

**VILLAGE OF PLEASANT PRAIRIE
PARK COMMISSION
Village Hall Auditorium
9915 39th Avenue
Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin 53158
April 4, 2012
6:00 p.m.**

A regular meeting of the Pleasant Prairie Park Commission was held on Wednesday, April 4, 2012, 6:00 p.m. Present were Michealene Day, Monica Yuhas, William Mills, Cindy Schwab (Alternate #1) and Jim Bandura (Alternate #2). Rita Christiansen, Glenn Christiansen, Steve Kundert and Troy Holm were excused. Also present were Mike Pollocoff, Village Administrator; Tom Shircel, Assistant Administrator; John Steinbrink, Jr., Director of Public Works; Jean Werbie-Harris, Community Development Director; and Ruth Mack-Stoner, Executive Secretary. Two citizens were present.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. ROLL CALL**
- 3. MINUTES OF MEETINGS**

Michealene Day:

Our minutes were included in our packets sent to us. If there's not any corrections or additions can I have a motion to accept the minutes from the previous meeting?

Jim Bandura:

Motion to accept.

Monica Yuhas:

Second.

Michealene Day:

All in favor?

Voices:

Aye.

Michealene Day:

Thank you. Motion approved.

4. CITIZEN COMMENTS

5. NEW BUSINESS

a) Receive and consider Village community garden presentation.

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

Madam Chair and the rest of the Commission, as you guys know last year the Park Commission spearheaded a project for a community garden which took place over at Prairie Springs Park. I feel it was very successful. They did a really good job with the volunteers. We found people to make the boxes through Kenosha Grounds Care. Our park staff made some fencing around the outside of it, and I think it worked really good. I think it was a really good pilot program, and I think it's kind of a model for how we want to make this work moving forward.

We do have Barb in the audience today from Gateway, very instrumental. Oh, I apologize, from UW Extension, and she was very instrumental in going through and setting this up and kind of really giving us some professional guidance on how this has to be done. And I do believe that she wanted to talk about it a little bit this evening if I'm correct?

Barbara Larson:

I have another kind of side proposal, but maybe [inaudible] about a community garden.

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

Okay, and I believe that we are talking about the community garden. And so if you wanted to say a few words this would be your time to do that.

Barbara Larson:

I'm Barb Larson. I'm a horticulture educator with the University of Wisconsin Extension. And I have several master gardener volunteers who are very interested in using the site to kind of expand into some teaching gardens there. One of the things we noticed last year when we were just working with some of the volunteers were there were people that came that said I just came because I don't know how to vegetable garden so I'd like to learn how. So my kind of side proposal with this is that part of this space be used for some raised bed teaching gardens that would be planted and maintained by master gardener volunteers, and then they might even have certain times – there would be

signage, there might be brochures as to how to garden, how to take care of things. And it's even possible that we might even have come to the garden this evening and we'll teach you how to plant tomatoes or how to identify bugs in the garden and some of those kinds of things. That was kind of my thought and looking at getting permission to do something like that either with the existing raised beds. Or, my proposal is that we would even do, as those are being used for something else, that we would even actually the Extension can build some other beds right there in order to do it. It wouldn't be large. I can see that we'd probably have maybe four or five 4 by 8 or 4 by 6 raised beds in order to kind of start a demonstration garden. Questions or comments?

Michealene Day:

Anyone have any questions or comments?

Monica Yuhas:

Barb, would you maintain those beds throughout the season?

Barbara Larson:

Yes. The ones that would be the teaching beds we would take full responsibility for, so watering, maintenance, we would cover the cost of planting, putting the beds together to begin with, all of those kinds of things.

Monica Yuhas:

So basically you're asking for us to establish the beds?

Barbara Larson:

Yes, for space to establish the beds and permission to use the site as a teaching space. The other thing we'd probably want to do is put up some sort of sign that would say this is a teaching garden, it's joint between Village of Pleasant Prairie and UW Extension.

Monica Yuhas:

And what do you anticipate your hours to be?

Barbara Larson:

The gardens would be accessible whenever the parks are accessible. Now, when the volunteers would actually be there working on it will vary with the volunteers and what their schedules are. I would guess a lot of them evenings or weekends.

Monica Yuhas:

Thank you.

Jim Bandura:

How would you get the word out?

Barbara Larson:

I can put it in my garden column, we can put it on news letters, we can put it on websites so there are different ways that we can promote it. And I think like anything you start out slowly and it kind of builds. And we might ask for some of your Village information that goes out, too, to let people know.

Michealene Day:

It sounds like a terrific idea. Does staff have any immediate issues? Maybe the signage you'd have to work with what kind of signage and size.

Barbara Larson:

Sure. It wouldn't be big.

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

I think from a staff perspective it's an excellent idea. And we're more than willing to work with you, keep the area fenced in, provide the water, whatever support that we can do obviously. I think it was very successful last year as the pilot, and I think this is really a perfect progression moving forward to going to something like this. I think it's great, and I really appreciate you coming forward with it.

Barbara Larson:

And I think maybe from that then maybe more community members would feel comfortable actually starting their own gardens.

Cindy Schwab:

I have a question. I know in some of the community gardens like teachable like you guys also do composting? Would that be something you'd be doing as well? It's a great program and anybody who composts realizes it would save the Village – more people composting saves on trash collecting.

