

City of Lawrence

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board April 12, 2005



MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Sharon Spratt, Vice Chair, Bill Penny, Tom Bracciano, Chris Schumm, Kelly Barth, LHS Student Matt Riley

STAFF PRESENT: Fred DeVictor, Mark Hecker, Roger Steinbrock, Jo Ellis, Lee Ice

GUESTS City Manager, Mike Wildgen
KS School of Gymnastics representatives; Cathy Singles, Don Shobe, Ted & Kris Grinter, Amy Laytimi, Chad Simpson
Burroughs Creek Rail Trail & East Lawrence; Dayna Carleton
CAP Study Commission; James Grauerholz
West Lawrence Neighborhood Association; Susan Chi, Alan Cowles
Greenbelt plan/Langston Hughes Elementary School area; Harris & Connie Tate, Janace Maynard
Marilyn Schmidt

Call to Order/Minutes - The meeting at Indoor Aquatic Center, 4706 Overland Drive, was called to order by Chair Spratt. Minutes of the March 8th meeting were approved on a motion by Bracciano, 2nd by Penny.

New Member – Board members introduced themselves to attending guests. Spratt welcomed new member Kelly Barth. Kelly volunteers at PPNC, lived in Lawrence since about 1992, student at KU off and on, freelance writer, does some work at KU, interest in all aspects of Parks and Recreation especially hiking/biking trails and nature areas and said she was happy to participate. DeVictor reported the brief orientation with Barth a few weeks ago and gave her of lots of materials. A copy of the Parks and Recreation comprehensive plan was given to Chris Schumm, he will pass it to Kelly Barth.

Concerns of Board – Bracciano said there was good discussion about the parks system in his campaign for City Commission, there was large discussion about the desire to have neighborhood parks, smaller neighborhood parks versus the green belts and green-ways. He said it was interesting to hear some of the perceptions of what people view as a neighborhood park and some of the desires to have those versus regional parks.

KS Open Meetings Act – DeVictor reviewed the attachment to remind staff and members periodically about Kansas rules and regulations of open meetings, the quorum need and any hand outs are considered public record and things of that nature. If anyone ever has questions about regulations can ask staff and if staff does not have answers will get with the City Manager's office to advise.

KS School of Gymnastics request – Cathy Singles, Kansas School of Gymnastics Booster Club President, presented things that they consider are important concerning the gymnastics program. We have been partners for many years and the KSG could not go on without LPRD and that LPRD is better because of the Kansas School of Gymnastics. The booster club has provided a tumble track, kids are able to do some of their tumbling routines that you cannot do on the floor and provided the new foam that is under the carpet on the big gymnastics floor that routines are done on. They have provided spotter blocks, large fans and were in the process of putting up a pit with LPRD help when KU informed that they need the space. Booster club bought the vaulting table that had to be upgraded. They participated in the Sesquicentennial parade with LPRD and put on exhibitions in the park for the community to view to

advertise the program. They participated in the National Day of Gymnastics event to raise money for LMH and train coaches to keep them safe and up on the latest techniques. Quality of coaches is higher and the program has sent kids on to the college level. The program is on the rise. It generates \$36,000 per year and the revenue with 30 team gymnast and team level gymnast are role models. Program has been in existence for over 20 years. Lawrence is growing, program is growing. Believe with a one time investment can meet all the gymnastics needs of the community. Gymnastics is an alternative to the ball sports and is a year round sport. Gets kids off the couch and fit and we will be better citizens. Discipline and dedication that gymnastics takes creates a better citizen. They have hosted meets, brings people in from all surrounding areas, to generate revenue for the Lawrence area. KSG holds unique fund raising opportunities where they can provide some monies need to be a competitive gymnast, since it is an expensive sport. Private gyms do not have these opportunities. They ask for a one time investment - \$200,000, base on property with 3000 sq ft, to continue the program to have at least 5000 sq ft. They request money to buy a building already in existence that is big enough to house all equipment because when KU shuts program down it will probably deed all equipment that the program has to the City. Possibly can put up a building that LPRD already has and continue the partnership. Request may be as high as \$500,000, and they still need to do more research. Handed out information about all the qualities involved with gymnastics and the benefits it provides for other sports.

