



CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Mayor Christopher B. Coleman

Suite 840  
50 West Kellogg Blvd.  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102  
www.stpaul.gov/parks

Telephone: 651-266-6400  
Facsimile: 651-292-7405

MEETING NOTES

FURNESS PARKWAY PATH EXTENSIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS

District 2 Community Council Meeting February 18, 2009

Epworth Methodist Church

Brian C. Tourtelotte, Landscape Architect

- I. Project overview
  - A. Funded by City’s Capital Improvement Budget program from bond sales, not from the general budget. There is no spending connection to jobs. Funded in parts over 3 years: 2006, 2007, and 2009.
  - B. Includes: extension of the pathways to complete the 16 blocks from Larpenteur to Maryland; lighting the length for safety; fencing where appropriate at adjacent private properties; benches and trash receptacles, crosswalks at Arlington and Sherwood; and tree planting, sod and seed as needed. These 7 elements of the project were presented and discussed at the Community meeting Feb 17.
  
- II. Project Design Presentation
  - A. The design is now standardized in conformance with national (AASHTO) standards. This path is classified as a neighborhood connector, shared pathway, low volume. Standard design width is 10 ft. (minimum).
  - B. Where possible, street crossings will be at corner intersections; these include Ivy and Luella, and Maryland and Hazel. Mid-block crossings will require signage to stop on the path, and warn the vehicles of a crossing point; no crosswalk striping will be included as the traffic engineer says that is less safe.
  - C. The project will complete path extension 4 blocks from Hoyt Avenue to Larpenteur, and 4 blocks from Maryland to Ivy Avenue. The northern section may have been a misinterpretation of the CIB proposal language, and does not conform with the District 2 Area Plan, which has not yet been adopted by the Planning Commission. While there was some objection to the development of pathways and the northern pathway in particular at the community meeting, the objections were not strong enough to conclude we should not accept it. However, the Council should render a decision on doing it or striking it.
  - D. The entire length is proposed to be lighted with classic pathway lighting, similar to the street lights recently constructed in the street revitalization project. We chose the Sun Valley fixtures, which is a softer light. However, this proposal may be a misinterpretation of the intent for “low level” lighting, which meant bollard-style lights. Bollard lights would not provide pathway safety lighting, and are problematic for maintenance; Parks would not recommend putting these lights in. The Council should render a decision on using the proposed lights or not.



- E. Fencing will be installed where appropriate at adjacent private property. It was decided to use a turned-log 2-rail fence style, but to give the individual owners a choice for Parks to install the fence, or just to do property corner markers instead. This is a compromise position, and may result in a variety of fence styles as one walks the parkway, very much like currently exists.
  - F. Benches will match the official District 2 bench. Benches and trash receptacles will be installed at the Larpenteur Avenue terminus, at the 2 existing bench locations, and near Orange Avenue. The new locations will have the units just off the path in a visible location.
  - G. Crosswalks will be constructed both sides of Arlington, and one side of Sherwood Ave. (which side is not clear), as indicated in the CIB description.
  - H. Signage proposed includes stop signs on paths at mid-block crossings, and on the streets warning vehicles of the crossing point. No identification style signage is included, but if the Council had intended that, we might still be able to consider it.
  - I. For personal safety of the path users, we will remove small volunteer trees (under 8 inch diameter) and prune some lower branches as needed to increase visibility of spaces around the pathway. All Oak trees will be protected. In the area from Idaho to California several Black Locust invasive trees will be removed, and two other trees need to be removed to protect a group of large Cottonwood trees.
  - J. Tree planting will be done in a fashion similar to previous planting projects in areas not done. In addition, we will do fill-in planting where trees have been lost or will be removed for health reasons.
  - K. Finally, one item not discussed at the Community meeting, which the Council needs to be aware of, is that a number of property encroachments have been discovered with the survey. The City attorney advises that there must be resolution of the encroachments. We have met with the attorneys to get education on encroachments (since Parks doesn't deal with this subject often), and will be meeting with Councilman Bostrom for his direction. It is our intent to be fair and sensitive, but that all must be resolved. We will be meeting privately with homeowners to resolve these issues.
- III. District 2 Community Council response
- A. After much discussion on the proposed path alignment, including review of the origins of intents stated in the Area Plan, there was general agreement that proceeding the both the north and south extensions was good.
  - B. One Council member discussed his experience with bollard style lighting, and agreed that they would not be appropriate for path lighting. General Council feeling was that we need to be sensitive to homeowners in placing the lights with as little impact as possible. That may include getting light shields if possible.
  - C. Fencing as decided at the community meeting was discussed, and it was agreed that the solution will be a compromise that may look strange, but is the correct decision.
  - D. The tree planting intent is agreed. It was suggested that some of the fill-in planting might consider trees that would add seasonal flower color.
  - E. Crosswalk at Sherwood should be the south side, which continues the sidewalk on both sides of the parkway. If possible, the Council would like to also add a crosswalk at the south side of Clear Ave. to continue the walk there.

- F. Safety on the path and in the neighborhood was discussed. It is agreed generally that experience shows that lighting the path will be good, and that the increased presence of pathway users will be a deterrent to crime activities. It was also noted that police will occasionally use the paved path in their patrols, and that allowance should be made for their access.
- G. Regarding the Larpenteur Avenue safety concern, Council suggestions included making the bench area into a small courtyard to appear like the end of the path. In addition, it was suggested that some bollards or break-away half-gates be used to deter vehicles from accessing the path. Police are able to go around the gate if they need to get onto the path.
- H. Council passed a motion to proceed with the project as proposed, including the decisions made at the community meeting, and with possible small adjustments as noted in the discussion.
- I. Council District Organizer Repke requested that he be included in meetings with property owners where the encroachments will be difficult to resolve. One specific request also is to be included in meeting with owners of 1558 Ruth St.