



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Approved BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

6:30 PM 1625 Northport Dr. # (Warner Park Community Recreation
Center)

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

The regular meeting of the Madison Board of Park Commissioners was held on Wednesday, October 14, 2009 at Warner Park Community Recreation Center, 1625 Northport Drive. President Barker called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. A quorum was present and the meeting was properly noticed.

Parks staff present: Kevin Briski, Steve Doniger, Marla Eddy, Eric Knepp, Kay Rutledge, Jim Weinstock, Russ Hefty, Brad Weisinger, LaVonne LaFave
City Staff present: Linda Horvath, Archie Nicolette of Planning and Development
Alder present: Satya Rhodes-Conway

Present: 6 -

Paul E. Skidmore; William W. Barker; David L. Wallner; Betty Chewning; Emanuel Scarbrough and Janet Parker

Excused: 1 -

Joseph R. Clausius

II. PARKS EMPLOYEE(S) OF THE MONTH

Superintendent Briski announced that the October Parks employees of the month are David Steinhof and Justin Eckberg. Earlier this year we lost two Parks employees and these individuals wanted to respect their legacy and their time as part of the Parks family. David and Justin built a bench out of respect for their co-workers. The loss of Bruce and Tom was a loss felt throughout the division. He distributed photos showing the bench that David and Justin built on their own time in an effort to create a masterpiece that recognized Bruce and Tom. The bench sits in the lobby of the Goodman Maintenance Facility. It is a beautiful piece of craftsmanship.

David and Justin are being recognized for their commitment, work and the donation of their own time to remember two good guys who worked for the Division.

Parker commented that the bench is beautiful and it is a very classy memorial.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Wallner/Skidmore to approve the Minutes of the

September 9, 2009 regular meeting of the Park Commission. MOTION
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Pat Woicek addressed the Commission regarding her concerns about the new Cherokee Marsh boardwalk. She has served as a naturalist at Cherokee Marsh for 38 years, teaching wetland values. Hefty reported that the boardwalk was constructed as directed by the Park Commission.

Jack Hurst spoke about the lagoons in the Warner Park Neighborhood Plan. The reference to a canoe area was not removed. He is concerned about the water quality and is also representing the Yahara Fishing Club.

PUBLIC HEARING - 6:45 p.m.

A motion was made by Skidmore/Scarborough to declare the public hearing on Diseased and Dead Elms and Oaks on Private Property, 2009 Requiring Condemnation open. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

There being no speakers, Wallner/Skidmore moved to declare the public hearing closed.

A motion was made by Wallner/Scarborough to declare the attached list, as amended, of diseased and dead elms and oaks a public nuisance by the Board of Park Commissioners according to City of Madison General Ordinance 23.40 (4)(B) and recommend approval of the condemnation and to direct the City Forester to issue removal notices. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

A motion was made by Skidmore/Parker to take item VIII. B. out of order. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. A motion was made to take item VII A. out of order prior to item VIII. B. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

COMMUNICATIONS

Request from Kris Riley of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society requesting permission to hold their 22nd Walk MS in Wisconsin in Warner Park on May 2, 2010.

Registered Speaker:
Kris Riley – available for questions in support

A motion was made by Scarborough/Wallner to approve the request from Kris Riley of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society requesting permission to hold their 22nd Walk MS in Wisconsin in Warner Park on May 2, 2010 subject to sponsor's compliance with the recommendations set forth by the Parks Division. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

15282

Adopting the Northport-Warner Park-Sherman Neighborhood Plan as a supplement to the City of Madison Comprehensive Plan.

Nicolette of the Planning Department commented that they appreciated all of the concerns about wildlife and natural habitat that were brought up last month. They have tried to integrate those comments into the Neighborhood Plan that has been in the planning stage for over two years. They are also interested in hearing from the Park Commission on their recommendations for this Neighborhood Plan. President Barker thanked staff for all of the work that was done this past month to address the issues the Park Commission heard in September.

