

Cambridge Parks, Trails, and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 10, 2023

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the Cambridge Planning Commission was held at Cambridge City Hall, 300 3rd Avenue NE, Cambridge, Minnesota.

Members Present: Commissioners Jeff Andres (Chair), Jeff Soderquist (Vice Chair), Kriste Ericsson, Christina Thayer-Anderson (Community Education Representative), Josh Ryberg (Youth Representative), and Lisa Iverson (Council Representative)

Members Absent: Lindsay Rassmann

Staff Present: Community Development Specialist, Amy Norling

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Andres called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Organizational Meeting

A. Council's reappointment of Jeff Andres on Feb 6, 2023 City Council meeting

B. Council's reappointment of Jeff Soderquist on Feb 6, 2023 City Council meeting

C. Council's appointment of Youth Representative, Joshua Ryberg on April 3, 2023 City Council meeting

D. Election of Parks, Trails, and Recreation Commission Officers

Soderquist nominated Andres for Chair, there were no other nominations. All voted aye, motion carried.

Ericsson nominated Soderquist for Vice, Soderquist nominated Ericsson. Ericsson declined the nomination. All voted in favor of Soderquist for Vice Chair, no nays. Motion carried.

Approval of Agenda

Iverson moved, seconded by Ericsson, to approve the agenda. Upon roll call, all voted aye, no nays. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Andres requested to correct Jim Iverson to Lisa Iverson. He also requested to change the last paragraph on page 2 from "Redfield suggested a bike ride..." to "Andres suggested a bike ride..."

Ericsson moved, seconded by Soderquist, to approve the amended January 9, 2023 meeting minutes. Upon roll call, all voted aye, no nays. Motion passed.

Public Comment

Adam Schore approached to podium to speak. He said he attended to observe the meeting and hoped to provide input in the future.

New Business

A. Snowman Contest and Winter Festival

Norling updated Commissioners on the snowman contest and Winter Festival that was held in January. There were 15 entries in the snowman contest, three of the winners were present at the Winter Fest to accept their gift baskets. Approximately 150 people attended the event, despite the weather being frigid. The warming houses were open, along with bonfires scattered throughout the event. There are plans to host this event again in 2024.

Norling mentioned more volunteers at events would be appreciated.

B. 2023 Parks Programming

Norling presented the 2023 Parks event details to Commissioners. The events that were in collaboration with the City of Isanti have been removed due to loss of communication interest from Isanti.

Norling continued, the river run event is still being planned, Twin Cities Kayaking has been contacted to rent kayaks from, they have 40 kayaks available to rent. Canoes are allowed if people want to bring their own, but tubing would most likely be too slow and now allowed. Country Camping was contacted, but failed to return any phone calls or emails. Iverson offered to contact them herself.

New for 2023, Norling said, is the Parks Department is organizing the Art Fair. This has previously been handled by the Administration Department.

C. Amphitheater

Norling said the Amphitheater sustained damage due to heavy snow load. Public Works has blocked the structure off for safety and are working with insurance to repair or replace it. There are six events planned this summer that utilize the Amphitheater, staff is working on an alternate location for these events.

D. River Run

Norling said the pertinent river run updates were discussed in the 2023 Parks Programming update.

E. Update from Todd Schwab, Public Works Director

Norling presented the update provided by Schwab. He attended an Isanti Township meeting and provided a concept plan to complete a Cambridge Isanti Bike Walk Trail connection on Central Drive from 32nd Avenue to 313th Avenue NE. A draft Joint Powers Agreement (JPO) was provided for their review, as the Township would maintain ownership of the improvements after completion. The Township has given verbal approval to start preliminary work to facilitate design. Final approval will be given after the review of the JPO has been completed by the Township's Legal Counsel. The project will be funded by Local Option Sales Tax and is scheduled to be completed in 2024.

Norling continued, the Ice Rinks have been closed for the season. Schwab has been working with individuals that have a desire to donate benches in memory of loved ones for various parks. Iverson asked for a picnic table to be installed at Parkwood Park, and benches around the block near her neighborhood and Roosevelt Gardens for the seniors that frequently walk there.

