undeveloped parcels neighboring it and if there is potential to construct parks on those parcels. He stated that he would like to ensure that the neighboring developments have a park. Peterson asked about Bluff Park and if there is room to expand the facilities at the current park. DeCamillis stated that there is land that can be further developed at Bluff Park. Marotz stated that there is another neighboring parcel with more wetland area that is likely to have a park created within it when it is developed.

Halverson stated that he would like to see cash in lieu rather than greenways being introduced. Marotz stated that the way the application is currently, the DNR will likely require more open space. Halverson asked what the cost for the developer will be if they turn in an application that is denied due to lack of open space. Meyers stated that this is the concept plan stage and it is used as a time to provide feedback to the developer so that they know what the City would like to see from the final application. She stated that the DNR is allowing some flexibility and if the developer provides at least 35% of open space, they will likely support it. Halverson asked if the lots were bigger if that would help with the required open space. Meyers stated that the open space requirement is not related to the lot size, but rather needs to be space that will not be built upon.

Marotz stated that he understands why Halverson would rather see cash in lieu for the Park Dedication Fund rather than have the applicant provide open space that doubles as parkland because that funding can go toward creating and improving other parks in the area, but that the developer needs to do what financially makes sense for their project. Meyers stated that storm ponds and other bodies of water would not qualify as parkland because they cannot be recreated on. Marotz stated that an option for the applicant to provide more open space without taking from the potential for park dedication funds is to move stormwater ponds to the western portion of the parcel where open space is required. The Committee unanimously agreed with Marotz's suggestions. The applicant, Kevin Clark, stated that providing additional park dedication beyond what is required would make the development of single family homes on the current parcel challenging. He stated that in order to keep the project feasible for an R2 it is ideal to meet the requirements for both open space and parkland in one area.

Halverson asked if there is a market for these types of homes. Marotz stated that young families that do not have the resources to upkeep a large yard, especially in the metro area are purchasing these types of homes. Halverson asked if the development is set up as an HOA. Marotz stated that it is not set up as an HOA, and although they are smaller than what the community is accustomed to, there is a market for them. Peterson asked if the

price point proposed is similar to existing, neighboring developments. Meyers stated that entry level home pricing has increased significantly. Halverson stated that someone he works with is moving to Minnesota from Texas and is having trouble finding an affordable four bedroom home. Marotz stated that there are not a lot of homes for sale at this time, but that most homes for sale in the area currently are around \$300,000. Marotz stated that the cost of lumber is adding about \$20,000 to each home being built.

Meyers stated that there are a lot of parcels that are developable within the City but that they are mainly encumbered by the shoreland management rules and that any decisions to this potential development will set precedence for the remaining developable parcels. Marotz stated that this is a challenging time for developers, especially with shoreland restrictions, and it is very possible that the developer will come back to the Parks Committee and ask for a reduction in Park Dedication Fees. Halverson stated that he would be against lowering the required Park Dedication Fees, especially because the lot sizes are so small. Meyers commented that the Comprehensive Plan does call for a variety of housing types, but that the City also generally wants to preserve open space. She stated that as Marotz recommended, this is a great opportunity to get creative.

Halverson stated that he is concerned with the houses being so close to each other if they have vinyl siding because they tend to spread fires from house to house very quickly, especially when it is windy. Meyers stated that a condition for the developer could be to not allow for vinyl siding. Peterson asked if the setup for this concept plan is similar to previous applications that fell through. Meyers stated that the density has been sharply reduced with this concept plan compared to prior applications for the same parcel. Marotz stated that if the developer provides more open space it is likely that the number of lots will be reduced.

Meyers stated that there is another project being constructed near the currently proposed parcel that will be adding about \$150,000 to the Park Dedication Fund and that those funds could go toward upgrading a park in the area or creating a new park. Halverson asked if this is the CommonBond development. Meyers stated that the development is called Marketplace Crossing and the developer is called CommonBond.

