

PUBLIC WORKS & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, May 9, 2017
Minutes

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m.

Members Present

Paul Skrede, Police Chief Cory Johnson, Public Works Foreman John Menzel, Jeff Kask, and City Administrator Dana Young

Also Present

Tony Jewett

Discuss Request to Clear the Entranceway to Cleveland Park

Dana Young stated that he received a request from Al Farha and several neighbors to remove excess vegetation along Hamilton Avenue. He asked Al Farha to present his request.

Al Farha (3475 Hamilton Avenue) stated that he and a number of his neighbors would like to see the excess vegetation along Hamilton Avenue removed to improve the views of the marsh and return the area to a natural state. He stated that he would also request the removal of buckthorn. He stated that he does not want to create issues with those neighbors that do not support this project.

Lynn Stetler (3580 Hamilton Avenue) stated that she would like to see all the vegetation that has grown along the street and path removed. She noted that there is quite a bit of buckthorn the closer you get to Lake Louise. She stated that she is recommending the removal of the buckthorn and trees closer to the road so that you can see just the marsh and the cattails.

Darlene Arndt (3455 Hamilton Avenue) stated that she has lived at her residence for over 30 years and has seen the area change significantly. She noted that there are a number of trees leaning on other trees that could be removed. She stated that it is dramatic how much this area has changed.

Shawna Melvin (3430 Hamilton Avenue) stated that she and her husband Franz have lived next to the wetland for 15 years. She stated that it is a natural park next to them and bought the property with that in mind. She stated that some of her neighbors are not happy with the view. She said that this has been going on for a while. She stated that Darlene Arndt does not like the natural roadside and has called the City to provide regular maintenance of this area along the road. She stated that about a year and a half ago, there was broad clearing of this area, which was shocking to the houses abutting the wetland. She stated that grass clippings have been dumped next to the No Dumping sign. She stated that the whole issue came to a head at the National Night Out meeting when Al Farha stated that he wanted to clear the vegetation to improve views to the marsh. She stated that after discussions with Dana Young, she was told

that it is illegal for residents to clear park land without City approval. She stated that she saw Al Farha on April 9th clearing the area without permission. She stated that there are different expectations on the parkland. She stated that she has three requests for the City:

1. Keep the roadside area along the marsh natural. She stated that the City has done a lot of work along the roadside and erosion in this area is an issue. A lot of runoff goes into the wetland.
2. Don't make any decision lightly. She stated that this decision may impact other natural areas.
3. Stop people from doing what they want to do on park property.

She stated that everyone would agree that buckthorn removal is not an issue.

Becky Farha (3475 Hamilton Avenue) stated that Shawna Melvin is wrong when she assumes that we don't care about our neighbor's property. She stated that they spend time in the park cleaning up trash and improving the health of the wetland. She asked why this has to be one or the other decision and suggested that there should be a compromise solution.

Heidi Quinn, Minnetonka Creek Watershed District, was present to provide a summary of the rules and regulations pertaining to the Wetland Conservation Act, WCWD rules, and floodplain rules. She stated that it is important to identify what you are intending to do in this area and noted that any work conducted within the floodplain would require a permit as would any fill or grading work. She stated that the removal of vegetation would likely qualify under the No Loss Criteria.

Dana Young stated that it is clear that there is a disagreement as to the extent of the clearing of the vegetation and recommended meeting with representatives from both sides to specifically review which trees should or shouldn't be removed. He noted that everyone seems to support the removal of buckthorn.

Paul Skrede stated that he would like to talk with Public Works Foreman about the work that's already been done in this area. He stated that he would not be opposed to residents marking those trees for removal and those to be kept and the City would evaluate the marked trees. He stated that it would be extremely difficult for the City to address all the buckthorn because we would need to triple the size of our crew. He stated that he would not like to see any more tree or vegetation removal until the City could evaluate the marked trees.

John Menzel provided an overview of the work done by the City crew in this area. He stated that the drains to the wetland are wide open, the path has been graded, and the crew has removed a lot of buckthorn in this area.

Paul Skrede asked if the improved drainage will also improve keep the pathway dry.

