

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
LITTLE CANADA, MINNESOTA**

September 6th, 2018

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof a regular meeting of the Parks & Recreation Commission of the City of Little Canada, Minnesota, was held on the 6th of September in the Council Chambers of the City Center located at 515 Little Canada Road East in said city.

Chair Dave Miller called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and the following members of the commission were present:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Anna Abruzzese
Ms. Sharen Darling
Mr. Ron Horwath
Mr. Dave Miller
Mr. Tom Ray
Mr. Peter Schletty

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Rose Chu

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Bryce Shearen, Parks and Recreation
and Community Services Manager
Mr. Lee Elfering, City Engineer
Mr. Tom Fischer, City Council Member
Ms. Anna Leibel Recording Secretary
Ms. Vanessa Van Alstine, Cable TV Prod.

MINUTES

Ray made a motion to approve the minutes from the July meeting. Darling seconded the motion. The motion passed 6 – 0.

**SPOONER
PARK REPORT
PARKING**

The Community Services Manager reported the City Engineer was present to discuss the Spooner Park Improvement Report. The City Engineer explained numerous improvements were being discussed at Spooner Park including a new playground, additional parking to accommodate rental of the pavilion and ADA accessibility throughout the park. He stated there are currently three parking lots at Spooner Park. One of the lots is near the pavilion, another is next to Gilbertson Field, and the other is located down by the lower shelter. The City Engineer stated the lot near the pavilion has 31 stalls including 2 handicapped spaces, but it doesn't meet City Code.

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He explained the lot doesn't have perimeter curb and the stalls and drive aisles do not meet required dimensions.

The City Engineer stated option one is to expand the existing parking lot. He explained in order to expand the lot, it would have to be brought up to code. This would create several conflicts and would lose some spaces before adding additional spaces.

The City Engineer stated option two was to add on-street parking along Eli Road. He explained this option is less favorable because the farthest stalls would be a significant distance from the shelter. He added diagonal on-street parking was also less favorable because it created unsafe conditions with cars backing out into the street.

The City Engineer stated option three was to build an additional stand-alone parking lot. He explained the lot would be built to City Code, but storm sewer would need to be extended to provide adequate drainage of the lot. He noted the lot would be west of the current lot, and some trees may have to be taken down.

Chair Miller asked if there were any advantages or disadvantages to having the parking lot turned 90 degrees from the position shown in Exhibit 1a. The City Engineer stated the orientation shown is the most efficient use of the pavement. He explained the lot could also be further west of the current lot, but it would require additional grading and would need additional drainage measures. The City Engineer noted the additional lot would need to maintain a 40-foot separation from the current lot to meet City Code. Schletty asked if Canadian Days had any needs the Commission should consider in regards to an additional parking lot. The City Engineer stated they were in favor of additional parking, and that they had requested the parking lot use a surmountable curb, but there had not been many other discussions with the Canadian Days group..

Horwath asked if 18 more parking stalls would be enough. The City Engineer explained this number was based on the pavilion's occupancy, which is 125. He assumed the number of stalls by estimating there would be 2.5 people per car. Adding the 18 spaces would be a total of 49 parking spaces including three handicapped. Horwath asked if 36 parking spaces should be added to anticipate future usage. The Community Services Manager noted it would take away green areas and add additional impervious surface. Chair Miller stated 18 parking stalls would meet the need of the shelter usage and limit the loss of trees and green areas. Schletty explained on a weekday only two or three cars are typically in the parking lot, so 18 stalls would allow enough space for weekend rentals without over parking the park. He stated he liked location one best for the additional parking lot. Councilman Fischer asked if the Commission was

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interested in taking steps to allow the parking lot to circulate within itself by creating a drive through aisle. Ray asked if the parking lot was upgraded if it would need to be brought into full compliance. The City Engineer stated if the work was only to re-stripe the parking lot or do a mill and overlay, the parking lot could stay the way it is. He explained to allow the lot to circulate within itself, six parking spaces would be lost.

The City Engineer displayed an option to update the current parking lot, saving as much existing concrete as possible. He explained the lot would work best if it ran parallel to Eli Road. This would save the greenspace near the park shelter. The City Engineer stated this would cost about 1.5 – 1.7 times more than building a stand-alone lot.

**SPOONER PARK
CONT.
PLAYGROUND**

The City Engineer stated there are two existing play containers, which are separated by a green area with two trees. He explained if the equipment was going to be changed, it may be appropriate to change the container to better fit the specifications of the new equipment. He explained there are areas within the smaller container to the north that have a grade change of more than 5%, which makes it not ADA accessible. He explained this may be a reason to change the existing container.

The first option presented by the City Engineer was to fill in the green areas to create one large play area. He noted the shape of the container may result in unusable space or dead area with the new equipment.

The second option presented by the City Engineer was to keep some of the shape of the original container, but fill the area out to more of an oval, to create more usable space within the container. He stated this would most likely cost about the same as building a new container.

The third option presented by the City Engineer was a new play container. He stated this would allow the play area to be built to the equipment chosen.

The City Engineer mentioned the play area currently has sand, which is not ADA accessible. He explained engineered wood fiber would be ADA accessible. This costs about \$3/square foot and could be maintained by Public Works Staff. The City Engineer stated poured in place rubber is also ADA accessible. This costs about \$15/square foot and would need maintenance about every 10 years, which cannot be done by Public Works Staff. The Community Services Manager stated the current slope of the containers washes the sand out during rain events. He explained he has been told wood fiber doesn't wash out like sand. The Community Services Manager noted he wasn't convinced this was true.

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The fourth option presented by the City Engineer was to keep the larger portion of the playground and add a sidewalk to make it ADA accessible. He explained the unique edge of the playground between the two containers would limit the equipment that could be put in. The fourth option removed the smaller box and added a smaller box to the east of the larger play area.

