

NEW BERLIN PARKS, RECREATION & FORESTRY COMMISSION MEETING

Monday, September 18, 2006

Please note: Minutes are unofficial until approved by the Parks, Recreation and Forestry Commission at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL, DECLARATION OF QUORUM:

The regular meeting of the Parks, Recreation and Forestry Commission was called to order by Chairman Bill Christel at 6:55 p.m. in the Common Council Chambers at New Berlin City Hall.

Present: Commissioners; Bill Christel, Chuck Bedwell, Nancy Duff, Paul Gihring, and Council Representative Bill Moore.

Also Present: Director of Parks, Recreation and Forestry Mark Schroeder and Administrative Coordinator Cheryl Bowers.

Excused: Dick Kinney, Vern Radtke and Darrell Standish

PUBLIC NOTICE:

This meeting was noticed on September 14, 2006 in accordance with Open Meetings law.

COMMISSION BY-LAWS – REVIEW & APPROVAL TO REFLECT MONTHLY MEETING DATE CHANGE

Motion by Alderman Moore to change the Parks, Recreation and Forestry Commission By-laws to reflect the change to the monthly Parks, Recreation and Forestry Commission meeting day to the second Monday of the month. Seconded by Commissioner Gihring and carried unanimously.

MINUTES:

Motion by Commissioner Bedwell to approve the minutes of the regular Parks, Recreation and Forestry Commission Meeting of August 21, 2006. Seconded by Commissioner Gihring and carried unanimously with Commissioner Duff voting present.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

BILLS AND FINANCIAL REPORTS:

The Commission reviewed the August 2006 Expenditure Detail in the amount of \$19,592.22. They also reviewed the copies of the August Revenues and Expenditures. After a brief discussion, motion by Commissioner Gihring to approve these financial documents. Seconded by Alderman Moore and carried unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Council Representative – No Report

Recreation Program Committee – No Report

Parks and Facilities Committee – No Report

Planning Committee – No Report

Golf Course Committee – No Report

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: No Report

PLAN COMMISSION MEMBER REPORT: No Report

UPDATES AND CONCERNS:

Update on ProHealth Care Park - With the exception of the rainy weather last week, site work has continued at a steady pace during the last month. A final inspection meeting for the shelter building was held August 30th. The contractor was given a punch list of items to address, but essentially the building is completed. WE Energies finished the electrical service installation on August 23rd.

The parking lot and trail system base was prepped, compacted with paving completed on September 5th. Stripping of the parking lot was completed September 6th, and shouldering of the trails and parking lot has also been finished. The color surfacing material was placed on the basketball court and striping finished on September 7th.

The concrete slab for the gazebo was installed on August 16th, and the parks crew has completed the site grading around the slab. The parks crew will follow with installation of the gazebo in late September or early October. Soccer goals have been placed on the fields. The baseball diamond infield construction has also been completed. The rainy weather has pushed back the installation of the backstop and sideline fencing.

The grading contractor has completed the site grading adjacent to the shelter building, play area, and parking lot. The parking lot light poles have been delivered and should be installed in the next week. As soon as the site dries out, the landscaping contractor will install the rain gardens, plants, topsoil and seed. The parks crew has been on site to remove the weeds and mulch the planting beds.

The project appears to be on schedule for the ribbon cutting/grand opening on October 11th.

Update on 2007 Parks, Recreation & Forestry Department Budget - The 2007 Operating and Capital Improvements Budgets were reviewed with the Mayor in early September. No changes have been made to the budget at this time. The Common Council has scheduled budget work sessions for September 19th and 20th.

Update on Quarry Park - Work continues to move forward on restoration of the west side of the site. Approximately 50% of the lake slopes on the west side have now been seeded and mulched. The goal was to have all side slopes of the west lake top soiled and seeded by mid September. Due to the rainy September weather, top soiling and seeding operations have been delayed. However, since all side slope of the west lake have been graded, Johnson has removed the water pump and pipes, and the water level allowed to begin rising. Johnson also continues to work on the various punch list items throughout the site.