Barbara Larson:

Sure, and I certainly think that's a possibility to do composting demonstration as part of it, too. I don't know whether we'd do that this year or not, but I'm sure we would be happy to do it if the Village would like us to do a composting demonstrating. And it would be a backyard composting.

Michealene Day:

Do we need a motion? Can someone make a motion to accept the proposal that Barbara Larson has provided?

Jim Bandura:

I would make that motion.

Monica Yuhas:

Second.

Michealene Day:

All in favor?

Voices:

Aye.

Michealene Day:

We look forward to working with you, Barb.

Barbara Larson:

Thank you very much.

Mike Kim:

Hi, I'm Mike Kim, I'm a village resident. I was here today because I wanted to make sure the Village garden happens again this year. I thought it was a very good start last year. Today I just wanted to get some comments in and have some questions that I wanted answered if that's okay.

Michealene Day:

Sure.

Mike Kim:

Okay. I was wondering if we could extend the size of the garden this year, have more plots put in, fenced in, and possibly if we have enough volunteers have each plot manned by one or two people and that would be their responsibility to take care of those spots or that plot. I think it's easier and more productive if a person is actually assigned a plot and they take care of it. I don't know what the logistics of that would be and what would happen if they don't show up or if they don't take care of their particular plot. But I think it's better that people have ownership of their own plot and maybe have them grow, let's say, all tomatoes or all cucumbers or peppers in their designated plot.

Michealene Day:

I wasn't involved at all so I don't know how that worked. John?

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

I think as long as we can get the people is really the key. I do know that last year we did struggle a little bit at times getting the people in, and that's my only concern is that if we start growing it too fast that we run into some of the problems.

Mike Kim:

We had a late start last year.

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

We have three right now, and Barb is proposing to put four or five and that's going to bring us to eight already. And so we're actually like 250 percent more than what we were last year. And so maybe by just adding the five on there that brings it up to eight, then we can kind of work with that then maybe bring it to 12 the year following or something like that.

Mike Kim:

Because I could volunteer to take care of two plots myself if we don't have enough volunteers. So I'm willing to do that. But the other thing is I'd like to see a plan like in what to do with the produce we make, that we grow. One way is to give to a food bank or a pantry. But I've been searching in Pleasant Prairie and there's nothing like that available. So the other option would be maybe if we have a farmer's market this year or coming up sometime soon, then we could sell the produce there and take the proceeds

and donate it to nonprofit or an organization that needs help or whatever. And the last option would be to distribute it among the volunteers. But some way so that the produce doesn't get wasted. All that effort I want to make sure it gets used.

Jim Bandura:

Just out of curiosity, do we have an exchange booth, say they're starting to grow it and somebody is growing a lot of tomatoes and the other one is cucumbers and they want to exchange. Is there a way of designating a small –

Mike Kim:

I don't think we have that, and that was one of my questions. How do we get the logistics of how to put all the questions I have together and getting people together so that we could discuss it outside of this meeting because you guys are busy and you have other issues you have to cover.

Mike Pollocoff:

The people at RecPlex were talking about the gardens that were started out there last year, and they actually have hired a person on staff who her title is, she just started this week, she's a wellness coordinator. And one of the programs that RecPlex is starting up this year is to – you know it's a nice place to work out and be, but they're also trying to expand out the experience for people who are members to develop healthier eating habits, eating more vegetables, better things like that. And one of the outcomes of the surveys that were done for the master plans for both the Rec Plan and the Park Plan was the desire or the want for a lot of people in the community to be able to have farmer's markets or someplace they could go to to get fresh food or local food.

I know one thing that they're working on is they wanted to find a way to partner with the people that were working on the beds to when the produce comes about to be able to bring that into RecPlex and sell it. And then whoever brings it in and sells it takes the money and does what they do with it. I mean we're not looking to collect money for it, but just have it be an opportunity where we've invited some farmers to come out and just have a market. Again, say we're not going to charge you for it, here's a space, just clean up after yourself when you're done. And it's been a little tough to be honest with you.

We have a lot of people there on weekends in the summer, but maybe it's not like Harbor Park, but I know that's one thing they're interested in doing. And they're also interested in we've had people from a recreation program standpoint want to learn how to garden. There's some recreation departments that's just another one of the rec programs that they do is community gardening. So I can maybe get you in touch with somebody over there and they can put those things together. Maybe, again, it might be baby steps this year to get it going, but it could be something that could take off. I know that's a big push that

they're going to be making this spring and summer is to find a way to introduce those components into a healthier lifestyle or living. And we just thought that the gardens out there were a natural connection.

Mike Kim:

Mike, do you have that person's name or can I call you?

Mike Pollocoff:

Sure, you can call me, 925-6721. Like I say she just started and I can visualize her but I can't remember her name. I should remember that. But I'll get you in touch with her and the rec director.

Mike Kim:

And I'll talk to her and see what we can come up with then.

Mike Pollocoff:

That was just an idea. As far as the money, like I say, we're not looking for any money out of it. We would collect it for you and provide a place for you to sell and collect it, but we just want to make sure that it happens out there and that people have access to it.

Mike Kim:

Do we need some kind of permit for like nonprofit so that when the money is collected we could put it in a fund or how does that work?

