

**PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2021**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**2. ROLL CALL**

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

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

**3. ADOPT AGENDA**

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

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Committee Member Talvitie motioned to accept the September 27, 2021 Parks Advisory Committee minutes as presented. Seconded by Committee Member Creighton, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

**5. BUSINESS**

**5A. PUD CONCEPT PLAN FOR PARKWOOD KNOLLS**

Spanier reviewed that Off and On, LLC has submitted a development application for a PUD Concept Plan. The request is for a residential development on 47 acres located north of TH 10, south of 205th Avenue NW, west of 172nd Street NE and east of Liberty Elementary School. The existing property is currently vacant agricultural land. There are no existing structures on the site. The parcel lies directly north of Preusse Lake.

Spanier asked the PAC to provide informal comment regarding the project's proposed parkland dedication or cash in lieu of dedicated parkland, and to advise the City Council as they review the concept plan.

Peterson asked what has changed from the previous application. Spanier stated that in the original concept the Applicant proposed detached apartments within a rental community. Halverson asked how large the land is south of Minnesota Avenue. Spanier stated it is about seven acres. Talvitie asked why the land south of Minnesota Avenue isn't being proposed for parkland. Spanier stated that the PAC could request for that land to be dedicated. She stated that it is best for that land to remain undeveloped, but that it is not beneficial for the City to own land contiguous to roadways because the City would have to take on full costs of any future updates or maintenance to those roadways as opposed to deferring that responsibility to private landowners.

Halverson asked what percent the Applicant would be required to donate if they do not provide cash in lieu. Spanier stated that it would be 10% and the reason they aren't proposing to donate that land is because it is going toward open space due to shoreland management requirements. She stated that open space cannot have any structures built to fit the shoreland management requirement. Halverson asked if the property needs to be rezoned. The Applicant stated that the land will need to be rezoned to R3.

Halverson stated that now is a tough time for the PAC to make comment to the Applicant because the land needs to be rezoned. Spanier stated that there is no formal recommendation needed at this time. She stated that because it is in the concept plan phase all that is requested is informal comment. Talvitie stated that she would prefer there be parkland in the middle of the housing units rather than across a major road. The Applicant stated that this property cannot be considered R1 because it has to be 50% open space and the open space has to be maintained. He stated that their intention is to either donate land or cash, but not both.

Halverson asked if this Applicant is in a similar position as the Capstone Homes project. Spanier stated that this parcel is in a shoreland management area and Capstone Homes is not. Halverson asked if the Applicant can develop an HOA to make it possible for them to get to their open space requirement and also build a park. Spanier stated that the PAC could recommend a park be integrated into the development. She asked the Applicant if they researched that possibility. The Applicant stated that they did not look into it because of the open space requirements. He stated that it isn't feasible for them to meet open space requirements and also build a park within the development. Talvitie asked if the housing in the concept is for sale or rent. The developer confirmed that they will be for sale. Talvitie stated that she wouldn't want to purchase a home in an area that she would need to cross a major roadway to access parkland. She also expressed concerns that the current landowner might not want to sell the land near the proposed development for a future park.

Peterson asked if the Applicant can develop on the south side of Minnesota Avenue. The Applicant stated that it is possible but that the utilities are already in Minnesota Avenue. Halverson stated that he agrees with Talvitie about it being ideal to have a park within the housing development rather than across a major street. Creighton asked if there are other concept plans that they are considering. The Applicant stated that this is the first concept

plan they have proposed, but that they only have two feasible options due to the shoreland requirements. Spanier noted that a lot of the undeveloped land in Big Lake has likely not been developed at this point because it is in the shoreland management district which comes with a lot of requirements. Halverson asked if they have considered larger lots with more expensive homes. The Applicant stated that if they build larger lots they would not be able to fund the parkway or collector street.

Talvitie stated that she prefers this concept to the original concept the Applicant submitted, but that she would prefer there be a park incorporated into the development. The Applicant stated that moving units to the south would incur costs for the construction of streets. Halverson stated that although they would need to build more streets on the south end if they move units, they would also not need to build as many streets on the north end that would hopefully even out the total cost of the project. He agreed with Talvitie's recommendation of trying to build a park within the development if possible.

