

EAST BETHEL PARK COMMISSION MEETING

October 14, 2015

The East Bethel Park Commission met on October 14th, 2015 at 6:30 P.M at the East Bethel City Hall for their regular monthly meeting.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kenneth Langmade Bill Zimmermann Bonnie Harvey
 Sue Jefferson Stacy Voelker Tim Hoffman

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Denise Lachinski

ALSO PRESENT: Nate Ayshford, Public Works Manager
 Tim Harrington, City Council

Adopt Agenda **Ms Harvey motioned to adopt the agenda. Ms Voelker seconded; all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**

Approve August 12, 2015 Minutes **Mr Zimmermann made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Ms Jefferson seconded; all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**

Park Financial Information & Capital Funds Summary Mr Ayshford presented the current fiscal year Park Maintenance financial status for the member's review (Attachment 4.1). He stated that nothing has been taken out of capital funds yet, but the Public Works staff is close to completing the outdoor ice rink. The total project cost will be around \$15,000. Staff has decided to rent a warming house for the upcoming skating season. The total cost for the three month period will be approximately \$1,500. Depending on how well it works, the city will decide how to proceed in future years with regards to renting or building a permanent warming house.

The parks operational fund is on track to complete 2015 as budgeted.

Public Forum Alissa Carlson, an East Bethel resident, came before the Park Commission as part of a school project to discuss some of the City Parks. Alissa stated a need for more parks and to upgrade the playground equipment in some of the older parks. She offered some insight into city parks from a user's perspective that included the more enjoyable pieces of equipment and how choosing lighter colors for the slides will help them to stay cooler on hot days.

Parks, Trails, and Open Space Comprehensive Plan The current Parks, Trails, and Open Space Plan was developed for the City of East Bethel in 2007. Regular reviews and update of the plan are necessary to see if goals are being met and what park projects still need to be completed along with any changes in the City's priorities.

One item of note with the current plan is that although the plan provides a broad planning framework, the scope may be too large for what the City can actually reasonably accomplish. Also, a number of assumptions were used while developing the comprehensive plan that did not take into account the economic downturn and stagnation of growth that

occurred in the last 7 years. With that, the plan overestimated projected populations, park needs, and revenue streams for the proposed projects.

Staff would like to update the plan so that it would be more representative of reasonable expectations and prioritize what projects are most essential and can be implemented.

Exert from the City's Comprehensive Plan:

Planning for the Future of East Bethel: An Update to the Comprehensive Plan

Chapter VI VI - 21 10/17/2007

Goals:

Create and protect an interconnected system of athletic areas, parks, trails, and green spaces throughout the City.

Policies:

1. Research amount of existing park area and current uses against future needs based on increasing populations.
2. Incorporate parks and open space into community center planning efforts and all development/redevelopment plans and designs.
3. Promote existing parks and pursue strategies to connect parks through trail systems; identify potential "corridors" for trails.
4. Coordinate planning activities with Anoka County based on park uses; pursue opportunities to incorporate sports-related and other community activities.
5. Protect and promote recreational activities within the community and identify opportunities to enhance infrastructure to support these activities such as snowmobile trails, lake activities, etc.
6. Design and maintain parks with proper lighting, shelter, and landscaping to ensure public and property safety.
7. Provide recreational facilities and programs to serve the varied recreational needs of all age groups within the City.
8. Encourage the acquisition of all forfeited and/or donated land in areas with potential recreational development opportunities.
9. Require dedication of park land or cash in lieu of land in conjunction with the subdivision of all properties.
10. Develop land use regulations compatible with adjacent parks, recreation areas, and natural features.

11. Identify the potential for trail and wildlife corridors in the City, and coordinate regional trail development opportunities with Anoka County and adjacent communities.
12. Provide convenient active and passive recreation opportunities to the residents of East Bethel. Enhance the existing park and recreation areas in the City.
13. Provide alternative forms of transportation that include walking trails, bicycle paths, and other surfaced media where motorized traffic is not permitted.

The Commission discussed the current Comp Plan and what future projects are feasible and should be prioritized. The commissioners focused on connecting major parks and natural features within the city including Booster Park, the Sandhill Crane Natural Area, Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve, and new development that may occur in the area served by the municipal utilities. The commission also talked about possible future park locations. A lot of those decisions will be dependent upon when and where development occurs. The commission also discussed the possible expansion of Booster Park or other community parks.

Staff will prepare an updated map showing these potential connection corridors and potential future park locations for discussion and review at future Park Commission meetings.

Council Report Staff and the Parks Commission will continue discussions on the future direction of the City's Parks and projects with the City Council liaison Tim Harrington. The purpose of this discussion will be to formulate goals and objectives for the park development program and to update the commission on issues currently before the City Council.

Mr Harrington updated the commission on the proposed tax levy and informed them that the council has until December to adopt it as is or reduce it. It cannot be increased. Mr Harrington also informed the commission about the November 19th Town Hall meeting which will have local, county, state, and congressional representatives available to answer questions and discuss issues facing our area.

Adjournment **Mr Hoffman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. Mr Zimmermann seconded the motion; all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Nate Ayshford
Public Works Manager