



**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS
PARKS, TRAILS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 16, 2021, 6:30 PM
ARDEN HILLS CITY HALL**

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair John Van Valkenburg called the March 16, 2021 meeting of the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Committee to order at 6:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair John Van Valkenburg, Committee Members Paul Beggin, Dan Dietz, Terry Finlay, Marie Hinton, and Rich Straumann

OTHERS PRESENT: Staff Liaison Joe Vaughan, Council Liaison David Grant

ABSENT: Committee Members Jill Anderson, Micah Kiernan, Suzanne McGaugh, Tim Nelson, Harold Peterson and Kristine Poelzer

Council Liaison Grant gave opening remarks noting that David Swearingen is the acting Director of Public Works and the engineering functions are being contracted out. Some of the members of PTRC have been going directly to Mr. Swearingen and making requests of his time. Mr. Swearingen works with Parks and Rec, but he is requesting that committee members bring concerns to Recreation Programmer Joe Vaughan who can report to David. Also, if the Committee has recommendations they should be given to the Chair who can forward them to staff.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: The agenda was unanimously approved by the Committee.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. February 17, 2021 PTRC Minutes

MOTION: The minutes were unanimously approved by the Committee.

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Snelling Avenue South Trail Update

Staff Liaison Vaughan stated there were no updates from staff on this trail.

Council Liaison Grant noted the Lake Johanna Boulevard trail is being studied by Ramsey County and will need to run its course at the County level, so there is no update. Council received the letter from PTRC and other comments from residents.

B. Mounds View High School Trail Update

Council Liaison Grant said this section of trail from County Road E2 to Mounds View High School is having a feasibility study done and is scheduled to be presented to the Council in April.

Staff Liaison Vaughan reported that the consulting firm has completed their field survey work and will begin the conceptual design plan in the coming week.

Committee Member Beggin wondered if there would be cost estimates that come with the feasibility report.

Council Liaison Grant said there will be approximate costs that would be used in funding requests.

Committee Member Finlay asked if the consultant firm working on the Mounds View High School trail should also work on the Snelling Avenue South trail.

Council Liaison Grant said the Snelling Avenue South trail is part of the road project scheduled for 2022.

Chair Van Valkenburg added there will be a trail, the question is if it will be separate from the road or not, and it might also depend on what happens with the possible round-a-bout.

Council Liaison Grant noted the road improvements are being done by Ramsey County, the round-a-bout would be City and County. They are trying to keep the road improvement and the round-a-bout separate so the road improvements move forward in 2022 irrespective of the round-a-bout.

C. Lake Johanna Boulevard Trail Update

Council Liaison Grant said this is a Ramsey County project so the City loses some control but there will be a city cost participation to go along with a possible trail.

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. Spring/Summer Recreation Programs

Staff Liaison Vaughan said staff presented some potential programs at the February 16 City Council Work Session. Council directed staff to move forward with the playground program, youth sports leagues, youth camps, and adult programs. Some programs weren't approved including the Spring Egg Hunt and AARP Driver Safety Classes. The spring and summer recreation guide is being printed and mailed. All programs are online for registration. All programs must follow guidelines set by the Minnesota Department of Health regarding capacity

limits, social distancing and masking. Feedback from residents has been positive, he's received numerous phone calls and emails each day asking what programs will be available.

Committee Member Beggin asked if they had instructors lined up for the programs.

Staff Liaison Vaughan replied that applications are currently open. The main programs needing staff are the playground programs and some pre-school programs. Coaching is all volunteer, and some of the programs are contracted out with vendors such as fencing, drama camp and yoga.

Committee Member Hinton felt staff did a great job coming up with a variety of programs while keeping within the guidelines.

B. Ice Rink Participation 2020-2021

Staff Liaison Vaughan reported the City of Arden Hills had 4 ice rinks that were available for use during the winter months at Cummings, Freeway, Hazelnut and Perry Parks. The warming houses weren't available but staff didn't receive any negative feedback about that, nor did the rink attendants. Public Works staff did a great job of flooding the rinks and there were a lot of comments about how good the ice was. Freeway and Perry had fewer skaters this year than last, but there was no broomball. Overall there were very good numbers of participants this year.

Committee Member Beggin said he saw the skating areas that neighborhood people had made on Lake Johanna. He wondered if there was something that would restrict the City from maintaining a rink on the lake.

Staff Liaison Vaughan said he would look into it. In past years there was a rink at Valentine Park and he's not sure why there isn't one there any longer.

City Council Liaison Grant said they'd have to have the city attorney check on it because if the City promoted it there would be a certain level of liability. He asked if anyone knew of other communities with rinks on a lake, sponsored by the city.

Committee Member Beggin said the ice rink at Valentine Park was left out when the park was redone do to space and drainage.

C. Trail Priority List

Committee Member Straumann reviewed a priority trail list he compiled based on pedestrian safety concerns, projects that fit in with road reconstruction projects, projects when buildings are being built and trail development enhancements. The Mounds View High School trail and Lake Johanna Boulevard trail fit into pedestrian safety. Road reconstruction projects included the Snelling Avenue South trail and from Lake Valentine park to Highway 96 under I-694.

Committee Member Straumann said under the category of new building projects, the senior housing project that is coming next to the Bethel University Anderson Center will be redoing/adding on to the trail, and Bethel will be repairing the trail system on their property. There may also be a trail involved with the new fire station. Also listed under possible new building projects is a trail along the south shore of Round Lake.

Council Liaison Grant suggested the list that was emailed get renumbered as priorities one through eight. He also said they could submit a list of suggestion of where they'd like to see trees planted.

Committee Member Straumann continued with possible trail development enhancements, which included the Crepeau Nature Preserve trail and Lake Johanna Boulevard from County Road E along the west side of Highway 51 to Glenhill Avenue.

Committee Member Finlay requested a map be made of the trails.

Committee Member Straumann said he'd like to propose buckthorn removal continue in Crepeau Nature Preserve, led by resident Sheldon Bruce. There are some benches that need maintenance, along trail and bridge improvements. He would like to see a clean-up day with Committee members and others, possibly in April or May.

Council Liaison Grant mentioned a bench that he knows needs cleaning and possible relocation, and the Arden Hills Foundation could be approached about a bench. They recently funded four additional benches that will be placed in the spring.

After discussion, it was decided that Chair Van Valkenburg would renumber the priority list and send to Committee Members for approval before it was presented to the City Council. It was also agreed the Committee Members will possibly join in a clean-up day in Crepeau Nature Preserve.

5. REPORTS

Council Liaison Grant said the priority list will be helpful for the City Council and he looks forward to their final draft.

Committee Member Beggin asked if they should get feedback from people in their own neighborhoods regarding the trails, the same questions could be asked by everyone and then brought back to the Committee for discussion.

6. NEXT MEETING

The next PTRC Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 20, 2021.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.