Mike Pollocoff:

That would be your call. I don't have any problem, and I don't think the Village does either, if someone is engaged in a program and they're growing produce and they make it available to the members or the Village residents at a reasonable cost, and we think that's a good thing and we provide space for it, then I think it's really up to the people what they're doing with it. I mean it's nice that it's a nonprofit and people should know that, but I wouldn't know that we would make that a requirement. It would just be a nice benefit.

Mike Kim:

Because I don't like that handling the money part. I would rather see that go right into some kind of account or whatever and then get distributed if it got big.

Mike Pollocoff:

They could handle the money there for you, but I think my first inclination would be we'd rather have the people who grew it handle it. It kind of closes the deal.

Michealene Day:

I just on a personal note I had the Wisconsin Department of Revenue come in for sales tax audits, and is that sales taxable if they're in the office there selling produce? I'd just hate to have these people coming in and volunteering and then the IRS comes in or the Wisconsin Department of Revenue comes in and says you just sold \$100 worth of groceries and you didn't claim it so now you owe the tax and penalty and interest. So I just don't want us to say, yeah, go ahead and sell it and then the IRS comes in.

Mike Pollocoff:

Food is exempt.

Michealene Day:

And comes in and says ah.

Cindy Schwab:

What about thinking about a totally different approach is these gardens were to get more people interested in doing it, and so why sell the produce instead? Whoever this wellness coordinator is, what if the food is just picked, because our goal is to eventually to have more gardens, so these are demonstration gardeners who hand out the food, have somebody from the RecPlex, maybe if we're going to work in conjunction with them, explain and use it as a tool like this was grown out here with very little work. Because that does spark peoples' interest, and then we are probably more likely to be able to grow it or expand it at a different park, have more people in the community respond than charging a fee for something that's being grown on public – I don't know.

William Mills:

I agree, it seems like to bring money into it just makes it a lot more difficult.

Cindy Schwab:

I just think the community gardens really should be about sparking interest in gardening, not about producing a profit.

William Mills:

I agree.

Mike Kim:

I agree with that, too. One of the ideas I had last year was to maybe have a local chef from a restaurant cook and do a presentation wherever, maybe at the RecPlex, and that would tie in with the wellness program for healthy cooking and use the vegetables that way, too. Maybe you could get different chefs from different restaurants once a week on the weekend or whatever and do a presentation.

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

I think those are all great ideas. I've actually met the wellness coordinator, and I guess it's like a liaison between her and you. Maybe all three of us can work together and come up with a plan that works for the park, that works for the residents, that works for the RecPlex and maybe try to meet in the next couple weeks before the season gets really busy. I'll plant that seed, so to say, to kind of get that going.

Mike Kim:

Okay, so real quick, two other things I was thinking about is how to close up the plots at the end of the season. Last year some of the plants I dug up and pulled up and tossed it over the fence because I had no place to put it. I was thinking it would be great if we had a compost bin there and we can just pull it out and toss it in. So maybe we can get one of those installed this year. It doesn't take any work to compost vegetable matter.

[Inaudible Audience Comment]

Mike Kim:

And maybe tool storage. I have a truck so it's no big deal, but I brought in a mower a couple times and I mowed. I could even donate a mower, but I would like to see it stored somewhere.

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

We have a really good relationship with the construction group at Tremper, and they've actually made pretty much all of the storage sheds that we've had there. I really didn't have a need for one until you had just spoke right now. So I'll speak with the director of that program, and I'll see if they can't make us up like a little 5 by 5 or 6 by 6 shed, something like that, just to put a mower, some shovels, posts, stuff like that. I think that's a great idea. Excellent.

Mike Kim:

I guess that's all I had, just trying to get together with some people to talk about how to get this going.

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

I believe that Ruth has your contact information, and I will give you a call this week or early next week and we'll set some meetings up and we'll push that forward. Thank you very much.

Mike Kim:

Thank you.

Michealene Day:

Thank you, Mike, for your dedication. It's appreciated. Any other questions for Mike at all?

b) Discuss letter received from The Nature Conservancy regarding 4.42 acres of Barnes Prairie land in Chiwaukee Prairie to be transferred to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Jean Werbie-Harris:

Madam Chairperson and members of the Park Commission, the Land Use Management Plan for the Chiwaukee Prairie/Carol Beach Area was adopted by Pleasant Prairie back in the mid 1980s. That plan set forth a recommended Land Use Management Plan which identified areas to be developed for urban purposes and those areas that would be preserved for conservancy or open space purposes, as well as those to be acquired in the public's interest under a willing seller/willing buyer basis. Over the years many of the lots were acquired by The Nature Conservancy of Wisconsin, the Chiwaukee Prairie Preservation Fund, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Village in accordance with that plan.

One area, however, that was not identified in the plan for a permanent open space acquisition was determined later after the plan had been adopted by the Wisconsin DNR to be of environmental significance. And this was identified as the Barnes Prairie. As you can see on the slide and in your packets, basically between 94th and 95th Street, just north of 94th Street south of 94th Street and north of 95th Street, there are a number of lots in that area that were acquired and were deemed to be determined to be very significant. And by the State of Wisconsin they were determined to be acquired and to be named as the Barnes Prairie State Natural Area.

