



WORTHINGTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the Tuesday, December 15, 2015 Meeting

Members Present - The members present were Dan Armitage, Laura Ball, Bob Burpee, Rob Wendling and Darren Hurley, Director of Parks & Recreation. Michele Miller participated via conference call as a result of being home with a knee injury.

Paula Deming was also present representing the Arbor Committee.

The minutes from the November 17, 2015 meeting were approved.

Olentangy Parklands Trailhead Project Update – Mr. Hurley shared a map of the Olentangy Parklands with the members to illustrate options for the location of the Olentangy Parklands Trailhead Renovation project. Mr. Hurley reminded members that he had previously presented them and received their approval for the location to be across from the existing paver area with bench seating and a water fountain that rotary had completed. This location is close to the tennis courts and just south of the base of the sledding hill. He indicated that he also took the location to the Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Board who introduced an alternative location option which would be at the intersection just north of the skate park where the trail forks to go either north to Worthington Hills or east to the Olentangy Parklands tennis courts and parking areas. The Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Board is somewhat split, feeling there are merits to both options. Mr. Hurley indicated the new location would possibly be more visible to more people, especially if the trail eventually is connected on up to High banks Metro Park. However, there would be added costs to running water to the newly proposed location as well as building up the elevation at that point as there is a significant drop-off from the trail to the grade next to it. Members expressed concern with the added work and that it would result in less overall improvements being a part of the package and to some concerns of vandalism bleeding over from the skatepark. It was the consensus of the members that the original location was more desirable and that way-finding signage at the newly proposed location would be sufficient to direct people to the original preferred location.

Park Planning Process – Park by Park Improvement Prioritization – Mr. Hurley indicated that he had made the changes reflecting the discussions from the November meeting and the newly distributed sheet included those changes. The next park on the list for review is Perry Park.

The Commission members reviewed the listed projects and ratings for Perry Park. The group confirmed they want to continue the process of renovating the fields, one at a time. Fields 1 and 3 are scheduled for renovation in the next two years. They indicated that renovating the existing restrooms should be a priority and moved it up to third on the list. They did not think improving creek access was a priority project and removed it from the list. The repair of the electrical issues was not a big concern for the public as the lights seem to be working well, but they wanted to keep it on the list at a lower priority as there are staff maintenance concerns. They decided to combine the replacing of the asphalt trail with improving the walking path around the fields. They thought adding water fountains/bottle fillers should be combined with the restroom renovations. Replacing the aging split rail fence at the entrance was moved to maintenance. The group felt strongly that the tot lot (smaller playground) should be moved and combined with the larger playground, not as a priority, but when the playground is due for renovation. They also wanted staff to evaluate the slope of the soccer field on Perry 1 to determine the cost of improving playability on that field. The new project listing was agreed upon as follows:

1. Continue ball diamond renovations – ball diamond renovations scheduled for 2015-2017.
2. Add trees to provide shade for parents watching games.
3. Renovate restrooms and add water fountains/bottle fillers.
4. Repave the asphalt path around fields and between parks.
5. Improve connectivity to Snouffer.
6. Move tot lot from current location and combine with larger play structure when renovation is due.
7. Add bridge for mower/Cushman over Potter's Creek or culvert and blacktop trail.
8. Repair electrical issues with field lighting to improve performance of lights.
9. Evaluate slope/grade issue on Perry 1 soccer field to determine feasibility of reducing slope for better soccer playability.

Next the members discussed Pingree Park. No changes were made to the initial ratings and priority order leaving the list for the park as follows:

1. Resurface the basketball court.
2. Fix/update the water fountain.

The next park reviewed was Selby Park. Members discussed the overall park and the need to recommend a direction for the shelter in terms of whether to renovate the existing structure or consider eventual replacement. Members felt given the need to redesign the parking lot and basketball court that having a consultant do a redesign of the west end of the park would be beneficial and could provide some renovation options and scope for the shelter for future planning purposes. They combined those into one project and made it the top priority for the park. They also noted the benefit of renovating the restroom so it could be accessed from outside during the project. Mr. Wendling noted the need to repair the rubber surfacing on the playground and Mr. Hurley indicated he would add that to the maintenance list if it wasn't already there. Finally, they added the placement of trees on the east end of the park around the playground as a project. The revised listing is as follows:

1. Redesign west end of park utilizing consulting services:
 - a. Renovate the existing Selby Shelter house for ADA compliance and better use of space.
 - b. Include in renovation of shelter house access to restrooms from outside.
 - c. Redesign parking lot/asphalt area including the separation of the basketball court.
2. Replace drinking fountain to resolve on-going issues.
3. Add trees to east end of park around playground.

The last park discussed by the members was Shaker Square Park. Committee members discussed the playground and agreed it should be made the top priority due to it being over 20 years old. They agreed the size and potential downsizing could be addressed at the time of design. The list for Shaker Square is as follows:

1. Replace the playground.
2. Add two concrete pads with/for picnic tables (could be purchased in conjunction with Civic Association).

Mr. Hurley indicated staff had been researching planning documents from other communities and had chosen some to share with them for review. He provided members copies of the plans from Aurora and Gahanna. He also indicated he would email out links to several others for their review on-line. He asked members to review and let staff know of formats they liked, certain sections or layouts they liked, and any other feedback that would help staff as they begin drafting our plan.

Mr. Hurley will revise the list based on these discussions in preparation for the January meeting.

Other – Mr. Armitage shared a press clipping regarding an ODNR grant secured by Bexley for \$81,000 to build athletic fields. He asked if staff were aware of ODNR funding for this type of project. Mr. Hurley replied no, but that he would look into it. Mrs. Ball concluded that this grant could be made available for the development of flood plains and possibly could be applied in Worthington at Huntley Bowl or Olentangy Parklands.

Mr. Wendling indicated he had heard about managed forestry funds being made available.

Mr. Armitage shared concerns patrons had expressed to him about fitness equipment being out of order at the Community Center and the amount of time it was taking for repairs. Mr. Hurley indicated he would look into it and follow up.

Ms. Deming asked for an explanation about what the Park Improvement Fund is and what it is used to do. Mr. Hurley explained it is used as a place for donations, gifts, and for certain development funds. Ms. Deming asked if it could be given more of a menu format and better publicized and Mr. Hurley indicated some things exist like a link on the webpage and a brochure but that staff were also interested in developing it further.

Mr. Burpee passed along a comment inquiring if we had ever thought about differentiating pricing for admission to the Community Center based on use such as a lower rate for people only interested in using the fitness floor. Mr. Hurley indicated the only place he knew doing that was Westerville and that it requires access check in points at each venue which would be cost prohibitive.

Being no further business, the motion for the meeting to adjourn was granted.