



**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS
PARKS, TRAILS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2022, 6:30 PM
ARDEN HILLS CITY HALL**

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Staff Liaison Joe Vaughan called the January 19, 2022 meeting of the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Committee to order at 6:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Committee Members Paul Beggin, Kristine Poelzer, Jill Anderson, Marie Hinton, Tim Nelson, Dan Dietz, Council Liaison Steve Scott and Public Works Director/City Engineer David Swearingen

OTHERS PRESENT: Staff Liaison Joe Vaughan, and Assistant Public Works Director Lucas Miller

ABSENT: Committee Members Suzanne McGaugh, and Micah Kiernan

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved by the Committee.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. November 16, 2021 PTRC Minutes

The Committee approved the minutes.

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Trail Projects Update

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen said the Snelling Avenue North improvements project that includes the trail from Highway 51 to County Road E is scheduled to be brought to Council for approval of plans and specs in February. That will trigger the process of collecting bids and selecting a contractor, with construction starting in the spring. The trail will be on the west side of the road, in part due to the existing trail north of County Road E being on the west side of the road, along with the voluntarily mowed grass trail on the southern end being on the west side.

Committee Member Poelzer asked if there were any trail segments that were going to be replaced.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen said there will be a few segments that will get a fog sealed and they will be inspected for replacement at that time. A pavement maintenance plan will put on the City website.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen stated the City Council approved a feasibility study for a proposed trail segment along Old Highway 10 from Lake Valentine Road to County Road 96. They have 95% plans for the segment between E2 and Lake Valentine Road but are waiting on funding.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen noted that Ramsey County is still doing preliminary studies on the Lake Johanna Boulevard trail.

Committee Member Poelzer commented that there is a Ramsey County trail segment from Tony Schmitt Park to Perry Park that is often under water and wondered if Arden Hills had ever brought it to the County's attention.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen replied that the segment of trail is actually city owned and Public Works is aware of it. The solution would be to put in some box culverts and have somewhat of a bridge, but it would need to be strong enough to hold larger trucks that are used to maintain lift stations. There are plans to include it in a stormwater study that will highlight drainage issues throughout the city.

B. 2022 Parks, Trails and Recreation Committee Work Plan

Committee Member Hinton said the committee needed to finalize goals and work plan priorities for 2022. Members were provided with a Power Point that was presented to the City Council in 2018 as an example.

Committee Member Poelzer said there is a dog park obstacle course shown on page 5 and wondered if that was ever added.

Staff Liaison Vaughan said that was an idea that was brought up but to his knowledge the obstacles were never added.

Staff Liaison Vaughan stated that the work plan is areas of focus for 2022. They could brainstorm some ideas as noted in the memo for parks, trails, recreation and community partnerships, and choose a date for it to be presented to the City Council. The work plan would preferably need to be completed by February's meeting.

Council Liaison Scott said the City Council would entertain a joint meeting with PTRC.

Staff Liaison Vaughan noted that there was a trail priority list made last year, but nothing for parks or recreation.

Committee Member Poelzer commented that they had submitted lists of things that needed to be done at parks they toured.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen said he felt that was more of a “to-do” list for the Public Works Department, not necessarily enhancements to the parks and what PTRC would like to see at them.

Committee Member Hinton said they could make one of their goals be park amenities.

Staff Liaison Vaughan stated that his interpretation of the list was also that it was more of a maintenance list that was passed on to Public Works staff. There were a few recreation items on the list such as the sledding hill at Hazelnut, but the attachment showed recreation goals with specific items for specific parks.

Committee Member Nelson thought buckthorn is important to continue to work on. He’d also like them to look at trail connectivity and where they could fill in the gaps.

Committee Member Beggin said he was part of putting the other presentation together and the idea was to focus on all of the areas with priorities listed, the Council also asked for what had been accomplished in the previous year. He wondered if they could just update that plan. He thought the problem with priority order is financing, so a general list is probably the way to go.

Council Liaison Scott said the Council has no problem with the committee setting priorities and they use the committee’s recommendations to base their policies on. Council would like to hear a synopsis of the work plan, how they’re going to go about working on it and coordinating the work with the Council.