The lots were recently offered to the Village of Pleasant Prairie for a permanent open space preservation and management. The Village staff recommended that the lots be transferred back over to the Wisconsin DNR rather than the Village as they are well equipped to manage and to monitor these types of preserves and other holdings in the Prairie. This is an area in proximity to this area that the Village extended municipal services, and so I don't think that the Village did not have any interest in acquiring these for permanent open space when we intended that these lots at one point were going to be developed for urban purposes as are the other lots to the north and south on either side.

So this is more or less for your information and correspondence to be filed. There was a letter that was attached from The Nature Conservancy. They have been in direct contact with Marty Johnson from the Wisconsin DNR in order to see the transfer of these lands to the DNR for that open space preservation.

Michealene Day:

Anyone have any questions or comments?

William Mills:

Has that been the normal practice that when they want to transfer the lots that it goes to the Wisconsin DNR as opposed to the Village of Pleasant Prairie?

Jean Werbie-Harris:

No. Actually when the Chiwaukee Prairie Preservation Plan was put together back in the '80s, there were specific areas that were identified as acquisition areas for the Wisconsin DNR and those for The Nature Conservancy of Wisconsin, and a few designated areas like along Lake Michigan and near some lakes and water bodies and creeks those were identified to be transferred to the Village of Pleasant Prairie. So depending on where you are in Chiwaukee Prairie they went to certain agencies. What we have come to learn is that the DNR is really well equipped as they are acquiring more and more of these lots. And I'm guessing at this point that they're at about 85 or 90 percent of what they were initially going to acquire to acquire for open space preservation. This is just kind of an anomaly. It's in a certain area surrounded by single family. It just is a little bit more difficult to manage, but they are more well equipped to handle these kinds of isolated plots.

Mike Pollocoff:

Basically it's a violation of the plan to acquire this and put it into preservation, because everybody agreed [inaudible]. So I think that, and I agree with Jean, the DNR is set up to do this management in the Chiwaukee Prairie [inaudible] development [inaudible]

violating the plan [inaudible].

William Mills:

Thank you.

Michealene Day:

Any other questions or comments? Does this need a motion then? Can I have a motion then to accept the Village's recommendation to the Barnes Prairie land and Chiwaukee Prairie to be transferred to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources?

Monica Yuhas:

So moved.

Jim Bandura:

Second.

Michealene Day:

All in favor?

Voices:

Aye.

Michealene Day:

Motion carries.

c) Discuss proposed Management Recommendations Plan for Sorensen Woods at Killdeer Farm.

Jean Werbie-Harris:

Madam Chairperson and members of the Park Commission, on November 16, 2010 the Village Board adopted a resolution accepting a land donation from J. Sorensen for the property located at about 11400 on the west side of 47th Avenue in the Village. The land donation is generally described as a 6.56 acre wooded oak savannah with trails running through the site along with a narrow band of wetlands traversing through the property kind of in the north/northwestern portion of the property. The land is located within a secondary environmental corridor land use designation as shown on the Village's 2035

Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The land is located within a C-2, Upland Resource Conservancy Zoning District. The C-2 District describes the land as being in an area intended to be preserved, protected, enhanced and restored as a significant woodland area.

Last fall the Village staff was contacted by the Millholland family. Just the single family home and the cottage and the other home, those properties immediately south of the area identified in the red rectangle is the Millholland family farmstead. At one point they owned this woods as well as all the land surrounding it. And so they have always, at least from 1950 on, had a very keen interest in the development or preservation of this particular land in this area. The Millholland family, again, lives adjacent to the Sorensen Woods. Additional woodlands are also located on the Millholland land adjacent to the woods to the south. As you can see, they extend south almost into the farmstead and the home sites.

On November 11, 2011, the Village staff members from the parks and community development departments met with the Millholland family to discuss the future of the woods. The Millhollands indicated the following: First, that their family had a draft proposal prepared for the Village to review which included management recommendations for the woodland maintenance on the woods. The management plan was prepared by Frank Hassler of Good Oak LLC Ecological Services. Two, they would like to restore the Sorensen and their adjacent woodlands to an oak forest or oak savannah pre-1930s. Three, they would like to discuss the plan and have the plan, which includes the scope of work, time frame, costs, etc. adopted and supported by the Park Commission and the Village Board.

Four, they would like to establish a partnership with the Village. Five, they understand that the Village has very little to no funding or staff time to conduct these activities at this time, but they are willing to volunteer and take the lead in all the management activities. Six, they want to work as volunteers to implement the plan, remove the dead wood, cut down the buckthorn, spray invasive species and re-establish the trails. And, seven, they would be willing to sign an indemnification agreement and waiver of liability and to work as volunteers on Village land in the Sorensen Woods.

In December the Village staff also met with Marty Johnson who is the wildlife biologist for Wisconsin DNR to obtain his insight and review the Millholland plan to restore the woods to an oak forest or an oak savannah. Mr. Johnson provided the Village with some contacts at UW-Parkside that may be willing to assist in the restoration project.