Norling said Schwab noted staff did a wonderful job keeping the trails cleared this challenging winter.

Norling reported Schwab is planning a ribbon cutting ceremony at Sandquist Park, possibly in early summer.

F. Update from Marcia Westover, Community Development Director

Norling said Westover reported the City of Cambridge has \$20,761 in the Park Dedication Fund from Cambridge Cove. This was the balance owed after dedicating the .66 acre parcel to the city for a park. They will build the start of a trail out to County Road 14. A combination of the .66 acre park, the trail, and the \$20,761 satisfies their parkland dedication requirements.

The money the City of Cambridge has dedicated in the Capital Fund is used for the Public Works Capital Improvement Plan for things such as park equipment replacement needs and not generally used for new park improvements. Norling noted the Public Works Capital Improvement Plan is also known as the Parks Priority List. Each year, Council looks at our any budget surplus and determines where the money is spent, sometimes spent on park improvements. They use the Park Priority List to base their decision.

G. Community Garden

Norling noted the registration for a Community Garden plot opens May 1st. They often get reserved quickly and have a waiting list.

H. Skinny Ski

A resident requested the Parks Department send updates to skinnyski.com. Cross country skiers use this site to find trails throughout Minnesota. Staff has been sending updates on the Spirit River trails when possible.

I. No Mow May

Norling reported council approved No-Mow-May, an option to allow your lawn to grow beyond 12 inches not be issued a citation. Research shows taller grass provides shelter for pollinators, along with other benefits. Other options include mowing less frequently and allowing grass to grow at a taller height.

J. PTRC updated member list

Norling provided Commissioners with an updated member list.

Other Business/Miscellaneous

A. City Council Update

Iverson mentioned the city is still experiencing a housing shortage, and two new apartment buildings were approved.

Iverson informed she received an email from a resident near a local park that is frustrated because kids playing in the park are noisy, allowing for no quiet time. Iverson thought it was interesting to see a different viewpoint on the hard work staff put in to encourage citizens to use the parks.

B. Commissioner Concerns

Saint Louis Park received funding from the Clean Water Land and Legacy Amendment. They have invited residents design and build rain gardens in their parks. It was requested to look into this grant, and to also do a similar program to show residents how to design a rain garden in a park so they can do the same at home.

Brown Park and City Park's oak trees are declining due to oak wilt, and the wonderfully wooded parks are becoming less wooded. Is it possible to look into reinforcing parks using donations of trees?

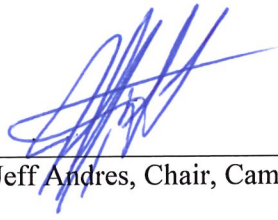
Norling said staff is reviewing the landscaping ordinance which does currently promote rain gardens. It was mentioned there is a yellow flower rain garden on South Main near a storm drain, as well as near Christ the King church.

Norling stated the City Forester, Will Pennings, has been updated on the deforesting of our city parks. He is also concerned about Ash Bore and looking into options.

The Bill Carlson memorial plaque was discussed, Norling said the city will allow a plaque to be put up, but can not spend resources on it so it must be donated.

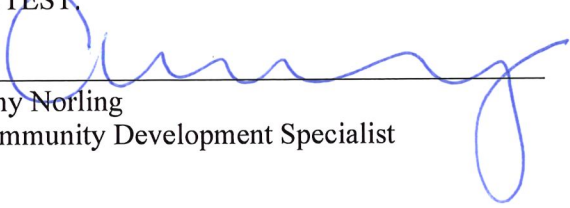
Adjournment of Council Meeting

Being no further business before the Commission, Ericsson moved, seconded by Thayer-Anderson, to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:19 pm. Upon roll call, all voted aye, no nays. Motion carried unanimously.



Jeff Andres, Chair, Cambridge Parks, Trails and Recreation

ATTEST:



Amy Norling
Community Development Specialist