



CARVER COUNTY PARKS

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Division of Public Works

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Carver County Park Commission Regular Meeting

Carver County Public Works Headquarters
11360 Hwy 212 West, Cologne, MN 55322

Wednesday, May 13, 2009

6:00 P.M.

Depart for Tour of the Dakota Rail Corridor
Return to Public Works Headquarters Approximately 8:00 p.m.

Agenda

- 1) Call Regular Meeting to Order (8:00 p.m.)
- 2) Roll Call (8:00 p.m.)
- 3) Approval of the April 8, 2009 Regular Meeting Minutes (8:01 p.m.)
- 4) Additions or Deletions to the Agenda (8:01 p.m.)
- 5) Approval of Agenda (8:02 p.m.)
- 6) Commissioner Liaison Report (8:03p.m.)
- 7) Open to the Public (8:05 p.m.)
- 8) Old Business (8:15 p.m.)
 - a. Comprehensive Plan
 - i. Equestrian Trails
- 9) Staff Reports (8:30 p.m.)
 - a. 2009 Budget Update (Marty)
 - b. Events, Activities, (Lenny)
 - c. Legislative - Parks Funding (Marty)
 - d. Regional Park Foundation Update (Marty)
- 10) Commission Member Reports (8:45 p.m.)
- 11) Set Next Meeting Date (8:50 p.m.)
 - a. Summer Park Tour Location
- 12) Adjourn Meeting (9:00 p.m.)

Please note if a Commission Member cannot attend the meeting, please call the Park Office at 466 – 5250.

Draft Minutes

April 8th, 2009 Regular Meeting

- Members Present:** Thomas Hermann, Neil Wingert, Jeff Conkling, Myron Karki, Jerald Moja
- Staff Present:** Marty Walsh, Lenny Klevan Schmitz, Bill Weckman, Tim Lynch
- Public Present:** Becky Smith, Hala Scott, Carol Dunsmore, Rayma Smith, Mary Novakowski, JP Meyer, Leslie O'Hallora
- CALL TO ORDER -** Wingert called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.
- MINUTES -** Moja motioned to approve the March minutes. Karki seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.
- AGENDA-** Moja motioned to approve the agenda. Karki seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.
- LIAISON REPORT-** Commissioner Lynch informed the Park Commission that at the Tuesday April 7th Board meeting there was a lengthy discussion about lifeguard services for Lake Waconia Regional Park and Lake Minnewashta Regional Park. After some discussion and a failed motion, it was decided by the Board to have staff explore options to reduce the contract amount by \$10,000-\$12,000 for this service.
- Walsh noted that staff have contacted the service provider and are looking into ways to meet this budget reduction. A couple of potential solutions include reducing the lifeguard season by a week in June and week in August, reducing the number of hours a day guards are on duty or a combination of the two.
- OPEN TO THE PUBLIC-**
- Mary Novakowski of Bloomington suggested some clarification to the motion on the table about equestrian use along the Dakota Rail Trail. Mary indicated that they have an interest in seeing a second trail in the 100' Right Of way and not in the 16' trail corridor.
- Carol Dunsmore of Chanhassen expressed her concern that the park commission may consider the removal of the motion/language on the table from the February Park Commission Meeting.
- Park Commissioner Moja asked those in attendance from the horse community if they are opposed to the development of the Dakota Rail Trail within the 16' wide trail corridor. Those in attendance indicated they are not opposed to the development but would like to see an additional equestrian trail added within the 100' right of way for the Dakota Rail Trail.
- Moja reiterated what was said by the group to make sure he understood that the group is not in opposition of the trail but interested in a separate trail in the future for equestrian use. Members present agreed this is what they are truly interested in.

OLD BUSINESS

a. Comprehensive Plan – Equestrian Trails

Walsh explained to the park commission and members of the public the types of plans the County has and outlined their purpose so all would have a better understanding of these documents.

