

Regular Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission

Proposed Minutes

- Date:** December 5, 2007
- Time:** 4:00 p.m.
- Place:** Fillmore Complex, Conference Room D
- Present:** Mark Oppenhuizen, Paul Geerlings, Betty Gajewski, Phil Kuyers, Ted Bosgraaf, Crystal Unema, Bobbi Jones Sabine, Roger Jonas and Joyce Kortman.
- Absent:** Russ Brown
- Staff:** John Scholtz, Director; Curt TerHaar, Coordinator of Park Planning and Development; Sherry Costello, Administrative Clerk; and Dave Mazurek, Park Operations Superintendent.
- Guests:** Fred Vaas, Joyce Smith, and Marjorie Viveen.

Subject: Approval of Minutes

- PR 07-99 Motion: To approve the minutes of the Commission’s November 7, 2007 regular meeting.
- Moved by: Sabine Supported by: Kuyers Unanimous

Subject: River Road Proposal

- PR 07-100 Motion: To authorize a letter of support for the proposal to consolidate Waverly, Mercury, Green, 128th, and North Cedar Roads into one and be named River Road.
- Moved by: Bosgraaf Supported by: Unema Unanimous

Subject: Dog Park Proposal

PR 07-101 Motion: To respond to the request by the Georgetown Off-Leash Dog Park Supporters to develop a dog park at Fillmore at the Bend Open Space by indicating the Parks Commission will continue to assess the need and potential to provide a dog park in the county park system but a dog park will not be a priority for development in 2008 or 2009.
Moved by: Bosgraaf Supported by: Unema Unanimous

Subject: Go Into Closed Session

PR 07-102 Motion: To go into Closed Session to discuss property matters.
Moved by: Kuyers Supported by: Sabine
Yeas: Oppenhuizen, Geerlings, Gajewski, Kuyers, Bosgraaf, Unema, Sabine, Jonas and Kortman.
Nays: None Motion passed 9 to 0.

Subject: To Rise From Closed Session

PR 07-103 Motion: To rise from Closed Session.
Moved by: Geerlings Supported by: Kuyers Unanimous

Other Items Discussed:

Commission members received the River Road proposal as submitted to the Ottawa County Road Commission by the Friends of River Road represented by Majorie Bethke Viveen, Ed. S. and deferred discussion until the Public Heard portion of meeting.

Commission members received the November 7, 2007 letter from Mr. James Wood, Manager of the Grants Management Division of the State of Michigan DNR, regarding the Olive Shores Acquisition grant. Scholtz updated the Commission regarding the Trust Fund Board meeting he had attended earlier that day. Scholtz stated that the Olive Shores Acquisition Project had been recommended for the full grant request amount. The recommended list will now go to the legislature for approval. If all goes well the acquisition should be wrapped up by late next fall.

Commission members received the November 26, 2007 letter from Nancy Hickey, along with the October 10, 2007 letter from R. Scott Stehouwer, PH.D., regarding an ADA request for beach access at Park 12 with animals. Bosgraaf suggested the request be reviewed by the Planning Committee, and Scholtz added that the information has been sent to our Corporate Council for review. Oppenhuizen asked for consensus, and the request was referred to the Planning Committee for a recommendation.

Oppenhuizen called for discussion in response to the email comments received since the previous meeting and none was noted.

Oppenhuizen called Ms. Marjorie Bethke Viveen for public comment in regard to her River Road proposal received earlier in the meeting. Ms. Viveen summarized the history of the five roads that are included in the proposal to rename them as one continuous road being called River Road. She continued in stating that these five roads (Waverly, Mercury, Green, 128th, and North Cedar) are the spine of the Grand River Greenway and she is in the process of trying to have the roads designated as a historical byway. Unema voiced her support for the idea and questioned the inconvenience of residents along the roads that would have to change their addresses. Ms. Viveen explained the change of address process and the willingness of the Friends of River Road to assist residents if needed. Gajewski suggested to Ms. Viveen that she contact the County Planning Commission for support as well. Kuyers asked what the cost of the project would be if approved and Bosgraaf asked if there were any other roads named River Road. Ms. Viveen responded that the River Road Friends group is in the process of obtaining historical designation for the project and would be taking donations to offset the cost of historical signs. Unema questioned what the obligation the Parks would have in supporting the proposal. Ms. Viveen stated that she is just looking for a letter of support and no funds. Kortman favored the idea, and Gajewski complimented Ms. Viveen on her extensive research. Action was taken by motion to write a letter of support for the proposal.

Oppenhuizen called for the financial report of October 31, 2007, and Scholtz reminded the Commission that the higher dollar amount for reservation revenues is due to the new on line reservation system and the fact that the Parks are taking reservations for the current year and next year combined. He continued to say that all is going well with the reservation system.

Oppenhuizen called for the Director's report, and Scholtz updated the Commission on the Park 12 encroachments. He then announced a Farm Park meeting being held on December 6, 2007 and invited all to attend.

Oppenhuizen asked Mazurek if he had anything to add to his Superintendent's Report for Commission members and Mazurek updated the Commission on the progress at the Eastmanville Farm, budget process for 2009, and the Weaver House well. He also updated everyone on the cross country ski sale that was held at Pigeon Creek Lodge the previous Saturday.

Oppenhuizen then called for the Park 12 Advisory Council report, and there were no questions.

Commission members received the Planning Committee report, and Bosgraaf gave a brief summary of their meeting and complimented Park staff for the excellent job they did researching dog parks. He then explained that the Committee does not feel they should recommend proceeding with a dog park for 2008 or 2009 but would like to follow up and revisit the issue on a regular basis in the future. The Commission members affirmed by

motion not to proceed with a dog park in 2008. Scholtz will write a follow up letter to Mr. Larabel regarding his dog park proposal.

Oppenhuizen called for the project updates and Scholtz began with Park 12. TerHaar continued with the parking area designs and explained that they hope to have the concepts and reorganization done soon so they can still get the permits this winter. Mr. Vaas, a Park 12 resident, explained that he had recently sent an email to TerHaar explaining his feelings regarding Park 12 issues which included the parking situation. He requested that TerHaar share the email with the Commission members.

Oppenhuizen called on Ms. Joyce Smith, a Park 12 resident, who requested some support regarding the parking situation. She expressed her concern for the Park 5 layout and the possibility of damaging the habitat in that area. Ms. Smith suggested keeping Park 5 as it is; she went on to address the communities character, habitat and park that became overwhelmed by parking. She would like to see the habitat left in place. Ms. Smith concluded by indicating her support of improving the parking area but emphasized the need to preserve park habitat at the same time.

TerHaar reported on the Upper Macatawa Natural Area non-motorized pathway project. TerHaar continued to say that evaluating different routes through the park has been challenging. Bosgraaf commented on the nice publicity Parks has received for this site.

TerHaar reported on the Riverside Park Improvements Project and showed pictures of various improvements including the upgraded picnic shelter. This facility will be available for reservations this coming spring.

Oppenhuizen moved on to new business and appointed Kuyers and Unema to the nominating committee for the 2008 Commission officers. Kuyers and Unema will nominate officers at the January meeting.

Oppenhuizen then took a moment to thank Gajewski for her numerous years of service on the Parks Commission and stated she would be greatly missed.

Oppenhuizen then thanked the Commission and expressed what a pleasure it has been to work with them over the years.

Oppenhuizen called for the public to be heard and there were no additional comments.

The Parks Commission went into Closed Session to discuss property matters.

Meeting adjourned at 5:43 p.m.