

**BELLE PLAINE PARK BOARD
REGULAR SESSION
APRIL 13, 2010**

Park Tour

The Park Board met at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 13, 2010 at Founders Memorial Park. Present were Chair Chris Kehr and Commissioners Kelly Norton, Kevin Crooks, Dan Gardner, Alternate Launa Olson, and Council liaison Cary Coop. Also present was Assistant Planner Andy Vilella. Mayor Tim Lies was present to conduct the annual Arbor Day Tree Planting Ceremony at Founders Memorial Park. The Commissioners toured the Episcopalian Church of the Transfiguration and the grounds. It was noted that a sink area would benefit from fill and it was noted that a tree needed trimming. Commissioner Crooks noted that it is appropriate for the City to provide lighting of the U.S. flag that is located in Founders Memorial Park. Staff to advise the Public Works Department accordingly.

The Commissioners then traveled to Chatfield Park. They recommended the swing set be painted, more mulch added to the playground area, and more sand/pebbles added under the slides and swings.

At Court Square, the Commissioners viewed the retaining wall and noted the MnDOT construction project planned for later this year will affect the location of the Court Square park sign. The horse shoe stands may be affected as well. The handicap latch is in need of repair. The Commissioners suggested that some of the poles on the playground equipment be re-painted.

The Commissioners then traveled to Fountain Park. It was noted that some of structures are in need of paint.

The Commissioners then met at the Council Chambers, Government Center, to conduct their meeting.

1. CALL TO ORDER. 1.1. Roll Call.

The Belle Plaine Park Board met in Regular Session on Tuesday, April 13, 2010 in the Government Center at 218 North Meridian Street, Belle Plaine, Minnesota. Chair Chris Kehr called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. with Commissioners Dan Gardner, Kevin Crooks, Kelly Norton and Alternate Launa Olson present. Commissioner Rachel Kelm was not present. Also present were Council liaisons Cary Coop and Tim O'Laughlin, and Assistant Planner Andy Vilella.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

MOTION by Kehr, second by Coop, to approve the agenda as presented. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES. 3.1. Regular Session Minutes of March 9, 2010.

MOTION by Gardner, second by Coop, to approve the Regular Session Minutes of March 9, 2010. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

4. BUSINESS.

4.1. 2010 MN HWY 25 Retaining Wall Project.

Chair Kehr referenced a memo dated April 13, 2010 from Assistant Planner Vilella the Highway 25 retaining wall project.

Assistant Planner Vilella explained that at the April Park Board meeting local resident Gerry Meyer was in attendance to express his concern over the safety of park users on the east border of Court Square. As

staff has explained in past discussions, MnDOT has proposed plans to remove the existing retaining wall on the west side of MN HWY 25 (Walnut Street) and grade the area to a more gradual slope. City Engineer, Joe Duncan has indicated MnDOT is proposing a 5:1 slope (20%) on the east border of the park where the retaining wall is currently located. It is approximately the same as the current slope in the northeast corner of the park. Al Fahey, Public Works Superintendent has indicated it will be possible to add shrubs along the east border of Court Square after the retaining wall has been removed.

The Commissioners had visited Court Square earlier this evening as part of their park tour. Coop requested that staff contact MnDOT regarding the possibility of preserving the large oak tree that is located in the area slated to be graded. Crooks commented that the Park Board should review the best location of the Court Square park sign after its removal for the retaining wall project.

4.2. Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP).

Chair Kehr referenced a memo dated April 13, 2010 from Assistant Planner Villella regarding the Statewide Health Improvement Program.

Assistant Planner Villella explained that the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) is part of Minnesota's 2008 health reform law. It was created to help Minnesotans lead longer, healthier lives by preventing the chronic disease risk factors of tobacco use and exposure, poor nutrition and physical inactivity. There is a Carver-Scott County partnership which has been granted funding to disperse among the municipalities in both counties. Staff has met with representatives to discuss Belle Plaine's involvement with the program. The program requires no cost to the City. The first step will be to complete an survey so an assessment may be conducted to identify existing policies that promote non-motorized transportation and active living. After the assessment the City will receive an action plan outlining opportunities for walking, biking and access to community recreation facilities. Finally the City will be given funding to implement portions of the action plan. Statewide Health Improvement Program information may found at the www.carverscottship.org.

The Commissioners supported the project and recommended staff proceed with participation.

4.3. Roberts Creek Preserve.

Assistant Planner Villella explained that the Roberts Creek Preserve development encompasses two separated outlots dedicated as parkland. A concept plan has been created with a playground and picnic area on the smaller of the two outlots. The larger lot hasn't been developed yet. It still has its original landscape with the creek, prairie grasses and wooded hills. There hasn't been a plan created for the larger outlot which is accessible from Oakcrest Trail on the southwest border of the City. Staff suspects there may have been trespassing activity on the larger outlot. It appears someone has been dumping yard waste and possibly even removing trees from the property. The old gate located on the west side of the larger outlot near the primary entrance is not in working condition and there is no deterrent for trespassers. This might be providing a place for dumping of yard waste and trash without proper identification or security. It may be beneficial to add fencing and/or signage on the west side of the property to help identify the City property.