The Community Services Manager explained a completely new container could be constructed if that was deemed the best option. The City Engineer stated this would allow more options to place equipment, the grade could be made flat, and the shape of the container could be simpler.

**SPOONER PARK
CONT. TRAIL**

The City Engineer stated the path to get to the playground from the upper shelter, went down a hill that has grades approaching 10 percent which is not ADA compliant. He explained to make the park ADA accessible about 600 feet of trail would need to be reconstructed. The City Engineer noted the trail would have to be routed around the volleyball court and play area and would have a connection to the play area on the south-west side. He stated a trail would also need to be added from the new parking lot to the existing parking lot. The City Engineer explained the new lot would also need a handicapped stall. He estimated the trail reconstruction would cost about \$65,000 due to the significant amount of regrading. The City Engineer stated there would need to be more discussion, especially about the trail, with Canadian Days.

Ray suggested the smaller playground container be removed completely since it is not ADA compliant. He explained the area could be green area. The Community Services Manager stated staff was concerned that the current shape of the playground would limit the equipment that could be put in. He noted a new container could be put in, and it could be more square or rectangular.

The Community Services Manager asked The City Engineer if the trail could withstand car travel, especially for the Canadian Days car show. He stated occasional car travel should be fine considering the soil in the area is quite stable and the depth of the material used for the path.

Horwath asked if poured in place rubber could be used to create paths to the equipment, and then engineered wood fiber could fill the rest of the play area. The Community Services Manager stated it was common to have poured in place rubber in the fall zones. He also explained when using engineered wood fiber, the play containers typically have a line drawn in to show when to add more. Abruzzese noted the difference between trying to save portions of the existing playground and starting with a new container was only \$13,000. The Community Services

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Manager stated staff would prepare an image of a new container to help visualize a completely new design. Abruzzese stated she would like to take time to envision a completely new container or look at several options of new containers, at a future meeting.

Darling suggested a workshop with the Commission, City Council, and Canadian Days Committee take place. Chair Miller noted, he wanted to have a plan to begin executing by next year. Councilman Fischer suggested the Commission have a workshop to put together a few options or a recommendation to bring to the Council. He stated it would be better to have a second workshop and involve the Council at that point, once there is a consensus within the Commission. Chair Miller stated the Commission would hold a workshop at 5:30 at City Hall prior to the October meeting.

**PORTABLE
RESTROOM
SCREENING:
EAGLE SCOUT
PROJECT**

The Community Services Manager reported Hunter Huot had finished the portable restroom enclosures at Spooner Park and Pioneer Park. He stated they look very nice and are great enhancements to the City's parks. The Community Services Manager stated the total City cost of the project was \$546.98 and the LCRA donated \$700 for this project as well. The Commission thanked Hunter for his hard work on this project.

**2019 BUDGET
PLANNING**

The Community Services Manager reported staff has been reviewing the 2019 budget. He presented the prioritization list and asked the Commission to reevaluate it as needed for 2019. Horwath stated the Pioneer Park item should be increased, similar to the amount that will be budgeted for Spooner Park. Chair Miller noted the Commission hadn't been able to discuss opportunities for that park yet. He noted the Commission had discussed a splash pad or special feature could be added to Pioneer Park. Chair Miller explained more discussion needed to occur about the Pioneer Park improvements.

**OTHER
BUSINESS**

The Community Services Manager reported the new City Administrator, Chris Heineman would begin on September 10.

The Community Services Manager reported the Fall Youth and Adult Activities were just starting.

The Community Services Manager reported the exterior remodel of the Old Fire Hall had begun.

The Community Services Manager reported the new scoreboard at Pioneer Park had been installed by Public Works staff which saved on cost.

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The Community Services Manager reported the last farmers market for the season would take place on Monday, October 8.

The Community Services Manager reported senior exercise will be moved to City Hall during the Old Fire Hall remodel. The event takes place year round, every Wednesday and Friday from 1:30 – 2:30 p.m. at the Old Fire Hall.

The Community Services Manager asked the Commission to share their thoughts about the Minneapolis Parks Tour that they had attended in July. Chair Miller thanked Ron Horwath for setting up the tour. He noted it was great to see the variety available in Minneapolis. Darling stated she was happy to see so much use at the parks when they visited. Horwath stated he wanted to see some of the concepts in Minneapolis brought to Little Canada. Abruzzese stated she really liked the natural play area and thought it would be feasible in a park in Little Canada. Darling and Horwath agreed it would be a nice feature. The Community Services Managers stated it would be relatively easy for Public Works Staff to create. Horwath shared in Minneapolis they have a cribbage board made on a large log in one of their parks.

The Community Services Manager reported square dancing starts September 13, on Thursday evenings.

The Community Services Manager reported the August Movie in the Park event was well attended, and the City is looking forward to holding more events like it in the future. Ray asked if there would be a fall Movie in the Park event. The Community Services Manager stated it has been discussed, but he doesn't have anything confirmed yet.

The Community Services Manager reported the Market Place Morning Talk topic is Telling your Story on September 12th at the Bingo Hall.

Chair Miller presented his Adopt-A-Park idea. He showed a worksheet the Community Services Manager created. He asked everyone to visit their assigned park and fill out the worksheet. Chair Miller noted this wasn't meant to be a form to create maintenance requests, although it may be necessary to include that. He stated it should be used to describe what was seen and give the Commissioners another reason to come out and visit a park you may not normally spend time in. The Community Services Manager stated the form was a draft and can be changed if needed. Horwath suggested the completed forms be discussed at the October workshop meeting.

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ADJOURN

Horwath moved the meeting be adjourned

Motion seconded by Abruzzese.

Motion carried 6 – 0.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Anna Leibel
Recording Secretary