John Menzel stated that the improved drainage will not impact the level of the water in the wetland and would not benefit the pathway.

Lynn Stetler (3580 Hamilton Avenue) noted that water runoff has been an issue on Hamilton Avenue for years. She stated that she is concerned that we will get into an “us vs. them” debate. She stated that she would just like to make Lake Louise the best it can be and is committed to making it better. She stated that she could bring in a crew to remove the buckthorn and garlic mustard this weekend.

Franz (3430 Hamilton Avenue) stated that there is obviously a difference in perspectives from those living on the wetland and those living across the street.

It was decided that residents would mark those trees that they would like removed in red ribbon and the trees that they would like to keep in bright green ribbon.

Paul Skrede stated that Hamilton Avenue is a good neighborhood and wants it to stay a good neighborhood.

Discuss New LED Street Lighting

Administrator Young stated that Xcel Energy completed the conversion of its street lights in Deephaven to LED lighting several weeks back. To date, three complaints have been received regarding the new lighting – two complaints from the Walden area and one from Park Place. The typical complaint is that the new lights are too bright.

He stated that he put Sarah Dale in touch with Ed Bieging, Xcel LED Lighting Coordinator, who will be making several improvements to the LED street light in Nocomo Beach and on Walden Trail & Sibley Avenue to mitigate some of the excess lighting. He stated that he will invite other residents who have a complaint about the lighting contact to contact Ed Bieging as well.

Discuss Request for a Turkey Shoot

The Committee reviewed an email from Allan Haag, who had been asked by a number of residents to reduce the number of male turkeys that are proving to be a nuisance in several neighborhoods.

The Committee thanked Allan Haag for his commitment to this effort but expressed concerns about the potential liability on the City in permitting a private resident to hunt turkeys in town and also recognized the Police Chief’s strong preference to utilize the services of the Department of Natural Resources in wildlife management rather than a private individual.

Discuss Request for a Non Parking Sign (Matt Wallin, 20375 Linwood Road)

Discussion was held regarding Matt Wallin’s request for a no parking sign across from his driveway. Chief Johnson stated that he resolved Matt Wallin’s concerns by returning the No Parking from here to corner sign at the intersection of Linwood Road and Cottagewood Road.

Discuss Request for a Street Sign at Deephaven Woods & Minnetonka Blvd

Administrator Young stated that he has been contacted by Joyce Hertaus with a request for a “Deephaven Woods Road” sign at the intersection of Minnetonka Blvd & Deephaven Woods back entrance in order to assist individuals attempting to locate Deephaven Woods.

Paul Skrede and Chief Johnson noted that they already had this discussion with the manager of Deephaven Woods and gave her their approval to install a private street sign and post at their own cost.

Other

Eagle Scout project – the Committee approved J.J. Schechtman’s proposed project to enclose the portable restroom at Village Hall. Paul Skrede recommended that the wooden enclosure be shorter than the restroom and that there be sufficient room inside the enclosure for the company to access the restroom.

The Public Safety Committee adjourned at 2:42 p.m.

Discuss Thorpe Park Island Landscaping Plan

The Committee discussed the Thorpe Park Island landscaping plan and recommended obtaining a quote on the proposed scope of work. The Committee further recommended waiting on this project until later this fall or next year.

Discuss Thorpe Park Project

The Committee developed the following checklist for consideration by the architect during the design phase of the restroom / warming house:

- Location of outside spigot
- Location of electrical control panel for the building & hockey rink lights
- Design mechanical room between the wall of the warming house & restroom to include water softener, water heater, pump controls, and furnace & venting. Consideration would be given to a vent less system.
- Location of drinking fountain
- Middle bench area in warming house
- Exterior entranceway
- Evaluate window locations
- Drains in restroom
- Location of garbage cans
- Siding considerations
- Provide a minimum of two exterior looks

Paul Skrede stated that he would take the design plans and these additional considerations and start meeting with local architects.

Other

The overall design of the Minnetonka Blvd Ravine Project was discussed.

Further discussion was held regarding seal coating specification recommendations provided by the City Engineer.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Dana Young, seconded by John Menzel. Motion carried 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Public Safety & Public Works Committee will be held on Tuesday, June 13, 2017.