The last major item that needs to be completed is construction of the spillway/outlet structure which will be located on the east lake as the normal water flow on the site goes from west to east. Staff and Bonestroo have met with city engineering staff to discuss a storm water management plan for the site. Bonestroo has also met with the DNR to discuss design and permitting issues for the spillway/outlet structure and settling basin. Bonestroo will be on site in the next week to finish the wetland delineation and survey/topographic mapping required for this project.

A resident has contacted Alderman Moore requesting prairie grasses and wildflowers be planted in lieu of grass. Alderman Moore and Mark Schroeder will meet to tour the Park to locate possible areas for planting of prairie grasses and wildflowers.

Update on Community Center proposal for the Former Library Building - In early 2005, the New Berlin Public Library moved operations to the new facility in the City Center. For the past 18 months, the city has discussed a number of uses for the former library including a community center, park and recreation offices, and most recently use by the New Berlin School District for administrative offices.

At the August 22nd Common Council meeting, the Facilities Committee made a recommendation to the Common Council to approve the use of the former library as a city community center/food pantry. After considerable discussion, the council gave approval to use the facility as a community center and refer back to the Facilities (staff) Committee and the Parks, Recreation & Forestry Commission. The reasoning behind sending this back to the commission is that the Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department is involved with community programming including Senior Activities, and would eventually handle facility scheduling, building rentals, policies and procedures, while the commission would approve fees for use of the facility. The Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department would also work with the Building & Facilities Department for set up and maintenance.

The first step is to develop a conceptual plan for the facility taking into account the needs of the community. The department will be meeting with representatives of the Senior Advisory Board later in the month to gather initial input from the senior community.

Motion by Commissioner Gihring to refer the development of a Community Center conceptual plan to the Parks and Facilities Committee. Seconded by Commissioner Duff and carried unanimously.

Update on the Mary Ella Milham Property - A meeting was held on August 28th with Ms. Milham, Attorney Mike Schober, and Mayor Chiovatero to discuss this donation of land for a future city park. City Attorney Mark Blum is preparing a donation agreement for review at a future commission meeting.

Update on Malone Park Soccer Shed - The New Berlin Athletic Association and the Parks (NBAA), Recreation and Forestry department recently partnered to construct a soccer storage/concession shed for Malone Park. The NBAA donated \$5,000 for building materials including the concrete slab, while the parks crew provided the labor. The building was completed in time for the start of the soccer game season on September 9th. The department is now working with the NBAA on electrical service for the building. Staff has sent a thank you to the NBAA for this donation to the City Parks System.

Update on Soap Box Derby Improvements at Valley View Park – The Commissioners received a letter from Dave Nagy, Secretary/Treasurer of the New Berlin Soap Box Derby Commission regarding the recent improvements made to this park facility by the Soap Box Derby Commission. A thank you letter has been sent to the New Berlin Soap Box Derby Commission.

Update on Historic Day activities including the Centennial Anniversary for the Weston Barn - Commissioner Gihring reported that the Historic Day celebration was a success. The 100 year old barn held a square dance in it. Mr. Draeger of the State Historical society complimented the City of New Berlin for having the foresight of preserving the apple orchard and the farming way of life.

Update on Impact Fee & Land Division Statutes – The Commission received a memo from City Attorney Mark Blum summarizing the recent changes made to the Impact Fees and Land Division Statutes. Mayor Chiovatero and city staff met with legal counsel on August 22nd to discuss the Impact Fee issue. The following is the outcome from that meeting:

First, the Finance Department completed an Impact Fee Analysis to determine if any of the impact fees collected would need to be refunded as the new law requires that impact fees collected must be used within 7 years of collection or be rebated to the current owners of the property. The city has taken the first in, first out approach concerning these fees. Based on this analysis, only the Bike & Pedestrian Facilities Fees collected would need to be rebated. The law does allow for a 3 year extension via adoption of a resolution citing the existence of extenuating circumstances or hardship in meeting the 7 year limit. Attorney Blum has prepared a draft resolution to extend the deadline for the use of the trail facilities impact fees that will be going forward to the common council for review and approval.