Walsh explained the following:

- Draft Comprehensive plan as it pertains to parks and trails is a simple and concise document about mainly policies and key issues but **does not** include specifics about future park and trail locations and approved activities within these facilities.
- Draft Parks System Plan – Provides much greater detail than the comprehensive plan. Elements included in this document include information about trends as they relate to parks, trails and recreation; vision for the department; concepts and information about building the parks and trails system, details about natural resources, connecting to other park and trail systems, programs and services which are or could be part of the department and means to implement the plan.
- Park or Trail Master plan – This document is specific to a park or trail and defines the park boundary or the trail location. Master plans include an extensive public process which helps in determining what activities and facilities are appropriate for the park or trail.

Walsh continued and explained the process involved with developing the Dakota Trail Master Plan including what activities were and were not included as appropriate activities in the plan.

Walsh indicated that there would be a need to separate incompatible uses like walking, biking, running from activities like ATV's, equestrian traffic and snowmobiling.

It was further noted that an expansion to the Dakota Rail Regional trail to include an additional trail would require a Master Plan amendment. An amendment would be needed in order to be eligible for Metropolitan Regional Parks and Trails Funding. As a part of a master plan amendment, another public process would need to take place. If the trail was locally or privately funded the master plan would not need to be amended but it still would require some public process.

Commissioner Karki wanted to clarify that at this time adding a parallel trail would be a separate project from the paved project planned for construction in 2010. Walsh noted that this is correct and with a second trail the impacts would need to be reviewed and studied.

Chair Wingert asked if this should be tabled to allow for time for someone from the park commission to meet with staff and formulate language to be passed out before the May meeting and for action to be taken at that time to ensure the language is well thought out including which document, if any, it should be placed in and where in that document it is appropriate.

Commissioner Conkling noted he felt this was fair and reiterated that the public present at the meeting are in favor of the planned trail development. He also noted he would be willing to work with staff to formulate a recommendation for the May meeting.

Walsh commented that the 2030 comprehensive plan and the Parks Systems Plans are in draft form and language can still be added to these documents if that is where it is best suited. Adding language to the Dakota Trail Master Plan would require an amendment to the plan and would need to involve a public process.

Commissioner Moja asked if this should be resolved before May since all parties seem to have a better understanding of the documents and the true concern of the equestrian community. All decided it could wait until May.

Carol Dunsmore from Chanhassen asked if it would be possible to walk the Dakota corridor with members of the staff and park commission before the next meeting. Walsh indicated that the corridor is not open to the public and is posted as no trespassing due to safety concerns so this should not take place.

DISCUSSION

Changes to the Comprehensive Plan -

Walsh informed the park commission that the County Board has provided staff with direction to remove information and language pertaining to the following areas from the Comprehensive Plan:

- Alternative Track Development
- Remove all reference to the parks systems plan in the comprehensive plan making the two documents separate.
- Remove conservation corridors from the plan and maps and language about condemnation from the comprehensive plan.

Commissioner Conkling asked if this included language about incentive programs for landowners for potential additional building credits. Walsh responded noting that ALL language will be removed for alternative development including incentive programs.

STAFF REPORTS -

a. Ballroom Service Provider Update

Walsh announced that the agreement has been signed for the old ballroom facility. He also noted that the facility will now be called the Lake Waconia Event Center. Staff and Lancer catering are working to get building and code issues resolved and updated. The health department is reviewing Lancer operation plan.

b. 2009 Budget Update

Walsh stated that the County Board has decided to reduce lifeguard services as a budget savings, but he also reported that staff needs to make additional cuts to the budget by June 9th for 2009.

c. Events, Activities, Campground Software Demonstration

Klevan Schmitz noted that the Maple Syrup open house on March 21st was very well attended...over 150 people would be a close estimate. He also informed the Park Commission about the following events:

- Earth/Arbor Day event on Saturday April 25th.
- Bird Clinic on May 9th at the Carver Rapids Unit of the MVNWR
- Campground Opens May 8th
- Minnewashta Mutt Strut Event is May 30th from 11-3.

d. Legislative - Park Funding

Walsh reported that House File 1493 is being considered indicating how the Legacy Funding is to be appropriated. Based on this bill Carver county would receive \$359,000 biannually.