Registered Speakers:

Paul Noeldner in support

Jim Carrier Oppose Warner Park portion of plan

Hedwig Jacobson Oppose Warner Park portion of plan

Trish O’Kane Oppose Warner Park portion of plan

Judy Woelfel – not speaking Oppose Warner Park portion of plan

Annie Stewart – not present Trish O’Kane read letter Oppose Warner Park portion of plan

Justin Kramer – not speaking Oppose Warner Park portion of plan

Mary Anglim Oppose Warner Park portion of plan

Carrie Kilman Oppose Warner Park portion of plan

Sandy Rezvani Oppose Warner Park portion of plan

Marie Jacobson Oppose Warner Park portion of plan

Jack Hurst – spoke earlier under Public Comments Oppose Warner Park portion of plan

Superintendent Briski stated he made note of the various ideas regarding mowing, managed meadows, the hedges and the lagoon. He also commented that there are differences between a master plan and a neighborhood plan, such as the plan before the Commission this evening. The neighborhood plan is a city Planning effort that included much public input. The items in this neighborhood plan contain suggestions for consideration, not necessarily “do that” statements, and even when the plan is adopted it doesn’t mean those suggestions will happen. Any planning opportunities that exist at this park must be submitted to and approved by the Park Commission before they will actually occur. Specific site designs, plans and recommendations must be brought before the Park Commission for approval. The Parks Division has been talking about the master planning process for Warner Park. It is time to review and update this master plan. During that process there will be many opportunities for public input and this Board takes that process very seriously.

Rutledge, Planning and Development Manager, added that the Parks master planning process also goes through a public planning process that would involve the community and neighborhoods talking about public uses in the park. Information that has been heard now as well as information from the neighborhood plan would be used, along with working with the community on what changes would be proposed in the future.

Alder Rhodes Conway then addressed the Park Commission, asking them to approve the Plan with potential modifications, such as the removal of item j. on page 39 as well as potentially removing e, f and/or g. There has been a tremendous amount of work done and she feels comfortable with the Park Commission taking items out portions of the park pieces of the plan. She also

suggested that the Commission not spend a lot of time trying to put in additions because there is more to be said about Warner Park than what is in the plan.

It is important to have a ped and bike connection that goes around Warner Park but it doesn't have to be totally on parkland. It is possible to make safe ways to cross streets and walk on sidewalks and bike on streets. Connections should go around the park and into the neighborhoods. The language could be modified but keep the intent in the plan.

A discussion about biodiversity surveys and environmental education in Warner Park would also be valuable. It is possible that a display could be set up in the Community Recreation Center.

She continued with challenges to the citizens who spoke about the plan. 1) Hold the Parks Division accountable to undertake a Master Plan update for Warner Park and that the citizens engage fully in it from the beginning. Many good ideas have been brought forward that would strengthen an update. The current plan is old enough that many things could change, i.e. a pool, expanding the Center, what to do with the baseball stadium. Any master planning process would address all of those items at the same time, not as isolated issues. If all of the public buildings would increase, so would the need for parking. The planning process should be participatory with the entire city because this is a regional park.

2) Reach out to neighbors on the other side of the park. Both the neighborhood and the kids in those neighborhoods don't have the same access to the park and you can help them learn why Warner is such a great resource with trees, meadows, birds and other wildlife.

3) Please get involved in your neighborhood association and the Northside Planning Council.

The Planning Department has indicated they will contact the various environmental groups that have spoken about this plan whenever they do another neighborhood plan in the future.

A Parks Master Plan will protect all of the assets in the park.

Commissioners inquired whether the entire park was an off leash dog park and were informed that dogs are allowed on leash on the pathways leading to the off leash dog exercise area. They are not allowed off leash in any other area of the park nor are they allowed in other areas of the park off the pathways.

Commissioners acknowledged that this is a regional park and questioned whether it should be for wildlife only, for only humans or do we want it to incorporate both. If we want a park to be used for both, a plan that studies the impacts for these actions needs to occur.

A motion was made by Wallner/Skidmore to accept the proposed revisions and adopt Resolution ID#15282 adopting the Northport-Warner Park-Sherman Neighborhood Plan as a supplement to the City of Madison Comprehensive Plan.

The revised language in the plan goes a long way to meeting the concerns that were heard last month. All of the items that impact the park will come back to the Commission prior to any implementation such as paddle boats or issues on mowing. The Commissioners do want to avoid trying to micro-manage the plan. Members recommended that the Master Plan process unfold and that the issues that have been brought up at the September and October Park Commission meetings will be addressed in that process. They will take all of the comments heard very seriously.