DeVictor reported situation of gymnastics. Years ago had classes in recreation centers gyms putting up and taking down equipment which was difficult. For about 20 years had agreement with KU and the program evolved over the years. About a year and half ago told by KU that space allocations committee has asked us to vacate the space and since then have been looking for sites and have not found any. Jo Ellis, Recreation Supervisor is also looking into sites, example Centennial School and various other sites but nothing affordable is available today. LPRD will get most of the equipment and may be able to place some tumbling classes in smaller gym areas. But we do not have a solution for a facility to move equipment once we have to vacate Robinson Center on the KU Campus this summer. This summer will be the last session, have to be out by August 31st. Gyms could not accommodate the team portion of the program. LPRD would like to see a facility somewhere; is on our wish list. Where and dollars are the big issues.

Jo Ellis reported during winter sessions offer about 26 classes every session involving about 236 kids not including team. Singles reported young kids get to use same apparatus as older kids just not at the same level. Ellis reported currently have available two full gymnasiums; about 10,000/sq feet. After expenses the programs generates about \$26,000 per year. Lee Ice, Youth Sports Supervisor, compares this program to about 850 for basketball over 6 week period, indoor soccer is about 400, Jan-March, baseball/softball about 1200 over two month period, K-6th grade. Revenue wise comparable after expenses. Team type sports involve about 3000 kids. Singles said they were not able to use gymnasiums to capacity because have to work around the University schedules. If this was not the case, could have a multi-use facility. Could use for gymnastics as well as fitness classes, martial arts, etc. Questioned if anything currently in park system available that would work? DeVictor indicates we have many parks and public spaces, but it's a matter of priority of this compared to other needs on the lists of things to be done. May have flexibility in budget to lease something but have not found anything reasonably priced to do something like that. Penny suggests 70x70 building, 5000 sq ft, a box space would be a wish list type facility. Private gymnastics organizations fees would be out of reach for many kids. LPRD has scholarship for kids who cannot afford programs and KSG has fund raising abilities that private groups would not be able to pursue. Singles received letter from Assistant City Manger, Van Saun, with other options of turning in request for budgets for mid year or next year. Ellis reports a concern is that once the team gymnastics goes away, it will be very hard to build it back up. Hecker reported not yet able to find space to lease by August, a longer range plan to build a field house facility by the softball complex. A large project, lots of money. Right now no time frame set for this. Board asks if there is anything that can be done. DeVictor reports we have no solution right now.

Wildgen reported that there should be no confusion about the mid year request; when you talk about money, it's the City's money, LPRD does not have a separate pot and you come the City Commission for a mid year request. This request sounds like a request for next year's budget. There is a process some go through for mid year funding for small amounts of money and this is a major request of \$200,000. You can't make a request for something that does not have a hard number on it; money is not laying around for that. Mid year request is not the time for requesting a new building, you have to consider everything that goes along with a new building, maintenance, operations, utilities, etc. This is not the time for this size of a request. Even the cost of leasing a building has to be budgeted and the sales tax is down not up. Spratt thanks Singles for sharing information. Singles handed out a copy of their proposal. Bracciano suggest she call Kathy Johnson with school district, see if she may have an ideas.

Neighborhood Park Standards – Last meeting Commission Highberger attended and asked the Board to take a look at our current park standards, particularly for neighborhood parks, which have 1/2 mile standard walking distance. Comm. Highberger's interest was looking at lessening that to perhaps 1/4 mile standard so people could walk to all the parks. DeVictor handed out a recent park standards survey that showed a wide variety of standards from 18 area cities and counties have. The current standard that City of Lawrence has in regard to overall parks is 12-15 acres per 1000 population. No city surveyed in the area that have that high of a standard. Per the comprehensive plan, LPRD is exceeding that standard today. There are some city's that have neighborhood park standards that are less than 1/2 mile. However the Lawrence parks comprehensive plan recommends moving away from mini parks and emphasizing neighborhood parks and not developing small parks that require high maintenance. Example of small parks, Ludlam and Water Tower Parks are each 1.5-2 acres.