Other thoughts by the staff at the time was that we have a couple of different areas of the Village including out in Prairie Springs Park that have large stands of oak trees and potentially could be created back to an oak savannah. And we are recommending that this would be a good opportunity for a smaller project, almost like a pilot project in the Village, to work with a group of volunteers to restore it back to this natural oak savannah

or oak forest. And putting together the plan, working with the volunteers and kind of setting up a strategy of how this could work this could be, again, a first step on how we're going to do this, whether the next step would be a larger project like Momper's Woods or a project as large as Prairie Springs Park, but to kind of get our feet wet and to kind of get us understanding what would be all involved, how many volunteers, what kind of training would they need to have and what actually might it cost the Village to be involved. Again, in this particular project the Millholland family they have four sons and a caretaker, and they're all willing to be involved with respect to restoring this natural woodland back to its, like I said, pre-1930s condition.

So what I'd like to do is I'd like to have some discussion with the Park Commission as to their opinion with respect to this, and then my recommendations and the public works recommendations would be to follow through with the five different items that I've outlined in the staff's recommendations.

Michealene Day:

Jean, I have a question on item number five that Millhollands had and said that they were willing to volunteer and take the lead in management activities. Are they capable to do that? I mean a lot of times volunteers volunteer to do something and they don't understand the commitment of time or they don't have the organizational skills or they don't have the back power, the manpower to actually do it once they start and then it falls apart. And then it would fall back on public works to do it but they have good intentions. So I guess my question would be if staff and you believe that they are capable to handle this project I'm all for it. I just don't want to get the project started and they go holy cow, what have I gotten myself into? Or, you walk in and go what are they doing? And that would be my only concern.

Jean Werbie-Harris:

I think what we do need to do is sit down with the Millholland family as well as, again, maybe Marty Johnson or someone from Parkside, and we have to define a little bit more clearly the scope of work and the time frame and any costs involved in doing a project like this. Because I think that they're more than capable. The woods have been in their family for a number of years but I think you're right. I think we need to set it up so that it's broken down in phases or time frames as to what could be done and what could really be accomplished in each season and what it might cost.

I do feel that there needs to be someone from public works to oversee what they're doing. And I know that we have one or two people that are trained at least in fire burning and doing fire breaks and things like that. Kevin talked to me about this, and then there was another staff person from public works, I think it was Leroy, that was out there with me that they talked about this project. Again, this is much smaller than Momper's Woods or Prairie Springs Park. And ultimately I believe the Village should be in some type of

position at some point to understand that if we want to protect and preserve these woods, we want to create something for future generations, we need to understand a little bit more about what's involved, what it's going to take and what the costs are. And if we can't do this because of our budget constraints, then we need to determine whether or not we want to get other groups or other volunteers involved.

Maybe John could speak to this, but I know that there was a good burning of the Des Plaines, I think that was last year, and I think you coordinated with the fire department and some other folks out there. I think that was very successful. That's probably the hardest task is doing a control burn.

Michealene Day:

Sure, I think it's a great idea. I'm 100 percent in favor of it. I was just concerned, I don't know the Millhollands, and I don't mean to imply at all that they're not capable of doing so. I just hated to – and I'm sure you've done your homework, it was just a question in my mind.

Jean Werbie-Harris:

I guess I think that because they live there, this woods has been in their family for over 60 years, and they were the ones that went out and discussed this as a family, and they hired a biologist to go out there and someone to put a plan together to determine what should be done and what are the steps and so on and so forth. I think that they would like to do this and I think they're capable of doing it.

Michealene Day:

Okay, great.

Jean Werbie-Harris:

But I do believe that the Village needs to provide some oversight for this.

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

And I would agree with Jean. She was talking about our parks foreman Kevin Meyers, and he has a whole bunch of certifications and degrees in horticulture and everything else. He's very familiar with invasive species, identifying different ways to remove them appropriately per all the regulated standards. So I would probably put Kevin as one of his responsibilities at least to oversee or work with the Millhollands on this. So at least they are getting some Village guidance in this and not just kind of running on their own. So I do agree with you, Madam Chair, that it is important that the Village still kind of keeps a little bit of a handle on it, and we do have some staff that can work on it a limited

amount of time but probably enough to make sure or at least to ensure our confidence that the Millhollands are doing it right, so maybe a little bit more time up front, having some meetings talking with them. And once we have a level of comfort with each other, then we can kind of let them work on it a little bit more, but the Village would still have staff kind of overseeing it on a regular basis.

Michealene Day:

Thank you, John. Any other questions?

Cindy Schwab:

I guess my concern kind of goes back to yours where you keep saying up on the front end. Typically an average homeowner even if they've owned woods would be very hard pressed. I mean if you read through this list the invasive and noninvasive I think an average person even involved in the woods would have a hard time ID-ing those. And sometimes the difference between a native and invasive I mean they're still, you know, in the viburnum family but one is invasive and one is not. I think you can do a lot of damage to native species if you don't know what you're doing. And so hopefully someone from the Village actually works with them to let them know. And maybe they do know, but I don't think that should be something that's assumed that they can ID all those native and invasives.

Michealene Day:

Any other concerns or questions?

William Mills:

Has there been any changes to the land at all since the Village took possession? Maybe I have this confused with another piece of property. I thought at one time we had talked like a very small like gravel where you could at least drive in. Again, maybe I'm confused with the piece of property.

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

I believe that this is the same site. We actually had an Eagle Scout that had started working on this as one of his Eagle Scout projects, and his time had just run out so he wasn't able to complete it. He actually worked on another project. And so I believe this is that same parcel that you are referring to but nothing has been done.