A motion was made by Chewning/Skidmore, as a friendly amendment, that paragraph j on page 39 be deleted from the Plan. Wallner accepted this as friendly. Members agreed that activity in the lagoon is a bad idea.

Parker moved that paragraphs d, e and f on page 38 also be stricken. Wallner did not accept this as friendly, nor was a second to the motion received. Members believe the process has been very good and details need to be worked out in the Master Plan. Warner Park is a very special resource and it is on a path to update its Master Plan. It will be tweaked again and again. Items d, e, f and g will be reviewed in the master planning process and will also be brought back to the Park Commission for comment and approval. It was also noted that after the Plan is approved by the Common Council, it will need to come back to the Parks Division and Park Commission before any portion of the plan relating to Warner Park could be implemented.

A brief statement regarding dogs in parks and the need for additional education on what is and isn't allowed in dog parks as well as where dogs are allowed may be in order.

Parker went back to the statements contained in d, e and f. She believes these are clear directions on what Parks should start implementing and that Parks doesn't have to wait until the Master Plan is completed. They are issues she heard people speak strongly against.

President Barker again stated that an update to the Master Plan for the park will be completed. He agrees with taking out "j" in the neighborhood plan. He also stated this neighborhood plan does not obligate Parks to do any of the items identified in that plan. The balance of the items will be addressed in the Master Plan review. He apologized to citizens who felt they have been bypassed in the neighborhood planning process which was conducted by the Planning Department. He went on to thank city staff for being responsive to his request to revise the plan based on comments made in September. One of the hardest things that the Park Commission deals with is the balance between recreation, conservation and preservation.

Members noted there were portion of the statements contained in d, e and f that Parks may want left in. They were not comfortable with cutting out sentences. In response to a question of whether Parks would move forward on d, e and f without the updated Master Plan, Superintendent Briski explained to the Commissioners that any work/projects in Warner Park would come to the Park Commission first for approval. Parks does manage the invasive species but any change to the Master Plan would come to the Park Commission. He learned this evening there are many friends who would provide in the expertise for the conservation and preservation issues. There are also many experts at the University that could help.

President Barker then interjected that he attended a walk with the Friends of Cherokee Marsh and gained a new appreciation for Russ Hefty's natural history knowledge of birds and snakes.

Parker again went back to d, e and f. She moved to strike the first sentence of d, leave in the reference to the playground area and strike the sidewalk portion of e, and strike all of f. The motion was seconded by Chewning. It was not accepted as a friendly amendment. President Barker stated he doesn't want to tie the conservation park staff's hands by not allowing removal of invasives such as buckthorn, box elder and honeysuckle and doesn't support removing d or f.

It was clarified that a vote on Parker's amendment would take place before the main motion because the seconder of the main motion did not accept the amendment as friendly and felt it was micro-management at its worst. The city has policies regarding the removal of invasive material. If this is removed, does it say that someone can come in and change the policy whenever they feel like it? This is not a master plan, it's a neighborhood plan, and there is a lot of other work that needs to go into this before its fully vetted and it will need to be brought back to the Park Commission for approval. He also cautioned the members to remember there were hundreds of people who weighed in on this plan who are not present and didn't object to the plan, in addition to the dozen or so people at this meeting. He then called the question on the amendment.

Roll Call Vote: Parker, Chewning and Wallner Aye. Scarbrough, Skidmore and Barker no. Motion failed.

Barker originally stated he didn't vote unless it was a tie and was informed that he could vote on any issue if he so desired.

The original motion was called. A motion was made by Wallner/Skidmore to accept the proposed revisions and adopt Resolution ID#15282 adopting the Northport-Warner Park-Sherman Neighborhood Plan as a supplement to the City of Madison Comprehensive Plan and that paragraph j on page 39 be deleted from the Plan. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

A motion was made by Wallner, seconded by Skidmore, to Return to Lead with the Following Recommendation(s). The motion passed by voice vote/other.