Committee Member Poelzer stated that she’d like to see a sliding hill put in at Hazelnut Park. They could add the warming house being replaced due to the fire that was there as something that was done. She wondered if fitness equipment was added to Cummings Park.

Staff Liaison Vaughan responded there was no fitness equipment added to Cummings Park, but they did install a new playground structure. He wasn’t sure what the committee’s goals were for fitness in the park in 2017.

Committee Member Poelzer suggested they add it to the list. She noted fitness equipment will be installed at the new senior living facility. A goal could be to have some kind of scheduled time for recreation in that area.

Committee Member Beggin said in 2017 they were talking about things like yoga in the park, gaga pits, and pickleball. Staff had been looking into activities that could be done inside the hockey rinks in the summer.

Staff Liaison Vaughan noted there is a push light at Cummings Park for ice skating.

Committee Member Hinton said she would like to focus on engagement, fill open spots on the committee, work with communications to put information out about activities that people might not know about.

Committee Member Poelzer said the city has a YouTube page that hasn't been utilized much and thought they could do videos of featured areas in the parks with a link on your website pointing to the YouTube channel.

Committee Member Hinton liked the idea and said some people are familiar with certain parks but not others, and maybe they could feature a specific park.

Committee Member Anderson said she also liked the goals from 2017 with some updates. She wondered if they could explore equipment geared more toward adults.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Swearingen added there will be six exercise stations at the senior living facility. The trail will be constructed in 2022 and hopefully the equipment will be in by fall.

Committee Member Poelzer said they could probably find out the cost of that equipment in case they wanted to duplicate it somewhere else.

Committee Member Anderson thought they could encourage outdoor events in winter at the parks.

Committee Member Poelzer suggested a collaboration with another organization to rent snow shoes and have instructional classes.

Committee Member Anderson felt and Earth Day parks clean up might be a good idea.

Committee Member Poelzer thought they could possibly get more involvement from students at Bethel University.

Committee Member Nelson commented that they could try to consolidate recreation information into a mobile app.

Council Liaison Scott noted the city web pages are adapted to work on mobile phones but they could give feedback regarding it.

Staff Liaison Vaughan added that when the website was redesigned a few years ago the mobile version was revamped quite a bit. There are map locations for each park, but they don't have a designated app.

Committee Member Nelson said adding trails to an app would be helpful so you know where you are.

Council Liaison Vaughan said he thought they could set up geocaching at a couple of the parks, but there had been concerns raised about vandalism since the objects are hidden and sometimes people will pull apart equipment while they are looking for items. But it might be a good thing to add to the work plan.

Committee Member Anderson thought geocaching would draw people to Arden Hills and it's fun for any age and to do as a family too.

Committee Member Poelzer suggested that reviewing and making recommendations for the website could be a goal. She'd like to see it be more robust for parks and trails, and recreation.

After further discussion it was decided to bring the workplan forward to the next meeting and present to the City Council in March.

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. Election of a Committee Chair and Reappointments

Staff Liaison Vaughan stated there were four reappointments to the PTRC; Jill Anderson, Dan Dietz, Marie Hinton and Tim Nelson.

The four committee members were sworn in.

Marie Hinton was nominated to be Committee Chair, and unanimously approved by the Committee.

5. REPORTS

Council Liaison Scott said he'd been on the City Council since 2017 and served many years on PTRC. City Council and committees are back to virtual meetings until further notice. There were ten candidates apply for the vacant position on the City Council, David Radziej was selected. His term will run through 2022 and a special election will be held this fall for the remaining two years of that term. A celebration of life was held for Councilmember Dave McClung the previous Saturday, and Shoreview also recently lost one of their councilmembers.

Committee Member Poelzer said she would like to see the Council extend a letter of thanks to the people no longer on the committee as of December 2021.

Council Liaison Scott said previous members had received a phone call from the Mayor but he would bring her suggestion to the Council.

Committee Member Poelzer said the application for PTRC committee is on the website and requested an email to know what part of Arden Hills members are from so they could recruit people from parts of the city that aren't represented.

Council Liaison Scott commented that once you reach your committee term limit of three consecutive three-year term limits you have to step down for a year and then you can apply to come back.

6. NEXT MEETING

The next PTRC Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 15, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.