Also the based on the 2010/2011 CIP process we could receive up to \$423,000.

Lastly legislation has been introduced to maintain Operations and maintenance funding at the same level (9%) as the last biennium. Walsh does not think this will hold true due to the tough times.

e. Regional Park Foundation

Walsh reported that the 10 implementing agencies the three non-profits and Peter Bell met to review the bylaws for the Foundation and that the Foundation is still seeking an Executive Director.

COMMISSION MEMBER REPORTS –

Karki noted that the Waconia Chamber of Commerce will be having their semiannual Home and Business fair on April 18th and over 70 businesses are signed up.

Conkling noted he attended the Maple Syrup event on March 21st and agreed it was a huge success and it was great to see people using the park.

NEXT MEETING – May 13th – Tour of the Dakota Trail Corridor (tentative), 6:30 p.m. meet at Lake Waconia Regional Park?

Staff will put together a schedule for tours for the summer.

ADJOURN -

Hermann motioned and Karki seconded to adjourn. Motion was approved 5-0 to adjourn at 8:45 p.m.



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DIRECTORS REPORT

May 13, 2009

PARK COMMISSION MEETING

To: Members of the Park Commission
From: Martin Walsh, Parks Director
CC: Bill Weckman, Interim County Engineer
Tim Lynch, County Commissioner
Date: 5/11/2009
Re: April 13 , 2009 Park Commission Meeting

This report continues the discussion about language in planning documents for a horse trail in the former Dakota Railroad Corridor.

Commissioner Jeff Conklin and I discussed where to place appropriate language concerning a possible horse trail to be located within the former Dakota Railroad corridor. Given the equestrian communities specific request for language pertaining to the Dakota Rail Regional Trail for a horse trail, this request is most appropriately positioned in the Draft Park Systems Plan at this time. As was reviewed during the April 8, 2009 Park Commission Meeting, the Draft Parks Trails and Open Space Comprehensive Plan is policy oriented and not site specific. Park facilities are not specifically discussed in this plan. The mentioning of one facility in the Draft Comprehensive Plan would be out of sorts and inconsistent with the rest of the plan.

The Park Commission at its January 14, 2007 meeting reviewed the below language as a part of the Park Systems Plan Trails and Bikeways Plan. I have made some additional language changes as indicated below.

“Currently, trails for horseback riding are provided in Carver Park Reserve, which is managed by Three Rivers Park District. At this time, there are no designated or anticipated locations for equestrian trails within any of the existing regional parks within Carver County (since these land units are not likely to be large enough to develop long enough trail loops). The trail system plan does, however, leave open the option to consider developing an equestrian trail within a select and limited number of railroad corridors or conservation corridors. It is desirable but not a requirement that future equestrian trails

connect with Carver Park Reserve and/or state and federal lands where equestrian trails are provided. Final determination on developing equestrian trails in these corridors would be based on several key factors, including (at a minimum): 1) clearly documented demand; 2) adequate conservation corridor width/condition to limit impact of trail development on natural systems; and 3) approval by administering agencies of lands that the equestrian trails would connect to (i.e., USFWS, MN DNR, and Three Rivers Park District, as appropriate)."

The desire by the equestrian community to have more specific language pertaining to establishing a horse trail within the Dakota Rail Regional Trail corridor is best handled through a master plan amendment. A trail master plan will provide the detail on types of use and provide direction on where the use is in relation to other trail facilities, properties, constraints in the corridor, and provide design concepts to construct a equestrian trail.

Recommendation

Staff and Park Commission agree that equestrian use is a desired activity within Carver County and the Carver County Regional Parks, Open Space and Trail System. The Park Commission could recommend to the County Board that a subcommittee of the Parks Commission meet with members of the public to develop criteria which would help to identify possible future areas for equestrian trails. This information could be used to help guide the selection of new parks, trails or amend an existing park and trail master plan. Future areas are to include but not be limited to the former Dakota Rail Line corridor.

The above italics language for horse trails is proposed as the clarifying language for equestrian use and would be included in the Draft Park Systems Plan.