A recess was then taken. Returning to the meeting, roll was taken:
Members present: Bill Barker., Betty Chewning, Janet Parker, Emanuel Scarbrough, Ald. Paul Skidmore, and David Wallner
Member excused: Ald. Joe Clausius

V. REPORTS

A. Habitat Stewardship Subcommittee meeting of May 12, 2009

A motion was made by Wallner/Skidmore to accept the minutes of the Habitat Stewardship Subcommittee meeting of May 12, 2009. MOTION CARRIED

UNANIMOUSLY. A motion was made by Wallner/Chewning to approve the Action Report from the Habitat Stewardship meeting of September 8, 2009 approving a pilot project for Urban Fruit Forest planning and approving the submission of an Application for NAWCA (North American Wetland Conservation Act) grant to conduct restoration activities in East Marsh of Cherokee Marsh that was acquired in 2008. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Members were intrigued about the fruit forest and inquired where it would be located. City Forester Eddy reported that there has been no final determination on where the orchards will be placed. It is in the pilot stage and there will be additional meetings regarding placement. A DNR grant was applied for, but not funded. The Dane County Tree Board did provide some community groundwork funding to look into pilot areas. The concept may work at Quann Park where there is a community garden and living fence already. She also wants to gather input from the Parks Planning Section. Superintendent Briski then expressed his support of this concept. He suggested that trees might easily be planted in the managed meadow areas.

B. Long Range Planning Subcommittee meeting of July 20, 2009

A motion was made by Wallner/Skidmore to approve the minutes of the Long Range Planning Subcommittee meeting of July 20, 2009. A motion was made by Wallner/Skidmore to approve the Action Report from the Long Range Planning meeting of September 29, 2009 approving revisions to Naming Policy as amended by striking the words "in the form of donated property or donated money or both for Public Park purposes only" in #3 of the Guidelines. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Requests or proposals for a specific name are now submitted to the Parks Superintendent instead of the Park Commission so as to serve as a clearing house to bring those requests to the Park Commission. At #4, it now says "in memoriam" and the question was whether an individual needed to be deceased. It was the Committee's recommendation and is consistent with most any designation. President Barker wanted to make sure that people could be honored prior to their demise, and that is covered under guideline #3.

C. Olbrich Botanical Society Minutes of August 18, 2009

A motion was made by Wallner/Skidmore to accept the Minutes of the August 18, 2009 meeting of the Olbrich Botanical Society. MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

D. President of the Park Commission

President Barker reported this past month has been amazing as he attended lots of parks related events and had the opportunity to thank donors for their contributions. He has had the opportunity to see Parks staff in operation and watch the public process. He attended the Harry Whitehorse Effigy Tree Memorial rededication, the Olbrich Circle of Friends Thank You event, two public meetings about trees ~ threats to the Urban Forest and the Orton Park

trees killed during street construction; the Friends of Cherokee Marsh fall color walk and the Eastside Dog Park Meeting. He is honored to work with such a great Parks staff. Russ Hefty's knowledge of natural history is very impressive. Madison's Parks would not be what they are without great Parks staff that are passionate about their work.

The street tree issue has been referred to the November meeting of the Habitat Stewardship Subcommittee. Parker confirmed that it will be discussed at the next Habitat Stewardship meeting and that it may be necessary to include punitive damage assessments to contractors in their contract documents. Superintendent Briski added that he has gathered a focus staff to address this issue with Engineering and to create a unified plan. Staff are researching what other communities do.

E. Superintendent of Parks

Written Report of Supervisor's Activities

A motion was made by Skidmore/Wallner to accept the written report of supervisor's activities. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Informational Items

2010 Capital and Operating Budget Submittals

The original submittals have gotten a great reception and the Board of Estimates and Mayor were impressed with the level of detail in the submittals. Staff is creating a systematic planning document for 2010. The Capital projects went forward as presented. Parks did get funding for gypsy moth and received \$100,000 for purchased services to help reflect actual amounts on that line item. There is an amendment circulating to put the ice skating rinks back in the budget and to create a pilot program for ice maintenance at Westmorland with an ad hoc ice committee similar to the arrangement at Wexford. Funding is also in place for the regional ice rinks facilities at Tenney, Elver and Vilas.

The amendment for James Madison did not pass but may come back later. The funds for Central Park remain.