Secondly, Attorney Blum has prepared a draft ordinance to amend Section 235 of the Municipal Code. This ordinance would amend the land division code to now require that land for parks and open spaces be dedicated as opposed to payment of park and open space fees upon land divisions. The Commission received a copy of the draft ordinance for review. This ordinance provides for one acre of land to be dedicated for every 25 proposed dwelling units, and also that the location of the land to be approved gives due consideration to the natural features, accessibility, safety of users, and the suitability of the land dedicated for development as a park.

Finally, a draft Impact Fee Ordinance has been prepared to replace the one on the books. The current ordinance was based on Impact Fee Needs Assessments done in 1995 and updated in 1999. However, before this ordinance can be adopted by council, including the imposition of an impact fee for park and open spaces, an updated study would be needed to justify the new impact fees. The common council will be discussing the undertaking of such a study.

The Commission was concerned with the draft land dedication ordinance and the one acre for every 25 dwelling units standard. The Plan Committee would like to meet with City Attorney Blum to review and amend the ordinance draft.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Trail Inspection & Maintenance Policy – Review and Recommendation – The Commission received a draft of the Trail Inspection & Maintenance Policy for their review. This policy would apply to all recreational trails within the city parks system, and be included as part of the maintenance policy for sidewalks and sidepaths drafted by the Engineering Department and currently being reviewed by the Board of Public Works.

The Commissioners were concerned the Trail Inspection and Maintenance Policy contained info that should be in a plan and not a policy. The plan and the policy should be stated in two separate documents. The recreational trails need to be defined for the purpose of determining who is responsible for maintaining them.

Mark Schroeder asked the Commissioners to submit their comments on the Trail Inspection and Maintenance Policy to him within a couple of weeks.

Quarry Park – Review and Recommendation on Option to Extend Lease Agreement with Johnson Sand & Gravel - The overall restoration work for the site is on schedule for completion by the end of the 2006 construction season. The only question mark at this time is the exact schedule for construction of the spillway/outlet structure and settling basin, which will require analysis and design tied to the final water elevation of the two lakes. While the major grading is completed on the west side, and the water level has started to rise, it will take several weeks to months to reach the static water level. In addition, the DNR will be involved from a review and permitting standpoint which will add to the timeline and approval process.

In looking ahead to the future use of this site as a community park, there are both planning and construction processes that need to take place before the city could open Quarry Park to the public. Depending on the level of city financial resources this could mean several years. From the Parks, Recreation and Forestry standpoint, Johnson Sand & Gravel has made great strides toward completion of the site restoration in 2006. However, since the actual opening of the site for public use is years in the future, the city could use a landlord to continue with oversight of the park property. That is why staff would recommend the city look at exercising the option to extend the lease agreement with Johnson Sand & Gravel for an additional year through December 2007. This relationship would continue to be a win-win situation for both parties as Johnson Sand & Gravel could continue office and maintenance operations at the site, and the city would benefit from additional cash flow from the building rental in addition to maintaining a landlord to oversee the site, and assist the city with the continued site repair and restoration on an as needed basis.

The Commissioners received a copy of the Addendum to the Lease Agreement which was approved by the city last year and a letter from Randy Johnson expressing interest in extending the lease agreement with the City for 2007. If the commission is in agreement on exercising the lease option, staff will work on the details of the lease extension with City Attorney Mark Blum for Common Council approval in October.

Motion by Commissioner Gihring to recommend to the Council, to exercise the extension of the lease agreement between Johnson Sand and Gravel, Inc., and the City of New Berlin to December 31, 2007. Seconded by Alderman Moore. Motion carries unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS: None

NEXT MEETING: October 9, 2006 at 6:30 PM

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Commissioner Duff to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Bedwell and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Cheryl Bowers for
Nancy Duff, Secretary
Parks, Recreation and Forestry Commission