

**CITY OF MENDOTA HEIGHTS
DAKOTA COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES

FEBRUARY 8, 2005

The February 2005 meeting of the Mendota Heights Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Tuesday, February 8, 2005 in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 1101 Victoria Curve. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

The following Commissioners were present: Chair Richard Spicer and Commissioners Dave Libra, Stan Linnell, Larry Craighead, and Paul Portz. Commissioners Missie Hickey and Raymond Morris were excused from the meeting. City Staff present were Parks Project Manager Guy Kullander and Administrative Assistant Patrick C. Hollister. Mr. Hollister took the minutes.

MINUTES

Commissioner Portz moved approval of the January 11, 2005 Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes with revisions.

Commissioner Libra seconded the motion.

AYES: 5
NAYS: 0

RECREATION PROGRAMMER'S UPDATE

Chair Spicer noted that Ms. Gangelhoff was recovering from surgery and would not be present this evening. Chair Spicer asked Staff if the City had received any comments from residents, either positive or negative, about the extended rink hours

Mr. Hollister and Mr. Kullander said that to their knowledge they had not received any comments on the extended rink hours.

Chair Spicer commended Ms. Gangelhoff on her winter/spring recreation schedule.

ECO-LAB REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN

Mr. Kullander presented a copy of the Eco-Lab Redevelopment Concept Plan submitted to the City by Opus. Mr. Kullander said that the Planning Commission would review this concept plan at their regular meeting on February 22.

Chair Spicer said that it appeared that Opus was proposing a total of 131 housing units.

Mr. Kullander said that there were two issues that Staff was seeking guidance on from the Parks and Recreation Commission:

- 1) Easements for Trails. Mr. Kullander said that it was Staff's opinion that the City should require easements for trails as part of the development. Mr. Kullander said that he felt that it would be better to have the trail back further from the road for both safety purposes and tree preservation.
- 2) Park Dedication. Mr. Kullander said that Staff was suggesting that the City accept the required Park Dedication for the development in the form of cash rather than land, because City plans do not indicate a park in this location and if the City accepted a land dedication it could prove to be more maintenance trouble than public benefit.

Chair Spicer agreed that it would be better for the City to take the cash instead of land.

Mr. Kullander added that the Eco-Lab site is at the intersection of a state highway and a county road, and that those jurisdictions would have to approve the trails if constructed within the roadway right-of-way.

Commissioner Craighead asked if the City could get either MnDOT or Dakota County to pay for the trails.

Mr. Kullander said that because of the proximity of this site to the Big Rivers Trail, and the possibility of making a trail connection from the site to the Big Rivers Trail, it may be possible to get grant money from the state, county, or DNR for this trail segment.

Commissioner Linnell said that it would be desirable to complete the trail connections to both Wentworth Avenue and Lilydale after this development is completed. Commissioner Linnell said that he would also encourage the developer to provide sidewalks within the development. Commissioner Linnell said that there may not be room to place a "trail rest area" with a small shelter or benches on the site, and that these things would have to be a future consideration. Commissioner Linnell agreed with the idea of requesting MnDOT, County, or DNR funding assistance.

Commissioner Libra said that he agreed with taking cash instead of land, and that he also would like to get state or county funds so that the cash dedication is not partially expended by grading for the trail. Commissioner Libra added that Wachtler and Highway 13 is a busy intersection, and therefore he agreed with having the trail "cut the corner" to keep the bikers further from the road.

Mr. Kullander remarked that people tend to take the shortest route available anyway, so the trail might as well cut the corner.

TOBACCO-FREE PARKS

Mr. Kullander explained that the Police Chief had provided him with information on efforts by some cities in Minnesota to ban smoking in their parks.

Mr. Hollister said that he had talked to the Police Chief last week, and that the Chief had clarified that he was not asking Mendota Heights to adopt a similar measure, but that he only provided this as an information item.

Chair Spicer said that since there was a bill related to this topic currently under consideration in the state legislature, it would be best to wait to see the outcome of that bill before the City took any unilateral action.

VERBAL UPDATES

Staff provided the following updates:

- Police Report

OTHER COMMENTS

Chair Spicer announced that Commissioner Portz had been hired by Century College as their new Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services. The Commission congratulated Commissioner Portz.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Linnell moved to adjourn.

Commissioner Portz seconded the motion.

AYES: 5

NAYS: 0

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.