Park/Planning Commission - DeVictor handed out latest draft of park/planning committee report. Bracciano is on the committee representing the Board. This is a committee of city staff, planning staff and planning commissioners to update the Horizon 2020 parks and recreation chapter and are trying to consolidate and work together. The next committee meeting is Wednesday, April 13th and this plan is de-emphasizing mini parks. This will be on the next P&R agenda in May after Board members have had a chance to review the draft. There are two things that are contrary to the concept that you've been asked to look at. At the last meeting there was some discussion about the greenbelt areas and trails and connecting these. Commissioner Highberger's idea was to have the smaller parks with in 1/4 acre for people to walk to in addition to the greenbelt and connecting trails, emphasizing more needs in the new parts of town. According to maps staff used, 1 mile standard and 1/2 mile standard for neighborhood parks that we currently have the city is well covered by those standards. The 1/4 mile standards in the existing parks would have East Lawrence well covered, few new areas would be covered. Lots of the inner city areas would not be able to accomplish this goal. Bracciano reported a new trend is a use of trails and connections by creeks etc; a connectivity with-out getting in the streets, which would be tough in old neighborhoods. Newer neighborhoods have some restrictions. DeVictor states these are some of the kind of issues the park/planning committee is discussing. The use of parks today is different than the last 5-20 years. Walking to parks is important but most parents are not going to allow children to walk alone to get to a mini/neighborhood park. Penny commented pedestrian movement is going to be the bigger concern as we move forward and we should look at the areas and if we have an opportunity for a park along the way we try to create it. Hecker stated park clusters are good and trails can connect to them. Bracciano stated we must get back to the economics too; it is more expense to maintain a small park. Penny feels planners need to be involved in these type decisions. Barth asks about impact fees. Can park fees be included in the price of a home, rather than resting on City? Bracciano states Board did have discussion of concern on impact fees, as long as fees are designated for park acquisition, but then they discussed the current one cent sales tax for park acquisition and would it continue. Basically the consensus is yes you could have impact fees or developer fees but would have to be specifically targeted for land acquisition for park but then the problem you have is to infill development like the Woods and where does that money go to? DeVictor stressed talking about any possible geographic inequality of the number of parks 20 years down the road. Inner city cannot get more park land and connections are

important. Another factor is if you provide ¼ mile neighborhood park, should the city maintain it? Barth said perhaps the homeowners association should be responsible for them? There are some parks like that now. How far should the City go? Schumm asks if any information that shows what happens to expenses when take on new parks. Hecker reports it's hard to determine costs but there are park modes that show different levels of maintenance at different parks. Schumm states it seems that having planned greenbelts that interconnect larger parks is the compromise between just having big parks and mini parks where it's not economically feasible but yet there's a plan developed. Hecker made a point that as you drive around town in the evenings look at what parks are being used. Mini parks are not being used extensively. You can tell by the level of maintenance needed. It's that obvious between Ludlam or Chaparral Park and a park like Centennial Park or South Park where some evenings you cannot find a place to throw a blanket. Neighborhoods think they are a great idea but mini parks are not getting used and that's discouraging maintenance wise because they still have to be mowed and cared for. Board asks for item to be on the May agenda to have time to go through report. The draft will come back in final form for the Boards consideration, for Planning Commission consideration and eventually City Commission consideration and ¼ acres is not part of the plan at this point.

Mary's Lake Properties LLC report – DeVictor reported a concern with the land west of Mary's Lake is that metals and arsenic were found on site there. Mary's Lake Properties LLC worked with KDHE for an environmental report and LPRD evaluated it and do not think there is anything that will create a problem if we go ahead and purchase the site that was approved by City Commission. About 6-acres will help preserve the wooded area on the west side of the lake and staff recommends moving ahead. Penny states this is one area would like to eventually hook up to the Haskell rail trail on 29th street. While currently under one owner, we should get a corridor that connects to the bike path in Mary's Lake area. Riley states it pretty important because it also connects to Haskell which then also connects to the wetlands. Barth asks if EPA or someone has tested the soil. DeVictor reported more water testing will be done. KDWP, who stocks the lake and helps manage it, was consulted. KDHE did water and tissue samples on fish and lake a couple years ago and wrote a letter stating they feel it doesn't pose a health risk to eat fish out of Mary's Lake and the water is not contaminated. Penny states part of concern with Honeywell was that they had enough type of issue that when they sell a piece of property to someone they have all these restrictions on it as it deals with residential because they do not want to have a class action suit come back on them as a result of selling a piece of property. There is pressure on each level to prove things are okay. DeVictor stated LPRD worked with previous owners Honeywell and had a written agreement to put some of the trail across their private property and worked with them concerning access. Penny made a motion to work out an agreement with Mary's Lake LLC to grant an easement near the north end of the property that hooks up to Haskell Street, across their property. Bracciano seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Greenbelt Park – DeVictor reported they have had several public meetings to develop a master plan for the greenbelt property east of Langston Hughes Elementary School. Staff met with folks from the neighborhood and had individual meetings with some individuals who had some concerns. He said we are ready for Board to take a look at the plan. CL Mauer with Landplan Engineering presented the plan and design drawings for a natural park with a walking trail with hard surface pathways, natural area, playground, outdoor classroom and picnic area. The City's purchase this land from 15th Street to Wakarusa Dr, SLT and George Williams Way. Parking is limited, may need to have some kind of crosswalk in addition to the roundabout by Langston Hughes Elementary School at Harvard Road. Crossing street may be somewhat difficult. Penny states these are the type places where elevated crosswalks would work if possible, noted is done often in Lincoln and Des Moines. Riley asks if underground cross walk such as at Pinckney and Broken Arrow is a cheaper route. Bracciano states typically those type of crossings need monitoring or to be locked at certain times. Parking is an issue for this park. Some neighborhoods did not want to have parking on the park side and encouraged LPRD to use the school side, which will also someday house a recreation center. DeVictor reported there was some discussion about a playground area on the park side. Hecker reported a goal would be to get a trail from this area to the Clinton Pkwy trails and potentially to 6th Street. Hecker handed out costs

