

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP

Parks and Recreation Board

DRAFT Minutes – January 21, 2021, 7:00 pm

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm.

2. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum

Present: Jennifer DeLisle, Cici Koenig, Doug Wilbur, Sam Iaquinto, Lee Cole, Jaqueline Otto, Tim Saville, Chuck Steuer

Absent without notice: Leigh Prince

Also Present: Natalie Bond of McKenna and Ken Dignan

3. Approval of Agenda

A motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Iaquinto, supported by Saville. Passed.

4. Call to the Public

Adam Olney commented on the size of the community park and how the draft parks and recreation master plan could be approved when not in finished form.

5. Minutes of December 17, 2020 Meeting

A motion to approve the minutes from the meeting of December 17, 2020 was made by Sam Iaquinto. supported by Otto. Passed.

6. Correspondence

There was mention of email from Leslie Lauwers regarding fundraising; Leslie was supposed to attend meeting but was absent.

DeLisle also received an email from Scott Stewart discussing the possibility of creating a memorial in the community park since the UM football team used to practice there.

7. Planning Commission Update

McKenna presented the draft parks and recreation master plan to the planning commission, and they voted to recommend that the board of trustees approve. A proposal is making its way to the planning commission for a mixed-use development at North Territorial and Whitmore Lake Roads. Saville asked if the development would include a park. Otto commented that the planning commission requested that the proposal include a public park. Iaquinto suggested that the public attend the planning commission meeting if the property was on the agenda to voice their opinions.

8. Township Board Update

Update from Jacqueline Otto: Stated that DNR requires size of project for application ("TBD" not accepted) and therefore made a motion that the board approve a size of 10-12 acres for the community park; plans to hold a public meeting to discuss park plans has been put on hold because of COVID; Otto suggested to the P&R Board that going forward, it might be necessary to put grant submissions on hold due to requirements from DNR (specifically that we made need to have a landscape designer at meetings to present specific plan(s) for which monies are to be used.)

9. School Board Update

Liaison Lee Cole: Biggest concern is COVID; All types of instruction are happening (in-person, remote and hybrid); suggests Tom DeKeyser get accolades for his management of instruction; two people tested positive for COVID therefore testing implemented and school board moved to all virtual; new officers chosen and Whitmore Lake Schools used as an example of instruction implementation in Washtenaw County.

10. Downtown Planning Group / DDA Update

Liaison Doug Wilbur: no update.

11. Recommendation to Northfield Township Board of Trustees to approve master plan

Natalie Bond of McKenna gave another review of plan and spoke of how the version on the web for community feed-back did not contain the most recent P&R board changes because of version control challenges.

Otto spoke of the addition of funding strategies to plan; She and Jennifer DeLisle attended workshop hosted by the MDNR regarding requirements for grant submission(s); Otto also spoke of the addition to P&R MP regarding trends in recreation in addition to population info and income level (noting the latter two need to be emphasized in plan). Otto mentioned that communities with lower income levels can get lower match requirements (e.g., 70/30 versus 50/50) and we cannot get more than one federal grant apply to the same project.

Saville not impressed with McKenna. Iaquinto seconds comments and asks if the township board could consider an in-house planner. Further discussion regarding the complication of applying for grants and that it might actually take two people, a planner and grant writer.

DeLisle again noted that changes were not made in a timely manner; Koenig mentioned that changes that were promised by McKenna before the plan went live (for public input) were not done.

Iaquinto made motion to adopt master plan, Cole seconded. Roll call:

Yes: Iaquinto, Cole, Seville, Otto, Wilbur, Steuer, DeLisle

No: Koenig

Absent: Prince

12. Financial Report and Financial Action Items

Saville noted \$7000 charge from McKenna. Lengthy discussion of whether the charges for McKenna should be included in P&R budget or the township's general fund. It does not appear that P&R has been allocated the \$5,000 that was to be granted for annual budget.

13. Project Review & Discussion

a. Community Park Planning

i. Disk golf project

Otto spoke with Lesley Lauwers who gave a quote on per/basket cost of \$250.00 and the course needs 9 for a total of \$2250.00 needed. So far there has been a \$750 donation leaving a remaining balance of \$1500.00. Otto noted that the installation of the baskets would be free due to donated labor. Otto commented that Lesley inquired about fundraising opportunities to which Otto suggested talking to Kiwanis and as a last resort approach the board.

ii. Parking on grass areas

Discussion regarding how to handle cars parking at the community park, as people have noted that the grass/ground is getting torn up. Iaquinto stated he has seen this many times before and that the area levels out in spring. Saville brought up the potential of using cones in the area to direct people where to park. Township board to address any issues with Chief Wagner.

iii. Plans to move forward with park plan

DeLisle commented that we may not be able to apply for DNR grants this year as there is much to do before the April 1st deadline. Otto stated she thinks we might be able to do something small. Saville commented he no longer would like to work with McKenna. Otto mentioned that a motion could be made to the township board to hire a new planner to help decide on what to move forward on for April 1st deadline. She believes this responsibility should fall to P&Rec, not the township board. Dignan mentioned McKenna stated they could help us meet grant deadlines. To this Otto commented that working on the plan felt like a full-time job and that McKenna did not fulfill their agreement (e.g., they failed to include relevant information pertinent to DNR grant application(s)).

b. Bark Park

Steuer- discussed damage to pavilion, mentioned it won't be fixed until spring; Otto asked if this was something that could be submitted to insurance.

c. Community Garden

Question about sign- Iaquinto asked about sign materials and if it is temporary; DeLisle mentioned zoning is unclear and that she sent email to zoning department for clarification on ordinance, waiting on reply.

14. Election of Officers

Iaquinto motioned to nominate DeLisle as chair for '21, seconded by Saville, motion passed.

Questions/Discussion regarding vice chair nomination; noted that Steuer will need to be reappointed to P&R board, but Dignan said that he is still a voting member. DeLisle made a motion to reappoint Steuer as vice chair, seconded by Otto; motion passed.

15. Board Member Comments.

Koenig asked if the latest version of the draft P&R master plan was in the Board's packet (with the understanding that it contained the latest changes). Otto would ask Jennifer Carlisle.

16. Adjournment

Motion was made by Steuer to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Cole. Passed. Meeting adjourned 8:35 p.m.