5B. BROM PARK QUESTIONNAIRE FEEDBACK

Scott reviewed that staff mailed out a questionnaire to over 330 homes located near the City owned parcel on Brom Lane in April. She reviewed the feedback from the 14 homeowners that returned the questionnaire to City Hall. She also passed out the completed wetland delineation survey from Bolton and Menk. She stated that at the next meeting she will have either Layne Otteson or a representative of Bolton and Menk present the survey results and answer questions.

Halverson asked if a survey of the land has been completed to determine property lines. Marotz stated that the City is aware of where the property lines for the parcel are, but the purpose of having the wetland delineation survey completed is to determine what can be built on the current City owned land. Scott reiterated that at the next month's meeting there

will be a more in depth presentation on the wetland delineation survey and more discussion will follow.

5C. STAFF UPDATES

Scott reviewed the status of various projects regarding the community's parks, trails, 2021 and programming. She commented that the May 21, 2021 drive in style Movie in the Park had great weather and a large turnout of about 170 attendees in about 50 vehicles. Marotz asked if the September Movie in the Park will be drive in style or not. Scott stated that staff is planning for another drive in movie this year, but it is always a possibility to go back to a regular movie if residents express interest.

Michels stated that staff is wrapping up street projects and can now start focusing on fixing the fishing pier at Lakeside Park after Memorial Day weekend. Halverson asked Michels when his street will be patched. Michels stated that Public Works will be finishing up street patching over the next couple of weeks. Scott stated that at the next meeting she will bring information on the Park Dedication budget and general funds that are budgeted toward Powell Park equipment maintenance. Michels stated that he will bring quotes for potential park equipment for Powell as well. Halverson stated that he would like to see Powell Park be reconstructed the same year that the street near it is reconstructed. Halverson stated that the park located on CommonBond's property in Coon Rapids is very small and only has a swing and a slide. Marotz stated that it is possible that there isn't a large demographic of children in some of CommonBond's properties in other communities. He stated that some of their properties are for people aged 55 or older and wouldn't require a large amount of park equipment.

6. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' REPORTS

Halverson stated that Council Member Kim Noding has taken over his seat on the BLEDA. He stated that his problem with CommonBond is that they are aware of the City's requirements, but want a lot of flexibility from the City regarding these requirements. He stated that they are receiving a lot of funding from the state and when they aren't building to the City's requirements regarding parking and decks, they are then pocketing those funds. He stated that they will pay lower property taxes if they are granted variances because the building will be worth less, and he feels that the City is giving CommonBond too much. He doesn't agree that someone like the owner of McPete's should need to build exactly to code while the City provides variances to CommonBond.

Marotz stated that all buildings need to be constructed in regards to the state's building code. He stated that there are times when developers will request PUDs and variances because of issues with zoning, markets changing, or other issues, and that is when the City considers allowing variances. He also stated that having vacant land that has infrastructure built into it is increasing resident's property taxes until it is developed. Marotz stated that he doesn't feel the community proposed to be built by CommonBond will be any less than current apartment buildings in Big Lake, and that if anything their landscaping and other

features will be of a higher quality. Halverson stated that because of the variances he fears that their building will bring in less property taxes than if the variances weren't granted. Peterson asked Halverson if he would like to put a discussion about CommonBond on an upcoming agenda. Halverson stated that it isn't necessary.

Marotz stated that the Code Revision Task Force is waiting until the new City Planning Technician to be on boarded until they start revising the City's code. He stated that in the meantime they are working on the City's sign ordinance. Halverson stated that the City's sign ordinance is difficult to understand. Scott stated that one of the applicants for the Planning Technician position accepted an offer and should start at the end of June.

DeCamillis asked why the dates for the Fairy House event were changed. Scott stated that there weren't any Parks Members interested in judging the event in May, and that the Big Lake Ambassadors offered to host the event if the dates were changed to the month of July.

7. **OTHER** - None.

8. **ADJOURN**

Committee Member Marotz motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. Seconded by Committee Member Merwin, unanimous ayes, meeting adjourned.