estimate and stated the project can be phased in; it doesn't have to be done all at once. He said there was lots of compromising on final design based on neighborhood input.

Harris Tate using the map provided stated his concerns about a culvert under Stonecreek where all drainage is diverted and water from even modest rain collects and can be up to 100 feet wide covering all the green space. He said other neighbors who live in the neighborhood have concerns about water lapping up to electrical boxes and the safety of children. Tate was concerned about creek erosion eating away at the properties. Janace Maynard stated concerns about taking out trees which would deplete the green space to accommodate for the sidewalk and mowing strips. The other concern was erosion. Water runs through and pools behind the homes. What additional amounts of water will be directed to the area from a culvert in a new development in the area? Tate used maps described how future sidewalks may run. Hecker met with Chad Voigt, storm water engineer, and discussed area and confirmed this will be a more difficult area to work with. Hecker and Voigt are still discussion options and costs. Penny remarks that trees do not typically work in these type waterways. Trees will back up water. Hecker reported Voigt would prefer a straight "v" ditch. Hecker reminds Board design work is not finished and discussion will continue until built. Maynard asks if assessment regarding the volume of water had been done. DeVictor reported that was not including in the scope of what Landplan was asked to do. Hecker stated the area has been reviewed and drainage issues looked at as far as homes being built. The area would be comparable to McGrew Nature Trail, with some limited access when it rains. Another example is Naismith Valley Trail, which has areas that flood during rains. When not flooded it is a very nice trail.

Susan Chi lives near Stoneridge and Harvard. She canvassed neighborhood while LPRD was taking public comments and encouraged neighborhoods to give public input and found citizens to be very excited and finds it a popular plan with those she talked with. On her street alone, there are 20 children many children in the whole neighborhood and find they will be able to walk to this area. Currently have to get in the car and drive to a park. DeVictor also said that the park does not have a name and would be open to suggestions. Chi states neighborhood is excited about having a walk to school day, walking to school from one of the trails and having a clean up day or planting day could bring the neighborhood together.

Alan Cowles speaking for the neighborhood association or roughly 400 homes in the area, agrees this is a popular project and agreed home owners have very good concerns about water drainage. Landscaping is a concern and should take homeowners concerns seriously. At the same time believes not having the park would inhibit the access to a lot of people in other areas and access is very important. A way to reconcile neighborhood concerns is to complete the access and put in whatever landscaping and additional trees that it takes to make the area as tolerable as possible for those living next to park. We should plan on following up on how things are working out do not put in and abandon it. He would like to see the trail access completed, do not believe in the 100' gas line easement that 6' or 8' wide will make much difference if the rest is done well. If do not have the loop trail access there will be cut through trails on private property, builders have not left any place for access anywhere else, which is unfortunate. Appreciates LPRD's attention.

