

**VILLAGE OF PLEASANT PRAIRIE
PARK COMMISSION
Village Hall, Auditorium
9915 39th Avenue
Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin 53158
Tuesday, May 1, 2007
6:00 p.m.**

A regular meeting of the Pleasant Prairie Park Commission was held on Tuesday, May 1, 2007, 6:00 p.m. Present were Michealene Day, Glenn Christiansen, Kathleen Burns, Michael Russert, William Mills and Monica Yuhas. Rita Christiansen was excused. Also present were Michael Pollocoff, Village Administrator; John Steinbrink, Jr., Superintendent of Parks; and Ruth Mack, Clerical Secretary.

1. CALL TO ORDER.

2. ROLL CALL.

Michealene Day:

First, I'd like to formally welcome Monica to our Parks Commission. It's an honor to have you serve with us.

Monica Yuhas:

Thank you. I've very excited to be serving.

**3. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 6, 2007 AND THE APRIL 4, 2007
PARK COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES.**

Michealene Day:

Did anyone have a chance to review the minutes? If there are no corrections or additions I need a motion to accept.

Michael Russert:

I make a motion to accept the meeting minutes from March 6th and April 4, 2007.

Michealene Day:

We need a second.

Kathleen Burns:

Second.

Michealene Day:

All in favor?

Voices:

Aye.

Michealene Day:

Motion approved.

4. CITIZEN COMMENTS.

Michealene Day:

Do we have any citizen comments in the audience?

5. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Pleasant Prairie Park Update and Property Acquisition

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

Good evening. The Village of Pleasant Prairie has just acquired one of the last properties for the 104th and Bain Station Park, Pleasant Prairie Park. It's the Brad Pensic property. First of all I have to apologize that we're having a network problem so I can't project the slides up on the wall but you do have the handouts in front of you and they're the same as what the PowerPoint presentation.

It's shown up at the top center of your screen as the recently acquired property, and that's really one of the last properties we needed to acquire to really start making some final improvements on that parkland. If you go up to the next slide it shows some of the improvements that we're looking at doing for the 2007 year. If you're familiar with the area, up on the northern portion of the property there's that existing asphalt parking lot that really has turned out to more of a hangout than really anything kind of functional. So we're going to remove that asphalt and plant some grass and the kids can use it for warming up for soccer or softball or anything like that. And there still is abundant parking toward the bottom of your screen. So some of the last properties that we acquired would be the Bohat's property and some of the other properties we actually turned into parking lots in the last year. So we do feel that we have adequate parking lot.

One of the things after consulting with Kris Jensen at the Lakeview RecPlex is that there really is a need for some permanent soccer fields within Pleasant Prairie. Right now whenever they have soccer leagues one of the things that they're doing is that they're converting some of the softball diamonds on the south side by 165 and Terwall Terrace into temporary soccer fields. The kids really don't have any time they can practice in the evening because there's always adult softball leagues going on five or six nights a week. So we can use these for games and for practice time.

One of the other improvements that we're looking at doing is constructing a split rail fence and some sort of a landscape berm that would keep, one, the people from driving onto it from 104th Avenue and then also if any soccer balls start rolling up towards the road the landscape berm would capture any balls before they would go out on the road.

The Pleasant Prairie Fire and Rescue Department is looking at razing that house, and then we will go through and re-landscape that area, grass it and hopefully have it done before the softball games start the end of June. So the project is going to move pretty quickly depending on all the permits and razing of the department of the house. Mike, do you have anything you want to add?

So the purpose of this is to inform the Park Commission exactly what our plans are to do for Pleasant Prairie Park. Then as funds are available we do plan to continue to follow the Master Park and Open Space Plan for this park with the playgrounds and any other future amenities as we have the funds to begin those project.

Michealene Day:

This will be real nice.

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

Yes, the Village has been working on acquiring property for about the last five years, and they've been able to acquire one property each year. And now we really have expanded that park. And one of our goals is to open it up from 104th so it really does look like open park space. It's very open. Any time that you have any sort of small bushes or shrubs it's always a place for somebody to go behind. It's kind of a trouble spot so we're going to open it up but it still provides the landscape berm and the fencing to keep it safe for the kids when there are athletic sports going on.

