



Advisory Board Minutes July 8, 2008

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Bruce Muzzy, Vice Chair Kevin Loos, Kelly Barth, Jana Dobbs and Tom Bracciano

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Ernie Shaw, Mark Hecker, Roger Steinbrock, Crystal Miles, Laurel Kupka and Chris Bristow

GUESTS:

- I. Meeting called to order by Chair Bruce Muzzy.
- II. Approval of the June 10 minutes on a motion by Bracciano, second by Loos.
- III. Bracciano reported the new zoning regulations will require a master plan and special use permit for all properties larger than 10 acres, and any improvements must go through the Planning Commission rather than being handled administratively. This change could make some future plans and improvements, such as new athletic fields, more difficult to pass.
- IV. All board members except for Barth plan to attend the August 13 meeting with the Planning Board. Loos' attendance is tentative. The purpose of the meeting is to introduce the board members and have some general discussions.

Shaw asked board members to review the Horizon 2020 manual before the meeting. Hecker said the plan should be adhered to and be the guide for park development now and in the future. One requirement of concern is the quarter-mile park requirement on page 9-16. Hecker and Shaw feel this provision needs to be handled with care. The city had established parks as a half-mile requirement prior to the quarter-mile standard being adopted a couple of years ago. Hecker is concerned too many small play lots will be developed to meet this new standard. Larger, open-area parks are preferable because they may be used for a variety of purposes. Loos added that it probably doesn't matter whether parks are within a quarter-mile or half-mile of people's homes because children aren't allowed to go to them without supervision anyway.

Hecker said he would also like to discuss future projects like the 31st St. extension and sewer treatment facility, as well as park/school combination planning for the land west of K-10. Shaw asked that board members e-mail him if they would like to add any topics to the agenda and he will pass it along to the director of the Planning Department.

- V. Hecker, who is on the 31st St. project committee, reported the committee was asked for feedback last week and he is pleased that they are highly engaged in the planning process. Shaw is concerned there hasn't been much interest in connecting

the extension with the Burroughs Creek trail and there will be a two-block gap. Hecker said he hopes a connection will be part of the extension project but it may be lost in the process.

- VI. Shaw reported plans for the Carnegie Building are being finalized. Parks and Recreation was able to review them and note their concerns, and Shaw is meeting with the City Manager this afternoon to discuss the project. He said there is the possibility of receiving a grant to help fund the renovation project. Loos asked what the building would be used for if it is renovated. The upstairs will be used for Parks and Recreation classes and rentals, and will include a space that has the capacity to hold approx. 250 people. An addition will include an elevator and restrooms. The downstairs will be used as office space for the Heritage Group and will include some large meeting room facilities.
- VII. Crystal Miles, horticulture manager, gave a presentation on the Horticulture Division. The division employs nine full-time staff that cares for the public landscape areas in city parks, downtown, city right-of-ways, and several municipal buildings. The division is working to replace the 40 year old tree planters in the downtown area with new trees and new, smaller tree grates that will allow more space for pedestrians and sidewalk dining.

The division was responsible for snow removal and cleaned up after the NCAA tournament this year, and put in many hours on the weekends. It also oversees the Master Street Tree program. More than 3500 new trees have been planted since the program began in 2002. Many of these trees were planted in the front yards of newly constructed neighborhoods. Parks and Recreation works with neighborhood associations, which allows the Horticulture Division to ensure that there is some consistency in the variety and size of trees planted across the city.

This year marked Lawrence's 30th year of being recognized as a Tree City USA, and a planting ceremony was held at Langston Hughes Elementary School to commemorate Arbor Day. Miles also discussed how Parks and Recreation is working closely with the Planning Department to design and maintain medians and roundabouts on city streets, and how the division is maintaining Xeriscape and native landscaping areas at the Rotary Arboretum and DeVictor Park. Approximately two dozen people attended an evening tour of the Arboretum's Xeriscape garden last week.

The Horticulture Division's plan to treat the build up of aphids on cuphea and zinnia flowers with ladybugs recently received a lot of media attention. Miles said it will be a few weeks before she can evaluate whether or not the treatment was effective.

- VIII. a. Shaw reported that recreation revenue is doing well. The Outdoor Aquatic Center has seen a decrease most likely caused by the cold weather last month. The department has received few complaints about the increase in admission prices enacted this season. He said the golf course was down about \$18,000 or 500 rounds in June. The weather was fairly good, so the decrease may be due to the economy as well as a few tournaments that were booked at the course over several days. Even though revenue is down, Shaw still expects Eagle Bend to meet its budget needs.
- b. Hecker said the Fourth of July fireworks show went well. It was the first time Sesquicentennial Point was used for a large event. Hecker said he is attending a meeting Friday to discuss how traffic flow could be better handled in the future. Shaw said Clenece Hill is getting ready to start trying to generate funds for the second phase of development at the Point. Hecker also reported the department is working

on rewriting its IPM plan and he hopes to send it to the City Commission soon. His crews are trying to complete as many park projects as possible before the summer part-time workers are gone. He also said the golf course is looking better than it has at the beginning of July in years past, and the Zoysia grass that was installed a few months ago has proven to be a good investment.

c. Steinbrock introduced Chris Bristow, his new marketing intern. Bristow will be assisting him in putting together a departmental video that will be completed by mid-August. Loos said Leadership Lawrence would like to do a spotlight on Parks and Recreation in the future and the video will provide a great presentation. Steinbrock also said the Marketing Division will be working on the Winter/Spring 2009 Activity Guide soon.

- IX. Adjournment 1:05 p.m. The August 13 Planning Board and Parks and Recreation Board meeting will take the place of the August Advisory Board meeting. Meet in the City Commission room at 7:30 a.m.