Michealene Day:

Any other questions? I would like to entertain then a motion to accept the Village's

recommendation to continue working with the Millhollands and restoring the property into a pre-1930s savannah.

Jean Werbie-Harris:

I guess the one comment I wanted to make is that one of the things that I think we do need to do is talk to the biologist either from Parkside or from DNR. Because it could either be restored to an oak forest or an oak savannah. They're two very different looks and feels. One clears out all of the under story and it makes it much more of an open, open park and one does not. And so I'm not educated enough on what those two things are. So maybe with the staff comments just to kind of move forward and consult, again, the professionals that understand this. One of the things that I had talked to the Millhollands about is they probably need to have a biologist on staff or someone whenever they're working out there and have any questions maybe we'll work through that as part of our process. But they need to have somebody out there that's working with them as well as the Village.

Michealene Day:

Cindy, you seem to be quite knowledgeable on this if someone had a question because isn't this your field? Would you be – I don't want to volunteer you.

Cindy Schwab:

No, no, definitely I would be willing –

Michealene Day:

To help with that. Thank you, Cindy.

Monica Yuhas:

Jean, what is the time frame on this?

Jean Werbie-Harris:

Well, they would like to actually begin sometime this spring. But I guess that it's been so many years at this point I'd rather get a process set up and the timing set up and scope of work and everything put together. I think that that would be in the best interest of everyone so that it's done right.

Monica Yuhas:

And will that come before this Commission again before the process starts so we're

updated?

Jean Werbie-Harris:

I think it should.

Monica Yuhas:

I agree.

Jean Werbie-Harris:

I think it should so that it's a little bit more clear in everyone's mind. And certainly for John's budgeting purposes if it requires a couple hours of Kevin's time here or there or a week at this time and then not again until the fall, I guess those are some of the things that he's going to need to know and understand.

Monica Yuhas:

That's where I was going. Thank you.

Michealene Day:

Okay, so I guess I'm going to amend my motion just to recommend as – for the Village to go ahead and move ahead with this project and then come back. Would that be appropriate?

–:

Yes.

Michealene Day:

Can I have a motion?

Jim Bandura:

You got it.

William Mills:

Second.

Michealene Day:

All in favor?

Voices:

Aye.

Michealene Day:

And then, John, Cindy said she would help with that, too.

John Steinbrink, Jr.:

Alright, sounds good. So we'll make sure when we talk with the Millhollands and my park foreman, Kevin, that you're also included definitely. And thank you very much for helping us out with this.

d) Receive Master Park Plan status update.

Mike Pollocoff:

Well, it's been a while since we met with our consultant that was preparing the master plan update. And it's been a troubled little project in the sense that I think there's been some good work that's been done in there, and there's been some controversial work that's been done in there, and then there's the things that staff had some vigorous disputes with the consultant on. I was at a point where I was trying to piece this thing together so that it would be a doable document because we need it for a number of reasons. One is we need to have an adopted park plan to enable us to secure grants and loans like that. And we need something as a guidance for our budget for public works to make their planning at least over a five year period for the improvements we need to make. And right now we're really out of that window.

We got the Park Plan for a pretty reasonable price. I mean you get what you pay for. My discussions with the consultant that prepared it I basically said, listen, we're done with what we have. Give me the cleaned up version for what's been done to date. And then what I'm really recommending is that we piece this thing together where we're going to at a series of Park Commission meetings I'm going to have to get you guys on your monthly schedule and, depending on what the chapters are, we'll do one or two chapters. And we're going to take what the park consultant put together, staff is going to prepare some additional comments or maybe even some insertions of things that we think need to be in there and get this thing put together ourselves and get this thing done.

If you think back to the previous master plan that we did the consultant did prepare a Master Park Plan, but we did have a lot of meetings with them that I think were fairly productive. The last set of meetings we had were we just never got to a good productive

point where we were dealing with some issues. And I think there's some things that were brought up in the plan that were maybe a little controversial or edgy or whatever, but I think what we need to do as a Commission and staff is sit down, we paid somebody to give us their external look into how we do business, I think we need to consider it and say it's crazy or maybe they've got an idea and then deal with it. Have you guys make a recommendation on whether to include that in the plan or exclude it and go forward and get the thing done.

So my hope is that we can get started on this and have her done this fall and get it adopted and put in place. And it will be our plan. But it would be nice to have just had it done and everybody be happy, but realistically that wasn't happening. So we're going to have to make ourselves happy. We're going to have to work to do it. Probably I think the silver lining in this I think it's a good experience for the Park Commission to really get down into the weeds on this with us and get this thing ironed out and have that be the basis for how we move forward. And I don't have that document from the consultant yet. So as soon as I get that we'll get it out to you. We're going to structure it so you get a chapter or two or three. I'm going to try to give us an hour and a half just to go through this, maybe two hours on some of the stickier things.

The things that you're going to probably see the most significant changes are going to be how we approach the goals and objectives. I completely disagreed with how he presented the financial process to fund these improvements and take care of it, so that's going to need to be reworked. But I think we got to me the most valuable part of the project was to the extent that we got an outsider's look at how the Commission operates. I mean [inaudible] that stuff and just go through it. But secondly I think that there was a lot of statistically valid information that we secured from the service. They seemed to transfer pretty well from some of the things that happened in Park and Rec. So I think to toss that out would not be – I don't think that's a good thing. We haven't had – that was a more intensive survey than we had as far as what they did by email or mail survey or phone call.