Hecker stated that for the area it is a very important project since there are no parks in the area. DeVictor commented there are easement concerns, trying to get a standard of 25 feet for sidewalks, maintenance, to get neighborhoods folks from their street to the parks. This will be addressed in the park/planning commission draft document and hopefully will become a standard. Hecker commented the biggest concern with developers is where the liability is on that pedestrian easement. DeVictor said LPRD has a 25' easement in the Green Meadows area that was donated and a fence was put on each side and that's where the walkway connects to the SLT bikeway. Connie Tate commented on the best route for access and landscaping, the intent for the park was to be left natural, not a suburban park, landscaping will mean taking out trees because the area is small and major adjustments will have to be made for

landscaping and that creates a whole different kind of park. A small parking lot should be planned in the park so pedestrians will not have to cross George Williams Way.

Spratt said she would like a motion to go forward. Schumm made a motion to approve this master plan and proceed but be sensitive to the narrow strip and some investigation needs to take place if there is a drainage issue to make a pathway. Barth seconded Schumm's motion. Motion passed. DeVictor said a final report will be presented to City Commission and the neighborhood representatives will be informed.

I

Pesticide Use In Parks – DeVictor reported he wanted to inform Board a group came to City Commission and presented a 125 page report about pesticide free parks; he handed out 9 pages containing the main proposal the citizens group made. The City Commission unanimously asked LPRD to work toward the direction of more pesticide free parks. DeVictor made comments to City Commission about how we protect and preserve the parks both in a safe and environmental friendly and fiscal responsible way and asked for time to evaluate the report and are in the process of doing that. The nine pages handed out are the key parts of the proposal from the pesticide free interest group. Staff is reviewing and will get back with Board at the May 10th meeting with recommendations and then back to City Commission May 17th. DeVictor said staff is looking at all alternatives to see what could work, thinks it will be expensive. Barth, who was involved with the citizens group, commented it seems to be a health issue. Expenses in short term will be more but may even out in the long run based on what Barth has read. She believes it will be a good thing for Lawrence to do. Bracciano commented about rodents, how do you deal with something like that? DeVictor said will have to point out exceptions. Other examples are mosquitoes and the tick problem in Dad Perry Park. Barth commented that there will need to be allowances in the recommendations.

Possible Bond Issue/Future Park Projects – DeVictor handed out draft of 2nd generation bond issue proposal. There are some bonds being paid of this year and next year and the idea is to issue some bonds again for park projects and pay off with sales tax. These are recommendations of some of the projects that are high on LPRD's list. Several Commissioners at their March 30th study session made comments about taking some of the sales tax money putting it toward the after school programs. The after school program is an important program in the city, which is run by the schools and Boys and Girls Club. LPRD also has a lot of after school programs. If the Commission feels it's important to fund some of the after school programs, that's less that would go to park projects. At one point LPRD was involved in the after school program but with grants running out, we are not part of it anymore. LPRD feels if City money is allocated it's important for LPRD to be involved in the program again. The bond issue that is being paid off this year is the ten year bond for the outdoor swimming pool, which is about two and half million dollars with about \$300,000 payment a year. These would be bond approved by the City Commission, not voted on. The costs estimates would not cover everything, some are in phases.

Schumm commented it doesn't make sense to run parallel programs. If City Commission is that committed to it they should work something so they are not taking resources from LPRD. Lee Ice commented when LPRD was involved with the after school program there was about a \$300,000 grant that was issued to the School District and LPRD offered physical education and recreational activities as part of our portion of the curriculum, including computer type activities. The Boys and Girls Club had a separate after school program that was at four different schools. The school district had four others so the after school program encompassed about eight school sites. When the grant began to run out we were no longer a part of the program. They came to us and wanted us to pay for what we were offering. We did not have the funds to continue to provide our services. With the Boys and Girls Club offering after school programs we are many times competing for the same space. LPRD is being bumped out more and more from some of the schools because the after school programs go until 5:30 and LPRD cannot get in 6:00. Younger children cannot be out for team sports practice after 8:30, it's too late. It doesn't make sense to give money to compete against ourselves. Instead parents want more after school programs from 5-8pm and there is not gym space available at our own recreation centers because

