

York Township Parks and Recreation Committee
February 24, 2010
7:00 p.m.
York Township Hall

Meeting called to order by chair F. Stukenborg at 7:05 p.m.

Present: Paul Fairchild, (arr. 7:43) John Farmer, Kathy Fischer, Norm Fischer, Jill Hargrove, Don Hasselbach, Paul Staley, Frank Stukenborg and guests from the community.

Chair F. Stukenborg opened the public meeting to discuss details of the MNRTF Grant application. He introduced the members of the committee to the audience and explained how the committee was striving to meet the growing needs of the community through the further development of the township parks. He specifically cited the need to protect and maintain equipment purchased for regular maintenance of the parks as well as the need to concentrate the equipment in a single accessible location. Increasing use of the park by families as well as soccer parents and their families has led to the addition of play equipment near the picnic pavilion. Long range plans to return the natural oak opening in the northwest segment of Richardson Park to its historic condition has led to the intermediate step of planning a seed and feed enhancement of the natural wildlife corridor along the seasonal watercourse in the park.

Committee member N. Fischer then discussed the proposed play area in more detail. Given our limited financial resources, the play area would very likely begin with an area of about 50 feet by 60 feet and contain 3 pieces of equipment. The 3 pieces of equipment were chosen after Grant chair K. Fischer conducted interviews with elementary school teachers, parents and grandparents about equipment to which children are naturally drawn. The area north of the picnic pavilion will be used so that parents can watch from the pavilion as their children play. The area would need to be excavated and drain tile would be installed under the 12 inches of safety surface comprised of manufactured wood chips. The play area would be accessed via an ADA compliant path from the pavilion and the play area would be surrounded by a cement path for accessibility as well as a mechanism for containing the wood chips.

N. Fischer then described the proposed maintenance building. It will be located just off the driveway from Willis Road. It will be 30 feet by 40 feet with a concrete floor and wood backed metal sides and roof. The building will have a 200 ampere electrical service for use within the building and for other potential use in that general area of the park. The east end of the building will feature a 36 inch steel entry door in a steel frame as well as a 10 foot by 10 foot over head door. A security light will be controlled by a photo electric device.

Committee member and naturalist J. Farmer then discussed the proposed enhancement of the natural wildlife corridor along the seasonal watercourse. He showed some of the earliest survey maps of the area from the mid 1800's indicating that it was then described

as “Oak Openings” or just “Openings”. The thinking is that Native Americans maintained these areas with the use of fire as ideal hunting grounds and for farming. He pointed out that it is estimated that only about 6/100 of 1% of these traditional oak openings remain in Michigan. He also described how Richardson Park is part of the dividing line between the drainages of Buck Creek/Stony Creek and Saline River/River Raisin and the natural wildlife corridors concurrent with the drainages. Since Richardson Park is connected to McCann Park by a natural drainage and natural wildlife corridor there is a natural synergy between the parks. The proposed seed and feed strip although relatively small at first will naturally spread as it is maintained with prescribed burns and light tilling.

Community members were then given the opportunity to ask questions or make comments. One question was raised about water supply to the maintenance building. It is felt that it is too expensive to do at this time since we would need to drill a well and also install a septic system, but that we are preparing for that future possibility by installing plumbing “stubs” through the cement floor. We are also planning to install an electrical “stub” through the concrete floor for potential future use.

Another person from the audience commented that the committee had done their homework in coming up with a plan that includes play equipment and provides for the care of park equipment while still focusing on protecting the natural assets of the park.

The other comment received was that the plan was very positive for the community and well worth doing.

The public meeting was adjourned by chair F, Stukenborg at 7:33.

The regular meeting of the committee was called to order at 7:35.

Minutes of the January 27, 2010 meeting were reviewed. Motion F. Schettenhelm, support J. Farmer to approve. Carried 8-0

Citizen Comments: None

Announcements and Communications:

No volunteer hours were presented.

F. Stukenborg reported the generous gift to the Parks by the Township Supervisor of a heavy duty come-along to show his appreciation of our work.

Standing Reports:

J. Hargrove that the Board continued to work on the budget and procedures. The request for up to \$600 for the EEPRA dedication was approved. Funds to come from Parks general fund.

P. Fairchild reported that several small trees were down along the trail. He was asked to assess the water situation along the woodland trail as the snow melts this spring.

N. Fischer indicated status quo at McCann. F. Stukenborg indicated that he had spoken to the township deputy about issues at McCann and received assurances that the park will continue to be patrolled.

J. Farmer reported that planning for the EEPRA dedication was coming along with another meeting scheduled for next week. Parking for the event was discussed.

F. Stukenborg is working on a quote for an aluminum plaque recognizing the contributions from CARES, U.S. Fish and Wildlife and Wildflower Association of Michigan to the EEPRA project.

K. Fischer reported that after anticipated monthly withdrawals are made and the Toyota money is removed, our balance for this fiscal year is \$3483.97.

Special Reports:

No new news on the 2010-11 parks budget.

K. Fischer reported her conversation with a contact at the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living relative to our MNRTF grant. The Center charges \$100/hour for consultation, including travel time to advise us pertaining to ADA compliance and Universal Accessibility. **Motion** F. Stukenborg, support J. Hargrove to spend up to \$200 for a consultation with the Center regarding accessibility issues on grant elements.

Carried 9-0.

F. Stukenborg reported on a presentation given to the Great Sauk Trail Council, BSA on February 11, 2010. A number of groups were represented including Washtenaw County Natural Areas Preservation, Ann Arbor Natural Areas Preservation, Washtenaw County Parks and Preserves, UM Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum, and Grass Lake Sanctuary. York Township Parks received positive comments for the help that prospective Eagle candidates received on substantive meaningful projects.

N. Fischer reported on attending a SEMCOG University presentation regarding the importance of a detailed Parks and Recreation Master Plan in seeking MNRTF Grants. Speakers included Linda Hegstrom, Grant Coordinator MDNRE, Sally Elmiger and Lucie Forten, Landscape Architects, Carlisle/Wortman Associates, Inc., Terry Cady, Community Education and Outreach for the Disabilities Network of Mid Michigan, John Paskus and Phyllis Higman, Michigan Natural Resources Inventory. They provided an array of resources that can be tapped in grant writing.

Old Business:

F. Stukenborg went over plans for the Willis Rd. parking lot, approved at the last meeting, which includes 60 cubic yards of gravel, 2 hours of dozer time, and 54 – 4” X 6” X 12’ posts to be cut in half and set upright to contain vehicles in the parking lot.

Motion P. Fairchild, support N. Fischer to purchase a 14’ gate and supporting post to replace broken gate at pump house, not to exceed \$250. **Carried 9-0**

Goals for 2010 were reviewed. **Motion J.** Farmer, support F. Schettenhelm to approve goals as amended. **Carried 9-0**

Potential Eagle and BSA service projects were identified and several EEPRA related projects were added to the list.

New Business:

More seedlings are needed to complete the planting near the Willis Rd. entrance. **Motion F.** Stukenborg, support N. Fischer to purchase 25 White Pine and 25 Norway Spruce seedlings at a cost not to exceed \$50. **Carried 9-0**

2 rounded cover tops for the 55 gallon garbage cans at McCann are needed to keep water out of the drums. **Motion K.** Fischer, support P. Staley to purchase 2 rounded steel lids from Granger @ \$125. **Carried 9-0**

Meeting adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Norm Fischer