Madison Parks Newsletter

This month's newsletter talks about International Exchange Program Intern, Yang Qijing "Alex", who spent time with various Parks staff. Alex is a member of a work study program sponsored by the UW Law School. She is the Deputy Director of Development of Green and City Appearance in the Minhang District of Shanghai in the People's Government of China. Alex taught us a lot about culture, relationships and politics. This international exchange of ideas was a very enlightening experience for everyone. She was really impressed with our Division.

Recycling in Parks Update

This program got off to a slow start as people got used to using the green recycling bins but was overall very successful. More than 2 tons of recycled materials were collected over the summer. Funding has been provided to expand the program next year.

Parks Watch update

This program began last year and has fostered relationship with the Police Department. A second training was held this year and 19 individuals/neighborhood association representatives attended. It is incorporated with the neighborhood watch program under the auspices of the Police Department.

Mall Concourse Special Charges

This is an annual Resolution regarding special charges to property owners on State Street and it is just to make you aware of it since Parks is in charge of the Mall Concourse maintenance.

Superintendent Briski introduced Eric Knepp our Administrative Services and Financial Manager. He has worked for the city for 4 years in the Comptroller's office and has been with Parks approximately 3 months. He has a degree in Public Administration from Indiana.

Olin-Turville Park Issues

Parks has been working with the Madison Police Department and the Neighborhood Watch program for neighborhoods surrounding the park. There have been many conversations and he has met them on site and he was embarrassed with what he saw. The Police have submitted a report on their findings of the activities in the park. There are ongoing problems with illicit and illegal activities there. Police have been increasing patrols and increasing pressure in a collaborative effort with the neighbors who also want to take back the park.

There are a number of recommendations to be reviewed and studied. One was the introduction of dogs on leash through the trails that occurred by special permission from the Superintendent for a one month trial period that ends on October 18. This was granted by the Superintendent based on the Ordinance. Any changes in that direction will be brought to the Park Commission. He has also communicated this proposal with the Alders and they were in agreement with the trial use of dogs on leash there. The police force has been spending a huge amount of time in that park.

Concern was mentioned about mountain bikes on the trails as reported in the Isthmus. That activity was not endorsed by the Parks Division and would not be considered without Park Commission approval.

Police are very committed to cleaning up the activities in this park. On their own time they have put together a volunteer group who are going in and removing invasive species and downed limbs in conjunction with our Conservation crew.

Skidmore commented that this park has been a problem for many years. Those activities have caused many events and camps to move away from that park. Police have made efforts through the years to curb these illicit activities without much success. This is beyond a Park Commission issue, it is a regional issue.

Registered Speaker:

Ron Shutvet – opposes allowing dogs and cross country bikes in park

President Barker stated that before anything permanent is done and after this

trial is over, this will not happen again.

COMMUNICATIONS, Continued

B. Proposed Park Fees for 2010

A motion was made and seconded by Skidmore/Scarborough to approve the park fees for 2010 as presented in the packet. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- C. [16110](#) Authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute an amendment to the lease with Community Action Coalition of South Central Wisconsin, Inc. allowing for the expansion of the community gardens site located within Reindahl Park at 1818 Portage Road.

A motion was made by Chewning, seconded by Scarborough, to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER.** The motion passed by voice vote/other.

A motion was made by Scarborough/Chewning to approve Resolution ID#16110 Authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute an amendment to the lease with Community Action Coalition of South Central Wisconsin, Inc. allowing for the expansion of the community gardens site located within Reindahl Park at 1818 Portage Road. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

- A. [15784](#) **SUBSTITUTE** Authorizing the execution of an Utility Easement to Madison Gas and Electric Company for underground electrical service to serve a new Traffic Engineering Parks Division storage facility at 15 Van Deusen Street.

This Resolution was **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER**

It was noted this is on park property and therefore needs approval. A motion was made and seconded by Skidmore/Wallner to approve **SUBSTITUTE** Resolution ID#15784 Authorizing the execution of a Utility Easement to Madison Gas and Electric Company for underground electrical service to serve a new Traffic Engineering Parks Division storage facility at 15 Van Deusen Street. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

IX. ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Skidmore/Wallner the meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.