of our own after school activities. Has to use all the Saturday facilities and parents want to get away from weekend programs and have weekday programs to spend weekends with family. DeVictor commented he gave a report to City Commission last fall about all the LPRD after school type programs. Lee commented in the 14 years he's been with Youth Sports, things are changing a lot as far as what the family wants in terms of activities. He has about 125 basketball teams from October to March and he tries to provide one hour of practice a week which is where the school district gets involved, have to have those gym facilities to have practices which is the most important aspect of teaching. If no practice facilities, no use in having games, children are not learning this activity. Currently cannot use LPRD facilities for practices because they are full with other after school programs. Penny commented giving money away is not the right thing for Parks to do. If LPRD focuses on the things it is currently doing will be fine, cannot keep taking on more and more. Boys and Girls Clubs and other like it are tremendous organizations. Parks area needs more building space. Create some place where we can build facilities down the line and put people in them. Example, metal buildings are not that expensive. Spratt commented we, as an advisory group, feel that we would like to see these funds go for the use of parks and recreation rather than outside agencies. Penny commented LPRD needs are huge. Schumm commented cannot bring on more after school programs if facilities not available. Penny asks to write a letter to the Mayor; positive in the sense that the Board feels that what they are doing is very positive but see our focus as already being behind in the needs of not only programs but facilities and need to focus those with bond money. The money needs to go towards buildings and things needed inside LPRD. Barth commented being new, is the gist that Boys and Girls Club for example would want to take Parks and Rec money. Ice comments allocations of funds already the Boys and Girls Club receives \$82,000 from the general operating fund from the City as well at \$76,000 from the special alcohol fund plus an extra \$25,000 from 2005 so they received \$183,000 already this year from the City and are asking for another large amount of money on top of that. Spratt noted a prime example is gymnastics program is going to be cut because of space and current existing programs are already grappling for space and to give up dollars that would be helpful to LPRD to help expand for own organization.....why would we do that? Schumm commented once you give up money, you never get it back. Penny said LPRD has too many capital needs. Spratt said when you look at the capital improvements some have been sitting for four to five years, while Board recognizes Boys and Girls Club is a worthy program itself Board would not be in favor of taking money from LPRD. Barth said this would be weakening our own organization.

Penny made a motion to write a letter to the city Commission saying LPRD needs are already too great for current needs to be able to give additional sales tax revenue to outside organizations, feel more needs right now in capital improvements than can be met with current funding. Schumm second the motion. Motion passed. Board would like to see gyms listed on the 2nd generation draft. Feels the need is strong. Board is supportive of the current draft.

Old Sale Barn/Burroughs Rail Trail – James Grauerholz, on Burroughs Creek Study Committee, commented that the last couple of years the whole east side has socially and politically have cooperated instead of fighting a lot of little developer battles, there's starting to be a positive vision. Three neighborhood groups are coming together to support rail-trail which has been on the list for fifteen years. Understands it could not have been built until the last couple years because the railroad had not abandoned the line. That time has come and the neighborhoods see a window of opportunity to capitalize on this and have a positive vision. Realizes looking at the maps provided the east side of town is covered well with parks/green space; Brook Creek Park is mainly natural open green space and neighbor want to keep it that way. The City bought the park ten years ago.

Grauerholz presented two proposals, one is for the rail-trail which is estimated at \$375,000, as a CIP submission. The other is the old sale barn acquisition by Hobbs Park, which is estimated between \$215,000 - \$300,000. The corridor for the trail is also the location of the City's main trunk sewers; 2/3 of the sewer delivered to the treatment plant come through. The area is about 18-acres, as far as the 100' right of way, apparently that can be financed by Utility revenue according to Corliss and Wildgen. That leaves the rough figure of \$300,000 and the rail trail could be phased. The City already owns about 9-acres. A 3-acre parcel that is zoned M3 has been sitting with a giant warehouse approved site plan for 4-5 years, which was not renewed recently. The owner was frustrated by that and was quoted saying in an article he would listen to proposals to buy the property but he's still thought the location was appropriate for office or warehouse development. Grauerholz commented the point he is making is that this is a window that will close sooner or later. They are working on a master plan for the rail-trail and there are no definite ideas about the sale barn site but it could house some recreation facilities. The 2004 completed projects spending breakdown, \$30,000,000 or so, 2/3 west of Iowa, 1/6 for Iowa and Mass., 1/6 for east of Mass. 2005 is the time to get this on line and it is more urgent than ever. Grauerholz asks for Board approval to recommend to the City Commission that the sale barn site be negotiated with the owners to be a part of the parks system.