Michealene Day:

Where the new soccer fields are is there going to be any lighting there?

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

There's not going to be any lighting. It's just going to be for regular daytime games.

Michealene Day:

Anyone else have any questions?

Mike Pollocoff:

Going forward in the future in this next budget we're going to try and establish some level of funding. We were able to one way or another able to find money to buy houses that people were making offers to us. And this last one was \$119,000. It wasn't that expensive. But when you think of the master plan it shows this park going through to 108th. I think there's two or three houses on that side that eventually we want to pick up. And so I'm going to recommend that we start funding that up. And we really want to be able to buy those through a willing buyer/willing seller and not have to condemn and do anything aggressive. We had the people on the far south side where that little commercial business is, I guess they're making offers as we speak and we've closed those properties and made an offer to the Village to purchase. As we get funds available if we can get queued up for a grant we'll continue to do that. It might take five years or what have you, but as long as we keep funding that in the budget as the proposals come in we'll give a response.

Michealene Day:

Terrific. Anyone else have any comments or questions?

Michael Russert:

You said it's going to go to 108th. So would it also continue north and then west from the current drawing?

Mike Pollocoff:

The current drawing as I remember from the Master Park Plan if you were to take that north property line that goes straight west to 108th and then that south line right where the bike path is that goes around the ball fields that goes straight west.

Michael Russert:

So would the plans be to be an entry point off of 108th?

Mike Pollocoff:

A pedestrian entry. I think the Master Park Plan only calls for the one traffic entry off of 105th.

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

That's correct.

Michealene Day:

Any other questions?

B. Veterans Memorial Update

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

I believe it was two meetings ago we had the President of the Pleasant Prairie VFW, Laurens Vellekoop, and he came down and made a presentation. I spent a little bit of time with him over the last couple months. We're visiting some of the other Veterans memorials that we have around the area. We wanted to make sure that whatever we did come up with that it was very representative and we really had a buy into the Veterans memorial and all the different branches that it represented in the Village and in the area.

So over the last six weeks Mr. Vellekoop has gone through and presented our plan to all the appropriate parties, all the Veterans and all the different ones in the area. He got very good reviews from everyone. They really haven't made any comments whatsoever. They were very happy with how it looked. So I guess unless there's any other comments or any changes from the Park Commission we would like to go forward and maybe design a little bit more of a detailed plan and iron out what some of the costs might be and start moving forward on that. At least finding out exactly how much this project will cost and the different materials. We're kind of moving forward with that.

Michealene Day:

Do you need a motion that we would like you to continue to get an update as you work on this project?

Mike Pollocoff:

Yes.

Michealene Day:

Would someone like to entertain a motion that the staff would get more details on costs? How about you, Monica, do you want to make the first motion?

Monica Yuhas:

Sure. I would like to make a motion that John Steinbrink, Jr. continue to research the cost of moving forward on the Veterans memorial site plan.

Michealene Day:

Any questions or discussion? If not, can I have a second?

William Mills:

I'll second the motion.

Michealene Day:

All in favor?

Voices:

Aye.

Michealene Day:

We look forward to getting that.

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

We'll have some better plans for you guys to review at the June Park Commission meeting and hopefully a cost estimate also.

Michealene Day:

That would be terrific. It looks wonderful. I think it's a good idea to do. This is an extremely short meeting but it is nice.

Glenn Christiansen:

I want to raise one question since we're to this point so quickly this evening. Would it be possible maybe in the near future to discuss the Des Plaines River perhaps like we did with the workshop a while back where we talked about the different parks. If we were to possibly focus on doing something with the Des Plaines River with maybe the intent to try and encourage some local support and involvement and the community doing something out there. Maybe that would help you out, John, with trying to—obviously I

missed last month's meeting with Lori Artiomo in here with her management plan. But I think ultimately that's going to be something that's going to require some resources to carry out. A lot of it is going to be possibly finding people to help carry out this thing. Just a suggestion. Possibly the thing to do would be to have a discussion on that.

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

I think that's a great idea. One of the things that I've spoken with Lori about is developing some sort of volunteer groups to help take care of some of the invasive species and some of the hand work that does have to be done on that area. So we can make it an agenda item next month to develop a strategy on how we're going to get some people involved in a volunteer program with the local community. We'll make sure that it's on the next agenda.