#### **5B. PUD CONCEPT PLAN FOR PRAIRIE MEADOWS 3RD ADDITION**

Spanier reviewed that Cavaliera Homes and Landform Professional Services have submitted a development application for a PUD Concept Plan. The request is for a residential development on 15 acres located north of TH 10, south of 205th Avenue NW, east of 172nd Street NE and abutting City limits. The subject application is for a residential development that will provide 22 twin homes and 55 townhome units in set of three or four. The proposed gross density of the development is 5.2 units per acre. The development includes a large amount of open space as part of the shoreland management regulations. Spanier asked the PAC to provide informal comment regarding the project's proposed parkland dedication or cash in lieu of dedicated parkland, and to advise the City Council as they review the concept plan.

Talvitie asked how much land is in the private play area. The Applicant stated that it hasn't been determined, but that it would likely be about 40 yards long by 25 yards wide. Halverson asked if it is an HOA and if the private play area will be maintained by an HOA. The Applicant confirmed that it will be maintained by an HOA. They stated that they did research on whether park equipment or a dog run area would be preferred and that a majority would rather have a place to bring their dog. The Applicant stated that 75% of people who live in developments like the one proposed are dog owners. Halverson asked if there is another park near the proposed development. Spanier stated that Bluff Park is located across the street. Halverson stated that the PAC could use the cash in lieu of park dedication to update and expand Bluff Park.

Talvitie stated that there is a huge interest from dog owners for places to bring their dogs, especially those that do not have large yards at home. Peterson asked if the area will be fenced. The developer confirmed that it will be fenced. Halverson stated that there is only one dog park in Big Lake currently. He asked if everyone in the Prairie Meadows development would be able to use the dog run area. The developer confirmed that it would be open for the public to use.

Spanier stated that the dog run area could qualify as a portion of their park dedication. Halverson stated that he would support the proposed dog run area going toward their park dedication if it is open for the public to use. Talvitie stated that she brings her family dog to Maple Grove to use their dog park because they also have park equipment for the children nearby. Talvitie asked if there is an ability to place a small park structure near the dog run area so that families could run their dogs and bring their children somewhere to play simultaneously. The Applicant stated that the area is quite small and if park equipment is introduced it might not be enough space for both. Spanier stated that there is still room to add equipment to Bluff Park which is nearby. The Applicant recommended that the City introduce a small dog park or dog run area at Bluff Park. Peterson asked about the unused area at Bluff Park. Spanier stated that Bluff Park is about 2.7 acres. Michels stated that the playground equipment only uses up about a third of the open space at Bluff Park and that there is plenty of room to expand the park facilities.

Talvitie asked how busy Prairie Drive is and if it would be safe for children to cross to access Bluff Park. Michels stated that it isn't a very busy neighborhood and that it should be safe for families to cross so they can use Bluff Park. Talvitie and Peterson stated that they like the layout of the development. Halverson stated that he doesn't like the idea of putting in a cul-de-sac. Spanier stated that the proposal doesn't include a cul-de-sac, but instead an opening to a future development. Halverson asked if the units will have garages. The Applicant confirmed that they will all have garages. Talvitie asked if they will have basements. The Applicant stated that they are proposing walkout basements. They stated that units will be around \$300,000 to \$325,000 and they will offer a great deal for the square footage for that price.

## **5C. BIG LAKE BUSINESS PARK PRELIMINARY PLAT**

Spanier reviewed that RJ Ryan Construction Inc., on behalf of Envision Company, the applicant, has submitted a development application requesting Preliminary Plat for "Big Lake Business Park" to create two lots and two outlots. The applicant is proposing a cash payment to the City's park fund in lieu of dedicating land. The park dedication requirements apply to buildable lots only (does not apply to outlots). The dedication requirement is 4% of the land area for commercial and industrial property. Lot 2, Block 1 (industrial property) is 17.83 acres, therefore requiring 0.71 acres (cash-in-lieu). Lot 1 Block 1 (commercial property) is 3.42 acres and will require 0.14 acres (cash-in-lieu).