Coop suggested that the Public Works Department install a cable across the driveway access to prevent vehicles from entering the preserve area. It was noted that 4-wheel vehicles have also been entering the site. Coop said a long-term plan may include fencing and a gate. Norton suggested that staff inform the local police department so that they may closely watch the area.

It was the consensus of the Park Board to recommend that Public Works Department install a cable across the driveway access, research the planting of thorn bushes, request frequent patrol by the Belle Plaine Police Department, and direct staff to obtain pricing for fence and gate for the Robert Creek Preserve ravine area.

4.4. Beautification Committee Appointee.

Chair Kehr referenced a memo dated April 13, 2010 from Assistant Planner Villella regarding the Beautification Committee.

Assistant Planner Villella explained that the City Council has created a Beatification Committee (ad hoc) to discuss the request from the Chamber of Commerce to continue beatification efforts they have previously provided to the community. This includes items such as planters, banners, Christmas decorations, tree lights, trash receptacles, a majority of which occurs in the downtown business area. The committee will consist of representatives from the following: Economic Development Association (EDA), City Council, Park Board, Design Committee, Chamber of Commerce and Public Works Committee. The Beatification Committee will discuss a meeting schedule after all of the commissions have appointed a representative to the committee. The committee will ultimately provide the City Council with a recommendation as to which of the Chamber of Commerce's requests for beatification activities shall be funded by the City. Once this has been determined, the Beautification Committee will be dissolved.

Launa Olson volunteered to join the Beautification Committee.

MOTION by Gardner, second by Kehr, to recommend the City Council appoint Alternate Launa Olson as a member of the Beautification Committee. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

4.5. Community Garden.

Chair Kehr referenced a memo dated April 13, 2010 from Assistant Planner Villella regarding a community garden.

Assistant Planner Villella explained that staff has received inquiries regarding community gardens in Belle Plaine. The suggested locations for a community garden are in Century Park and a vacant lot in the Provence on the River development.

The Commissioners discussed the concept of a community garden and requested for information from other cities, such as costs and responsibilities of the city and the participants. Staff will research other cities and report back at the next meeting.

4.6. Riverview Access Easement.

Chair Kehr referenced a memo dated April 13, 2010 from Assistant Planner Villella regarding the Riverview Park access easement.

Assistant Planner Villella explained that at the April 5, 2010 City Council meeting, City Council approved the access easement provided by Quest Development for the City to access Riverview Park. The duration of the easement automatically expires on the earlier of the following: installation of a publicly dedicated street providing access to the park property; approval from Quest Development of a final plat, or five (5) years from the effective date of this easement. Staff has scheduled a meeting with Applied Ecological Services (A.E.S.) to arrange a timeline for the prairie grass planting and maintenance. Staff is proposing the prairie grasses be planted yet this spring or summer. Once the prairie grasses are planted, A.E.S. will work with the City Public Works Department to perform maintenance until the grasses have become established. Riverview Park will not be opened to the public until a street has been constructed to the park.

4.7. Portable Sanitation Inventory.

Chair Kehr referenced a memo dated April 13, 2010 from Assistant Planner Villella regarding portable sanitation.

Assistant Planner Villella explained that at the April 5, 2010 City Council meeting, City Council discussed the usage of portable sanitation in City parks. Staff has received reports that there may be low usage of the portable sanitary in Century Park. City Council is now forwarding the issue to Park Board for further investigation. They would like Park Board to discuss the feasibility of providing portable sanitation in City parks. The cost for renting portable sanitation is not provided by Park Development funds. Included with Assistant Planner Villella's memo was an inventory for restroom facilities in City parks, which indicated portable sanitation at Century, Hickory and Meadow Park (seasonal).

The Commissioners discussed possible reducing the winter rental of portable sanitation to save costs. Staff will obtain the rental cost and report back.

5. ADMINISTRATION.

5.1. Park Related Activity.

Assistant Planner Villella summarized the recent City Council actions relating to park and trails.

The Park Board discussed the location of park benches. It was suggested that benches be placed at Founders Memorial Park (near Highway 25 and the new Arbor Day tree); along South Street near Oakwood Drive, and the Fire Hall.

5.2. Park Development Fund, Budget Update.

A financial status report of park funds was provided to the Commissioners.

5.3. Site Visits for May.

The Commissioners will be visiting Hickory, Meadow, Heritage and Century Parks at the May 11, 2010 Park Board meeting.

5.4. Arbor Day Tree Planting.

The Arbor Day Tree Planting ceremony was held earlier this evening at Founders Memorial Park.

5.5. Next Regular Meeting – Tuesday, May 11, 2010.

The Commissioners were reminded of the next Park Board meeting as listed.

6. ADJOURNMENT.

MOTION by Kehr, second by Gardner, to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Krings
Recording Secretary