Glenn Christiansen:

And then possibly to look at some of the little pieces of land to fill in some of the corners possibly. I know Jean Werbie and I talked about this briefly a couple of weeks ago. She's always wanted to see the Pegnotti property brought into the public domain. Anybody who knows anything about the property would understand why which we don't have to go into right now. But addressing some of these things and maybe if we could find some local support and get the whole idea out for the public eye and maybe we can capitalize on some public support that might help us move some of these little corner issues in that area forward.

Michealene Day:

Glenn, for those who might not know where that piece of property is where is it?

Glenn Christiansen:

The Pegnotti property is a small piece of wet mesic prairie and mesic prairie directly on the north side of Lake Russo. It's actually very close or right around the corner from your house.

Mike Pollocoff:

It's basically between Oak High Drive which is 86th and 82nd Streets between about 110th and the river.

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

We can identify that property on a map at the next meeting where we discuss it also.

Glenn Christiansen:

Mike, where you live you're on that dead end street, that runs right out in the middle of it where all the kids have their go-cart tracks where a lot of people don't realize until they walk out in there. If they don't understand plant life there's a number of rare plant species and a couple of threatened plant species out there. For years it's been a neglected piece of property that they're literally tearing the heck out of. It's always been SEWRPC's list for protection. There's also some nice features about it. If it was restored it would be a very beautiful property, very representative of what the plant communities around here once looked like.

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

One other thing that we're looking on doing for the meeting in June is doing a field trip out to the natural areas out in Prairie Springs Park. We were going to do it this month but with the amount of rain that we had it was very wet, so we felt it might be little bit better conditions to do it sometime in early June. I'm not sure if the Commission wants to establish a time whether it's before the meeting or after the meeting to go out on site and actually walk through that area.

Michealene Day:

If we did it beforehand, if we publish could we just have instead of trucking back here it would spare the time if it we did it beforehand could we have the meeting at the RecPlex?

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

Or the Rec pavilion maybe.

Michealene Day:

Because then we could publish it and then we could look and we would be there and we could have our meeting at the RecPlex. Does that work?

Glenn Christiansen:

Is that just for the Parks Commission or for anybody else who wants to attend it?

Mike Pollocoff:

Basically the agenda would be you convene the meeting and then you could go on your field trip and if the press wants to come you'd have to let them but there would be no decisions that could be made on the field trip until you come back.

Glenn Christiansen:

So this is to be part of the meeting itself.

Michealene Day:

Would this Commission entertain doing it before or after the meeting? It's not a problem for me to start the meeting before six but some of you from work might have trouble before six o'clock.

William Mills:

Occasionally we even have trouble from work to the six o'clock meeting which is why I was late today. I would prefer after if possible.

Kathleen Burns:

Or is it possible to have it at six and let that be the first item so that the meeting may go longer, but if we want to discuss anything. You mentioned last time that there might be canoes. Will it be dry enough that we won't be in a canoe? I mean how do we dress for this field trip?

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

I would assume that blue jeans and some sort of a boot would probably be an appropriate attire.

Mike Pollocoff:

Some mosquito repellent.

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

And if anybody needs a pair of rubber boots we do have some extra pairs at the public works that we could loan out for you so you don't have to go out and purchase anything extra.'

Michealene Day:

So you'll tell Ruth to let us know where to meet for our field trip?

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

We'll probably just meet right at the Don Wruck Pavilion then.

Glenn Christiansen:

What parts of the property over there are you going to try–

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

That hasn't been identified but I will definitely have it wrapped up. I'll probably spend some time talking with Lori and yourself maybe also, Glenn, and we'll see where the driest and the best routes to take are. We can kind of go from there.

Glenn Christiansen:

If you want to go on the north side of Jerome Creek then you'll probably want to figure on driving back in there to save quite a walk. The woods nobody has hardly spent any time looking at the woods right next to the Wruck Pavilion. That's probably just as much deserving a visit as anyplace.

Michealene Day:

So we have a time and a place.

Kathleen Burns:

I'd like to reserve a pair of those boots.

