

PARK COMMITTEE MEETING
April 26, 2010
Minutes

Call Meeting to Order

Chairman Darel Gustafson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present

Darel Gustafson, Sarah Lien, John Flynn, Cindy Webster, Peggy Beardsley, Jim Elvestrom, Administrator Dana Young

Members Absent

Scott Ferguson

March 3, 2010 Minutes

The Committee approved the March 3, 2010 minutes on a motion by Sarah Lien, seconded by Jim Elvestrom. Motion carried 6-0.

Matters from the Floor

There were no Matters from the Floor this evening.

Communication Towers located on City Property

Discussion was held regarding the Council directive to select publicly owned sites that would potentially be the most suitable for towers, those sites that would be adequate, and those sites that would not be appropriate for towers. Dana Young stated that the Council met at a Town Hall meeting on April 19th and further refined the list of potential sites from 53 to 7 sites. He stated that the seven remaining sites that the Council would like the Park Committee to consider include:

- Shuck Park
- Village Hall
- Thorpe Park
- Pump Park
- Site 12
- Hill Park
- Chowen's Corner Parking Lot

Darel Gustafson stated that the Park Committee has been given an inventory of seven properties and the Council has directed them to prioritize each of the properties by indicating whether they are suitable as a communications tower site, not suitable as a site, or might be suitable under certain circumstances.

General discussion was held on the existing cell tower at Village Hall, the approved site at the Chowen's Corner parking lot, and the possibility of future carriers locating in Deephaven.

Darel Gustafson stated that he would recommend the following for Committee consideration:

1. Expand the Chowen's Corner Parking Lot site for additional communication towers.
2. Expand the Village Hall site for additional communication towers.
3. Include Pump Park as a logical site for communication towers because it would provide natural screening.
4. Thorpe Park would be his last choice as a potential location but it should only be considered by the City Council under very specific conditions.

He stated that he would exclude both Shuck Park and Hill Park because of their proximity to existing tower locations.

Mayor Paul Skrede stated that the overriding factor that is driving this discussion is the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996. He stated that the City has some discretion on selecting potential communications tower site as long as the City can demonstrate that it is not being arbitrary or capricious in its actions. He stated that if a park were selected as a potential site, the Council could possibly request a number of amenities from the applicant. He stated that the Park Committee could select two primary sites with alternate sites listed but only under certain restrictions.

Darel Gustafson invited those in attendance to speak on this issue.

Marla Mullaney stated that she was an Excelsior resident but her daughter lived in Deephaven. She stated that it has been found that there are profound health considerations to consider from the installation of communication towers that the Park Committee should try to mitigate as much as possible.

Damien Coin stated he is the brother of a Deephaven resident and is a biology environmental scientist, which is someone who looks at the effects of issues such as EMT. He stated that the European Union has taken steps to look into the health effects caused by cell phones and wireless technology. He stated that the effects are occurring well before the heating of the tissues resulting in a number of adverse health effects. He stated that it has now been 20 years since cell towers have been constructed and the health effects of these towers might be revealed.

Darel Gustafson asked Mr. Coin what he would recommend in light of his comments.

Damien Coin stated that he would ask the Committee to consider not allowing cell towers to be located in close proximity to schools or parks. He stated that the health effects might be particularly profound for kids, who are not as physically developed as adults.

Darel Gustafson noted that the City Council has tried to accomplish that by selecting the Village Hall site and the Chowen's Corner site.

Erin Head, 3605 Westview Drive, stated that she lives close to Grace Church and St. Therese and felt that locating a communications tower at Pump Park would be far too close.

Motion by Peggy Beardsley to restrict future communications towers to the existing sites at Village Hall and Chowen's Corner Park Lot. Seconded by Sarah Lien. Motion carried 6-0.

Request for Proposals on Playground Equipment

Dana Young stated that prior to reviewing the proposed Request for Proposals on Thorpe Park Playground Equipment, and the recommendations submitted by Scott Ferguson, he stated that the Council has voiced their concern about replacing all three pieces of playground equipment at Thorpe and might prefer to have the new playground equipment replace only the wooden playground structure. He stated that the Council may not be convinced that the two other pieces of playground equipment – the Dinosaur playground and the Multi-colored playground – warrant removal.