Spanier reviewed that the Comprehensive Plan requires sidewalks on at least one side of future streets in industrial parks and commercial areas and specifically notes that a trail should be constructed on Minnesota Avenue. The plans show a 10' wide bituminous trail on the north side and a 6-foot wide sidewalk on the south side of Minnesota Avenue. No trails or sidewalks are shown on 180th Street. The Comprehensive Plan states that a sidewalk should be provided on one side of the street. A sidewalk should be considered on 180th Street to provide safe pedestrian connections to the Big Lake businesses.

Spanier recommended that the PAC provide a recommendation to the City Council on the applicant's proposal as it relates to the City's parkland dedication requirement for new development. The City Council will take these comments under advisement as they consider the applications on October 27, 2021, and to advise the City Council as they review the concept plan.

Peterson asked where their shipping route will be. Spanier stated that they will be building their own exit for shipping so they can avoid exiting onto 180<sup>th</sup> Street. Halverson recommended that a sidewalk be installed on 180<sup>th</sup> Street. Peterson agreed with Halverson's recommendation to install a sidewalk. Talvitie asked if the sidewalk would come out of the park dedication fund. Spanier stated that park dedication funds can only be used for the creation of new parks and trails, and that the creation of sidewalks would not qualify.

Committee Member Peterson motioned to recommend to City Council that they accept cash-in-lieu of land dedication for Lots 1 and 2 on Block 1 of Big Lake Business Park and recommend that a sidewalk be built on 180<sup>th</sup> Street. Seconded by Committee Member Creighton, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

#### **5D. 2021 JOINT COMMITTEE WORKSHOP**

Scott reviewed that the Council has scheduled the following workshop to meet with all committee members on Tuesday, December 7, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. in the Big Lake City Council Chambers. She stated that this year, City Administrator Wilfahrt will present the 2021 City of Big Lake Strategic Plan, and Committee Members will be invited to participate in identifying strategies to achieve the City's goals. She reminded all PAC Members RSVP to Gina Wolbeck if they plan on attending.

Committee Member Peterson motioned to set the 2021 Annual Joint Committee Workshop date of Tuesday, December 7, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. in the Big Lake City Council Chambers. Seconded by Committee Member Talvitie, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

#### **5E. STAFF UPDATES**

Scott reviewed the status of various programs and recreation taking place in the community's parks. She stated that the City received the final draft of the new Parks and Trails map and that it will be on the City's website by the end of October.

Michels stated that the PAC's recommendation for Powell Park will be presented at the October 27 Council Workshop. Halverson stated that \$100,000 was tentatively moved into a parks maintenance fund for 2022 and that there will be more going in that fund in future years. Peterson asked if those funds have restrictions. Michels stated that the only fund with restrictions is the park dedication fund because of State Statute. He stated that these proposed funds can be used for creation of new funds or simple maintenance on existing parks.

Michels stated that there is some minor excavation in the ice rinks planned for this year so that it will be easier to create quality ice during the winter months. This effort will hopefully cut down on labor costs to upkeep the rinks throughout the season as well.

Scott stated that there have been some complaints about people stealing from Community Garden plots and throwing weeds into walkways or other gardeners' plots. She stated that in 2022 they will be working on being proactive with these issues. Michels stated that although there were policing issues, the gardeners were happy with the updates made to the garden layout. Scott agreed that gardeners gave a lot of positive feedback about the new layout that was provided by Public Works staff including the introduction of small compost piles onsite and an increased number of water hookups.

Halverson asked about the status of Brom Park. Michels stated that he is prioritizing Powell Park and once he receives final approval from Council to order that equipment he will start to work with the City Engineer for plans for Brom Park.

6. **COMMITTEE MEMBERS' REPORTS** – None.

7. **OTHER** – None.

8. **ADJOURN**

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