The person to person survey, the workshops, were a disaster. I mean the only people there as us. We had a couple citizens. It just didn't happen. We had the same problem on the Rec plan, too. We actually had them in the Rec Center where the members were there and they knew about it or they were told about it. I don't know if they knew about it. I think we need to take the good things that we can get out of this thing and use them and put the plan together. So that's my recommendation. I don't want to turn it over to another consultant and have them do it, and I really don't want to turn it over to the staff to do it. I mean we could do a plan for you, and if you want a plan what we think is fine we could do that for you, but I think you guys all have important input and vision as to where you want to see us going. I want to get that incorporated into the document.

Jim Bandura:

Out of curiosity, Mike, once we get that document in hand, do we have the right to do our own insertions in it?

Mike Pollocoff:

Yeah, it's your plan, it's our plan.

Jim Bandura:

It is ours.

Mike Pollocoff:

It will no longer be the consultant's plan. We owe the consultant the courtesy of not altering his document and keeping his name on it because he might not agree with our method or what we came up with, so you won't see that document as a final result.

Jim Bandura:

So in other words you'd essentially take points with that and marry it up with yours and that would become a Village document?

Mike Pollocoff:

Right.

Jim Bandura:

A Village-owned document.

Mike Pollocoff:

Right.

Michealene Day:

Now, it does have to get approved by the Village Board.

Mike Pollocoff:

Right.

Jim Bandura:

I just look at it legally so that he put it together, he's got his name on it and –

Mike Pollocoff:

In the plan we'll reference and credit him for information that we decide to use. And he did do a fair amount of, like I say, statistical work, survey work, some base work, he did some plans, he did some park plans, some areas. I haven't heard anybody really be opposed to those. So I think the things that he did that we feel are of value we accept them, give him credit for it in the document where that was a service we contracted for to have somebody prepare it for us, he did it, we accept it, and it's included as part of the plan. And then the other things that we feel are important to us as far as process of how this going to go forward or the goals that we set for ourselves or how we organize or what we do those are things that the Park Commission is going to come up with and make a recommendation in the plan and include that. So it will be a Village document, but it will be a composite of resources that we acquired from the things that we do every day plus what the consultant provided.

Michealene Day:

Because we haven't seen this new consultant's Village plan or the Parks Plan, originally I had thought that this was just going to be an update from what we had, change any economical issues or changes that the Village has had and then update it for the next five years. But as I'm understanding it, it's like a completely brand new, throw away the old plan, here's the new plan, and it's just am I correct in that, that it really isn't a continuation of the old plan, it's like a whole –

Mike Pollocoff:

It's a completely different format.

Michealene Day:

So it's not going to be like we're going to be able to take our old plan and compare it to the new plan and update it?

Mike Pollocoff:

Those are things that I think we need to do. We have good information in the old plan that we need to bring forward and update in this plan.

Michealene Day:

Because I thought the old plan was really pretty good.

Mike Pollocoff:

It was, I'm not saying it wasn't. But the old plan didn't test us or push us either. The old plan, for lack of a better description, was a really good SEWRPC document. You would take it and put it on the shelf and you'd use it to say I've got my plan done, give me some grant money. But as far as pushing us out on some of the goals that we wanted to achieve and how we want to operate and what we're going to do that plan didn't do it.

Michealene Day:

So we couldn't take that old plan and adjust it to make it be more aggressive.

Mike Pollocoff:

That's what we're going to do. When staff brings our recommended work or options we're going to be relying on the SEWRPC plan to do that, but I also want to take from the staff's standpoint take the work that I think was done out of the consultant's plan, make it Wisconsin and get it tied up to the way that how we do business here and present that. So, like I say, when it's done it's going to look like, and my goal and it will, it will look like one complete unified document. We know it's composed of a lot of different data and information from different sources but every plan's that way. It's just at the end of the day we don't have the document that I think we can live with and go forward with that we'd be happy with.

Jim Bandura:

So you're enhancing the SEWRPC plan essentially.

Mike Pollocoff:

I think the plan that we had before I think what I want to do is get it more generated for enabling the park's function and operation to come up with a viable plan for growth and development given the realities that we're living with today economically. The previous Park Plan is a good plan. If we had all the money in the world, if we had a ton of money, we could do that plan. It's not a realistic plan. It just is not a realistic plan. So what this plan here did is it recognized some of the things that we're dealing with as far as demand, but it didn't do a good job of measuring up against what our financial capability or even willingness is to spend a lot of money on parks.

William Mills:

And we were thinking at the time if I remember correctly that we were collecting fees from developers at that point, so part of that plan is built on a funding source that no longer exists at this point in time.

Mike Pollocoff:

Right, we still collect fees but nobody is developing.

Michealene Day:

Because I've been here forever, have any of you seen the old Park Plan?

Monica Yuhas:

Yes.

Michealene Day:

I know you have. Have you seen the old Park Plan? Is it something that's like online that those who want to review it can look at it and print it up if they want to so that before we start into this new process and we at least know where we came from and review where we can from and where we want to go forward to?

Mike Pollocoff:

Yeah, it is online. You can pull it up and look at it.