Jim Elvestrom stated that he could support keeping the Multi-colored playground equipment, which was in fairly good condition and was a decent playground for 2-5 year olds, but felt that the Dinosaur playground should be removed along with the Wooden playground. He stated that the Dinosaur playground is dangerous with kids hanging off the head and tail of the dinosaur, and an eyesore.

The Committee generally agreed that the Dinosaur playground should be removed along with the Wooden playground and also agreed that both pieces should be thrown out rather than recycled at another park.

The Committee reviewed the Request for Proposals and the recommendations submitted by Scott Ferguson. The Committee recommended including several of Scott Ferguson's recommendations in the proposed Request for Proposal, as well as to include the square footage of the proposed playground area.

Motion by John Flynn to recommend approval of the Request for Proposal as amended. Seconded by Jim Elvestrom. Motion carried 6-0.

Deephaven Days

Discussion was held on Deephaven Days. Peggy Beardsley stated that the Park Committee has been scheduled to work Grill Night at the Cottagewood Store on July 30th.

Discussion was held on the community picnic. Dana Young noted that the Cottagewood Store, which has operated the picnic that last couple of years, can only offer hot dogs or brats because of Hennepin County health restrictions. Discussion was held on the possibility of augmenting the picnic by bringing in additional food vendors.

Further discussion was held on how to encourage families to attend the picnic and whether additional events needed to be offered for kids during the picnic.

John Flynn noted that he had been supplied information from Shelley Souers that showed that the number of Deephaven residents participating in the triathlon have declined over the last three years. He stated that there were approximately 100 or so participants in 2007, of which 40 or so were Deephaven residents. In 2008, there were approximately 130 participants and only 20 or so were Deephaven residents. He stated that last year, there were approximately 160 participants that had only 25 or so Deephaven residents.

Dana Young stated that at some point, the Committee would have to consider whether they want to continue operating Deephaven Days or whether it should be operated by City staff or some other organization. He stated that Deephaven Days is taking up the majority of the Committee's time and effort over the course of the year that could be better spent on other issues.

Discussion was held on the triathlon and whether the amount of planning required to run the event was worth the number of volunteers needed to run the event.

Darel Gustafson stated that while he really enjoyed running the triathlon, he stated that he could go either way on the event. He stated that the triathlon is a lot of work to organize and does chew up 35 or more volunteers each year.

Motion by Sarah Lien to suspend Deephaven Days for 2010. Seconded by John Flynn. Motion carried 6-0.

Other

Darel Gustafson thanked the public works crew for getting the Thorpe Park fountain up and running.

Darel Gustafson stated that he had been approached by the Cub Scouts at last Sunday's Arbor Day Celebration about the possibility of the scouts studying 2 or 3 acres at Thorpe Park in order to comment on the condition of trees and to recommend various plantings.

Motion by Darel Gustafson to recommend approval of the Cub Scout Tree Program at Thorpe Park. Seconded by Peggy Beardsley. Motion carried 6-0.

Sarah Lien stated that she has heard from three baseball coaches who were concerned about the poor condition of the baseball field at Village Hall park. Dana Young stated that the public works crew has just repaired the field late last week and asked Sarah to have the coaches call him directly with any specific complaints.

Discussion was held on finding two additional Park Committee members. Sarah Lien stated that Daren Aschoff would be interested in serving on the Committee. Dana Young recommended that Committee members contact him with any names of potential candidates and the candidates could be invited to attend the June Park Committee meeting.

Discussion was held regarding goose control at Thorpe Park. Dana Young stated that this issue has been discussed by the Public Works Committee and the City Council. He stated that the Public Works Committee recommended that the public works crew be more proactive in cleaning goose droppings from the path and the City Council wanted the Police Department to remove the geese.

Cindy Webster stated that she would like the Park Committee to consider a location for an off-leash dog park.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by John Flynn, seconded by Peggy Beardsley. Motion carried 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Park Committee will be held on Wednesday, June 2, 2010.