DeVictor told the Board this item has been referred by the City Commission for the Board to consider. The City Commission set a moratorium on any development of that property. Penny said he feels it's important to make a decision. What's happened is there's a developer who wants to move forward, there are 3-acres there, there was dirt work done back in 1996, have some potential buyers, the City has said hold on and has denied them a renewal of their site plan they had kept renewing each year. The owner is somewhat frustrated, he's called Penny and several people on the committee. If you look at the bigger picture, Hobbs Park has become a historical anchor on the east side and the functionality of it as far as the parks staff might debate this but he thinks it's an important piece as a connector as it deals with that park area. It's going to cost some money but it would be one of those things where if approved here, would send it back to City Commission they would have appraisal done, decide whether they wanted to buy it, would not be a done deal tomorrow. Penny agrees with Grauerholz and the whole group, everyone that's worked on this committee that this becomes a very important piece of that whole anchor on that end of town and as you drive up 11th Street you're going to see if you let it go to a building, you're going to see a building right up against 11th Street. If the City owned it that would soften the whole view at that park and give some green space to work with or something to work with for some other thing the parks people need. If you don't go for it and get it done there's going to be more building in there. He said it ties in with to our corridor or bike path and walkway. Penny said the railroad as only abandoned everything south of 12th Street, there are still some maybes on the design.

DeVictor commented it would be a very expensive piece of park land. Penny commented this corridor will be a nice area for people to use every day. Saw in the paper this morning, walking is the way to go. For that whole neighborhood we are not going to have very many opportunities to get a nice smooth already graded north, south route. It's going to take some money to develop but Hobbs needs this mass to give it some energy at that corner. Hecker suggested the Board needs to put reasoning in, will need some teeth because if goes beyond here, from park standards it does not make sense to purchase this, we have enough parks there. What are your reasons? DeVictor said you are making it a high priority, it's very expensive land, you would make it a priority versus all the other things we do in park acquisitions. The plan talks about connecting and that's important but the point about park standards was we do not need additional park space in that part of town. DeVictor said he was responsible for telling the Board that, as a Parks and Recreation staff member. We do not know when the railroad might abandon the spur up to tie into the sale barn property.

Grauerholz commented this land cost under \$100,000 ten years ago and it'll be built if it isn't bought. Dayna Carleton said this is an area where John Brown actually stood surveying Lawrence, this is what I think that we're getting into in terms of improving our economy, the clean industry, is the tourism and civil war heritage so this will be a real asset. If you look at Hobbs not just as a park but if you look at more and more moving toward a historical park and connecting that and I think that is going to be advantageous for our city and for our tourism industry. Grauerholz said that could be an important reason to acquire this property and also as a funding matter. The history of this site would connect it to the rail-trail of Burrough's Creek Park, being a park concept qualifies that linear park to participate in historic related funding. Penny asks if this is what Hecker was suggesting. Hecker responded that you can't just ask the City Commission to buy it, there has to be a reason because LPRD can't support it in regard to park standards. Penny commented the development plans he's seen are very aggressive as far as using the space. The past approved site plan approves office and warehouse and 99 parking spaces, more than twice the amount that would be required. Carlton said she is a member of the East Lawrence Neighborhood Association and states they strongly opposed to having all that traffic on 11th Street and see it more as green space. Schumm moved that the Board recommends that the City look into the acquisition of the property based on the discussion of its historical value and connectivity from Hobbs Park to the future rail trail. Spratt seconds the motion. The motion was passed.

LPRD Capital Improvement Plan – DeVictor has handout of what was turned in for the City Capital Improvement projects and Mark has spent time evaluating all the projects and five year plan and the important thing is that the items get on this plan before they are approved for funding. These have no funding with it, it is the list of projects we've turned in. Hecker points out this year we are using an entirely different procedure and the City Commission and Planning Commission have both said that we want you to give us a plan that can be funded. After the projects are prioritized they want to see how to fund them. In other words, what we've done in the past is just hand them a list and they looked and not many things were ever funded. We'll see when the budgets come through how it's funded or don't put it on the list. There's no reason to put ten on the list if we can only afford three projects. Each project will get rated by a committee and some may not make it to the final list.

Steinbrock reported the summer activities guide came out last Sunday. So far we've had 52% overall increase in enrollment, 73% increase in web versus last year and a 42% increase in walk-ins. We're working with the Nash Dash committee which LPRD receives 20% for scholarship fund, it's May 4th. The Bill Self golf tournament is actively seeking hole sponsors as well as teams for the June 17th event at Eagle Bend, which helps our scholarship fund as well.

DeVictor reports we will not do a park tour next meeting, there are too many agenda items to follow up on, we will have a regular meeting. DeVictor thanks the Board for taking the extra time for the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 2:35P.M.