Michealene Day:

So perhaps before our next meeting we all have some homework to kind of review what there was, and then we should have by our next one what –

Mike Pollocoff:

My goal is to start us off with maybe the first two or three chapters of what the consultant did and then some recommendations we have for modifications. And then we'll just discuss those and make changes as we go through the meeting to get it to reflect what the Commission's vision is, and we'll just modify that plan and make it ours as we go through the document. Yeah, we'll make sure you have – you've got the one document, the original document, and as soon as we get the consultant's document I'll just send that out to you in total. But in the meetings we get we're going to piece that up. You'll just get it in pieces. I want to make this thing manageable so that we're –

Michealene Day:

We're not like overwhelmed.

Mike Pollocoff:

Right, and it gives you time to reflect on it as you're going through the document and tying it together.

Michealene Day:

Okay.

Jim Bandura:

You wouldn't do like the open cafes again would you?

Mike Pollocoff:

No, because I think the citizens' input from the survey was pretty good. I mean it's a different way than doing it in the cafes but we don't have to do cafes. It's one way of doing it. But I don't believe the money we spent on the survey was wasted because we didn't really have a good survey. What we had was a synopsis of who came to a café and what they said which is one method. But I think given the number of responses that went out in the survey and what we got that was more than what we had from the café. So I don't think we should short that. I think his method of gathering the data and analyzing was statistically sound. All the measurements I saw it held up pretty true.

Jim Bandura:

So it was just how the report was put together essentially.

Mike Pollocoff:

Yeah, it was sloppily put together. I mean it didn't tie together well. It wasn't presented well. Some of the assumptions were even though we had some good statistics I think they were more opinion based than statistically based. There were things in there that just weren't comfortable. Some aspects of it, it would be the kind of report if somebody said to a consultant come in and tell us what people think about us and tell us what you think we should be doing and make some recommendations. And that's not an atypical plan that some governments receive. But it's not typical at all for what typically we accept as a plan or what we use as a document that guides our planning in the future.

I think we have a lot of room to improve upon what's been the model we've used because the one we've done before does assume there is no restriction on money and here's all these things you can do. And even in good times you fall short. Now it just isn't realistic. For us to put together a plan even what he said where you're going to spend \$7 million on park improvements over five years it's not going to happen. We can barely

spend \$7 million on police and fire and public works, just the core essentials. So we need a plan that really we'll say these are the things that we want to identify, the things we have to achieve and what our inventory of assets are and those goals, but then we really need a realistic set of goals, okay, let's be honest with ourselves, what can we achieve in five years? And if there's things we want to achieve that we can't at least we know what those are, and if we find some money we've got that loaded up.

But I think to give John something that he can work with that's realistic we've got to marry up what people really wanted that we got from input, what the Commission's vision is and what we can afford rather than a set of goals and objectives listing out every single thing that we could think of that could happen that we would want to do. That's nice, it's a great inventory, but as a usable document that you can budget with and relay to the community, here's what we're going to accomplish, it falls short. This plan will be successful if it's something that we put together that we like, it's fundable and it's deliverable. We can tell the public we are going to do these things and they see them happen, they know what's going to happen. There's some credibility and reliability based on what the Park Commission puts together as a goal and they're going to do it. If people want more, that's their time to say, well, it worked last time, let's get some more in there because that was pretty good. We had some good things happen and they said it was going to happen and it did. That's where the Park Plan has to land, and it's more critical for it to land that way in this economic environment than it was before.

Michealene Day:

Anybody else have any comments?

Monica Yuhas:

Mike, are you looking to get this done in the next six months?

Mike Pollocoff:

Yeah.

Monica Yuhas:

To have it wrapped up by October?

Mike Pollocoff:

Yeah, because I'd really like to be able to, one, we've got to get it adopted so we're back in the queue for getting grants in the future, but I want to even have it a little before that for budget.

Michealene Day:

So everybody on the next meeting be prepared that you're not going to get home to watch your next favorite TV show, that we'll be here for two hours, plan two hours.

Mike Pollocoff:

We'll try to keep – whenever something comes up we'll get it on the agenda, but we'll try to keep the agenda light especially if we've got a heavy chapter.

Michealene Day:

It would be nice if we could get our earlier, but at least if you're planning on two hours you're not going to be surprised that it takes two hours.

Monica Yuhas:

And, Mike, one thing I'd like to ask is maybe you can just include numbers for the last five what the Parks budget has been.

Mike Pollocoff:

Sure.

Monica Yuhas:

So everyone has a realistic expectation in their minds, this is the amount of money we've had the last five years, what are the next five years going to look like knowing what's going on in the economy right now, because that would also help us draw our own conclusions. Instead of planning the Mercedes maybe we're going for the Volkswagen. Maybe we need to get that in our mind.

Michealene Day:

Jean, are you going to be helping us attending the meetings?

[Inaudible Comment]

Mike Pollocoff:

I'll take all the help I can get.

Michealene Day:

I just know you're one of the smartest people I know. It would be great to have you there if you could be there.

6. PARK COMMISSION COMMENTS

Michealene Day:

Any other Park Commission comments? Alright, be prepared next month. Thank you very much.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Michealene Day:

May I have a motion to adjourn.

Jim Bandura:

So moved.

Monica Yuhas:

Second.

Michealene Day:

All in favor?

Voices:

Aye.