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

We'll send out a request in an e-mail. We have many sizes. We'll make sure that everything fits properly for you.

Michealene Day:

Any other items that you want to bring for future agenda items?

Michael Russert:

I just want to revisit b. Veterans memorial update. Are we still going to try at Prairie Spring days to have an official opening or ribbon cutting?

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

If we can come up with a cost estimate by our June meeting I don't foresee that construction would be too long on the site. Probably the only thing that might hold us up is the actual seven plaques that we have. We're finding a supplier and making sure that

we can order them in a timely fashion. So I'll do some research by the June meeting and find out how long it takes to order those and what the costs are. So if we have it by the first week in June that still gives us eight weeks to prepare and plan. If time does allow we will definitely attempt to make it happen.

Mike Pollocoff:

Do we have everything we need for the Phil Sanders memorial to happen by Family Days?

Glenn Christiansen:

The only thing that we've been running into is copies of everything forwarded to the family and to Kenosha Public Museum to check the facts and make sure the family was comfortable with it and repeated attempts to get comment back from the family. He had a niece in Chicago and a nephew I believe in Los Angeles. The niece in Chicago was the easier person to communicate with it. So far we've tried four times in the past two week leaving messages and getting no response.

About the only thing I can figure is most of that information was either well known information publicly or was taken right out of newspaper articles and so forth. Perhaps everybody just feels that it's such well established facts that there's nothing to comment on. I don't know. I'm a little surprised. You would think somebody would return a phone call or a message but so far how many times you try and you don't get a response.

Michealene Day:

Pretty soon you just have to decide to just go with it and do it.

Glenn Christiansen:

The funny part is was it you, Mike, who gave a copy of the scholarship thing from Halter Wildlife, and what was remarkable was what I was reading was practically the same information, a lot of the same details in there. So, like I say, it's all pretty well established information. When I wrote that about Phil Sanders being a friend of Aldo Leopold, he says do you know for a fact they were friends otherwise you've got to put down an acquaintance. It was curious how they had put it in there was much the same way, that I don't know if it said friends or acquaintances, but almost the exact same verbiage. The guy was around for a long time and he knew an awful lot of people around the area and he did a lot of things. But you read some of the books that he published or that he had published that some of the information also came from.

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

We do plan on having some of the public works staff preparing some of the site that we can do, because there still is some minor excavation that we can do and gravel that we can lay for the parking lot areas and we can move on that over this next month. Once the wording has been finalized then we can take and begin construction on the actual monument component of it. But there is some stuff that we can start doing over the next month to start moving both of the sites forward. We'll have crews work on that over the next month.

Glenn Christiansen:

Could we possibly maybe move it forward in this way, we all pretty much accept what we have so far. Right now the only thing that's holding us back is getting some comment back from the family. Do we just want to decide that after a certain date we just double check everything ourselves and go ahead with it? If they finally respond and say that's fine and they're fine with it, because in here we were always in agreement with it.

Michael Russert:

I guess one question I have is will any of the family be at the presentation, the niece?

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

They would definitely be invited.

Glenn Christiansen:

Yes, they certainly should be invited. I know when they held the memorial service here for him I was out of town, but I believe my father he's sitting out here and my older brother was at the memorial service. I don't remember if the nephew was there but the niece with her two daughters were at the memorial, and my brother spent quite a bit of time talking to them. I think they gave him some pictures and they swapped some items and so forth. They don't live that far away. And I also thought about possibly going down and talking to John Burke and asking him his thoughts because he knew Phil probably as well as anybody who is still alive. I believe just about all of Phil's friends now are deceased, people that were of his age and group, people that he did things with for many years. I think John might be another person to go talk to and see if he feels satisfied. He may look at it and say that's pretty well established. In fact, I think that probably might be another avenue. If he looks at it he may say I don't think anybody is going to complain so go ahead with it because it's pretty clear information.

Michealene Day:

Any other comments? Any other ideas to put on future agendas?

6. ADJOURNMENT.

Monica Yuhas:

I make a motion to adjourn.

Glenn Christiansen:

I'll second.

Michealene Day:

All in favor? Thank you. We'll see you at the Wruck Pavilion in June.