

MINUTES

**Thursday, December 8, 2016
Martin Luther King Recreation Center
271 Mackubin Street
6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Susan Bishop, Rafael Espinosa, Dan Marckel, John Mountain, Melvin Robinson, Emily Shively, Andy Trcka, SuChann Yang

MEMBERS ABSENT: Clara Haycraft

STAFF PRESENT: Mike Hahm, Joan Phillips, Alice Messer, Rachel Coyle

VISITORS: Shirley Erstad, Michael Kuchta, Gary Brueggemann, Tom Reisner, Joe McElwain, Tonya Johnson- Nicholie, Betty Moran, Adam Yust

1. AGENDA, MINUTES, INTRODUCTIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The meeting was called to order by Chair Trcka at 6:31 p.m.
- A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Mountain and seconded by Commissioner Shively. The vote was 6 to 0 in favor with three commissioners absent (Espinosa, Haycraft, Marckel).
- A motion to approve the November 2016 minutes was made by Commissioner Yang and seconded by Commissioner Robinson. The vote was 6 to 0 in favor with three commissioners absent (Espinosa, Haycraft, Marckel).
- Commissioner Espinosa arrived after the minutes and agenda were considered.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

- No one reserved the right to speak.
- A motion to close the public comment period was made by Commissioner Mountain and seconded by Commissioner Shively. The vote was 7 to 0 in favor with two commissioners absent (Haycraft, Marckel).

3. DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

A. Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Update – Rachel Coyle

- Rachel Coyle, Urban Forester, presented the commission with updated information on infestation rates, planned removals and reforestation.
- Director Hahm stated that plans have been adjusted as a result of 2017 proposed budget funds placed in contingency. More information is to come on any reprioritization that may be required as a financial resolution is sought.
- Commissioner Marckel arrived during the Department Highlight.

4. ACTION ITEMS

A. Res 16-08 Victoria Park Renaming – Alice Messer



- Alice Messer, Senior Landscape Architect presented a staff report on the item. She noted that the resolution differed from the norm as it comes with community concern.
- The Commissioners invited those in attendance to speak on the resolution. Gary Brueggemann, Tom Reisner, Joe McElwain, Adam Yust, and Tonya Johnson-Nicholie addressed the Commission.
- Commissioner Espinosa stated that he was concerned about the involvement of homeowners versus those who rent in the process.
- Alice Messer stated that the process was neither originated nor led by the Department of Parks and Recreation but by residents and the developer.
- Commissioner Bishop stated she was concerned that the name may reflect the history of the parcel of land but not necessarily all future uses of the park and had concerns about the breadth of community involvement.
- Commissioner Mountain raised concerns about the inclusivity of the process that occurred for all residents.
- Commissioner Marckel questioned if there would be additional time for the community to revisit the naming process and about the inclusion of City of Saint Paul Historical Preservation Committee (HPC) staff.
- Alice Messer indicated that she believed there would be enough time for additional work to occur that would not impinge on future fundraising efforts for the universally accessible playground at the site.
- Commissioner Shively stated that she is looking for additional information on the process as well as how those findings fit within the Naming Policy prior to making a recommendation on the name to City Council.
- Director Hahm stated that the Commission had the option to table the resolution to the February meeting that would allow additional work to be done by the community and/or staff, potential utilization of the master plan committee in that work and/or the HPC as well.
- Commissioner Espinosa motioned to table the matter until the February 2017 meeting. Commissioner Mountain seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 with one commissioner absent (Haycraft).
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5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. **Finalize Annual Planning Retreat**

- Staff plans to provide focused, concise staff reports on areas of interest expressed by the Commission as opposed to report outs from the past year.
- The January meeting will begin with a social hour. Commissioner Espinosa suggested that the food provided by from a local restaurant in close proximity to the meeting location

6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. **2017 Budget**

- Director Hahm reported that the budget was adopted as proposed with the placement of new funding items into contingency while the collection of ROW assessment fees is evaluated. Parks staff will continue to work on how to operationalize what delays in funding for EAB, rec centers and deferred maintenance will mean for work plans in 2017. The available 2017 budget for EAB remains the same as 2016 plus inflation.

B. Como Dockside Evaluation Process

- Director Hahm noted that the evaluation process was part of the Commission's work plan but that with the change in schedule for meetings, the sequence was out of order. The evaluation process will be added to the 2017 work plan allowing the report to be given to the Como Regional Park Committee first.

7. SUBCOMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE REPORTS

A. Como Regional Park Committee – Commissioner Marckel

- Commissioner Marckel reported that the community evaluation process for Dockside at the Como Lakeside Pavilion was on the agenda for the next Como Regional Park Committee meeting with additional information to come.

B. Transportation Committee of the Planning Commission – Chair Trcka

- Chair Trcka reported that the committee had been provided a summary of the Smith Avenue bridge construction project. He noted that he was concerned about the disruption that construction will cause for bicyclists.
- Chair Trcka also reported that the Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee is seeking applicants and that US Bicycle Highway 41 is expected to have a grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony on May of 2017.

C. Community Engagement Reports

- **No update**

D. Other Reports

- The Scheffer Community Design Advisory Committee will be added to the agenda with updates provided by Commissioner Robinson who is a member.
- Commissioner Bishop noted that the America Walks Summit would be coming to Saint Paul in September of 2017 for those interested.

2. ADJOURNMENT

- A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Shively and seconded by Commissioner Mountain. The meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.