



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes of January 10, 2018

City Hall – Council Chambers
411 W 1st St



I. Call Meeting to Order

President Schmidt called the meeting to order at 5:01 pm.

II. Roll Call

Present: John Schmidt, Erik Torch, Amanda Crosby, Tjaard Breeuwer, Dudley Edmondson Dennis Isernhagen, Britt Rohrbaugh, Tiersa Wodash, Kristin Bergerson, Em Westerlund (City Council Liaison), Frank Jewell (St. Louis County Board Liaison),

Not present: Dean Vogtman, Michael Schraepfer, David Kirby (ISD 709 School Board Liaison)

III. Approval of December 13 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Breeuwer motioned for approval of the December 13, 2017 meeting minutes; second by Commissioner Edmondson. Unanimously approved.

Schmidt: Recited the mission of the Duluth Parks and Recreation Commission and highlighted the seventh and eighth guiding principles of the Duluth Parks and Recreation Master Plan, including their corresponding objectives:

- Continue to meet evolving recreation needs – Duluth and its partners do a good job providing a diverse range of recreation opportunities, but there are some facilities that need improvement.
 - Indoor recreation
 - Athletic fields
 - Manage off-leash dog use
 - Outdoor ice skating
 - Recreation programs
 - Self-directed recreation
- Be sustainable – a sustainable park and recreation system is one where the economic, equity, and environmental aspects of recreation and stewardship are balanced with available resources to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
 - Park stewardship program
 - Sustainable trails
 - Resource management
 - Awareness and education
 - Community gardens

Schmidt: Recited quote from local author Barton Sutter's book, *Cold Comfort Life at the Top of the Map*. Indicated that this would be his final meeting as chair. Thanked public, park staff, city administration, and fellow Commissioners for making the City a better place to live. Stated that he leaves a legacy of long and arduous meetings, however his intent was to provide the public with ample access to the Commission, while bringing some humanity to the process.



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IV. Presentations

- A. Lower Chester Mini-Master Plan – Jim Shoberg, Project Coordinator, City of Duluth Parks and Recreation Division (informational)

Shoberg: Indicated he will provide a summary of the Lower Chester Park Mini-Master Plan draft. Stated that Lower Chester is a 2-acre park located at the intersection of 5th Street and 15th Avenue East, and is part of the larger 130-acre Chester Park. Confirmed that Lower Chester currently features:

- Two hockey rinks & pleasure skating area
- Open green space
- Skateboarding and biking - during the summer on the hockey rink
- Box lacrosse – fall on the hockey rink
- Warming house & storage building
- Wild garden flowers
- Little Library
- Limited parking

Shoberg: Referred to visual and described the infrastructure that has been present over the decades. Highlighted the locations with existing physical barriers:

- Collector streets – 4th, Woodland, 8th
- Steep topography at site

Shoberg: Stated that the 2010 Master Plan indicated that potential improvements to the site could include: outdoor play equipment, field games, skating, maintained landscape, and open shelter restrooms. Indicated that the 2012 Lower Chester Master Plan has recommendations that include: playground inclusion, field grass improvements, trail head connection to Chester Creek, and a second hockey boarded rink. Stated that Lower Chester Community Recreation Area currently functions with parks stewardship through two primary groups; Neighbors of Lower Chester Park (NOLCP) and Congdon Lower Chester Hockey (CLCH). Described community hockey in Duluth and indicated there are seven hockey organizations, with six being outdoor operations similar to CLCH. Referred to graphic representation of the park size, participants, and number of hockey rinks at each of the seven sites. Noted the registration boundaries that exist by neighborhood. Referred to the planning timeline and stated they have gone through a long public engagement process which includes:

- 19 stakeholder meetings to date
- 7 meetings (including two additional after today) to the Parks Commission
- Two-week public comment period
- Plan approval from both Parks Commission and City Council

Shoberg: Stated that typically Master Plans of this size and scope have 3-4 stakeholder meetings and 2-3 public meetings. Described the participation they've had during the planning process thus far:

- Emailed written comments
- Well attended public meetings
- 333 completed online surveys



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Shoberg: Listed NOLCP's priorities for Lower Chester Park:

- Open space in the winter and summer
- Playground
- Paved rink

Shoberg: Listed CLCH's priorities for Lower Chester Park:

- Two hockey rinks
- Pleasure skating rink
- Open winter space

Shoberg: Shared that from the public engagement process and surveys, they as the Parks Division worked to understand the top priorities of the neighborhood:

- Parking
- Public safety
- Playground
- Hockey
- Summer and winter open space
- Pleasure skating
- Sport court

Shoberg: Referred to the survey conducted and stated that of the 333 respondents, there were two primary competing interests, which were split between the local zip codes of 55805 and 55811, and those of surrounding zip codes. Listed the primary priorities that resulted from the public engagement process:

- Two hockey rinks
- Pleasure rink
- Playground
- Drainage system with grass improvements
- Paved walkways
- ADA improvements
- Sports court activities
- Gardens
- Trail connection
- Storage
- Box lacrosse

Shoberg: Noted the park has both summer and winter use, with the recommendations for summer use being:

- Large green area
- Playground
- Proposed drainage system
- Trail connections and trail head access

Shoberg: Listed the winter plan recommendations:

- Second perpendicular boarded rink (rotated 90 degrees)



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- Existing paved rink remains
- Playground
- Open skating/pleasure rink with onsite snow storage
- Open winter space

Shoberg: Indicated that the draft Mini-Master Plan aims at addressing the concerns that were brought up during the public process, noting the importance of establishing a long lasting partnership with stakeholder groups. Stated that while the park is ultimately owned by the City, it will have separate agreements in place with NOLCP and CLCH. Confirmed that no one group will have sole management of the park. Confirmed that in regard to the seasonal hockey boards, CLCH will be responsible for putting the boards up no earlier than November 1st for organized hockey purposes, and taking them down no later than the end of March. Confirmed that all maintenance gear and equipment must also be removed from the site at the end of the hockey season. Noted that the box lacrosse group will have the option to install the boards for use in the last week of September for their season. Stated that skateboard and summer equipment must be removed by NOLCP no later than the end of October and can be reinstalled on April 1st. Confirmed that organized programmatic hockey will run from 5-8pm each evening, noting CLCH's requirement to provide at least 25 hours of supervised rink time for free skate, including at least one day on the weekend. Stated that open skate must be extended during school breaks. Confirmed that rinks will be closed for maintenance and flooded from 8-10pm each evening, with the exception of the first flooding of the season. Spoke to the parking plan and stated that regulations will be clearly defined within each user group's agreement. Stated that event organizers and park users must coordinate with the Parking Division for high volume events. Indicated that during the public meetings, parking became a large concern. Confirmed the turf is in poor condition and needs improvement, which will include a new drainage system to prevent pooling and ponding. Confirmed there are about 90 stalls of legal on-street within a one block radius. Provided the following recommendations to improve parking:

- Additional signage and no parking around the blind corner (6th & 15th)
- Making 15th avenue a one way uphill on the creek side of the storm tank with 16 dedicated parking stalls
- Sidewalk down to the warming house
- Maintain existing on street parallel parking on 5th street with a dedicated turn around and trail head connection

Shoberg: Stated that they hope with these parking recommendations, safety will be improved. Confirmed that phase one costs would include a drainage system, sod and/or seed, players box, retaining wall for a second rink, new rustic and gravel trails, playground, and accessible sidewalk. Stated that phase two costs would include 15th Avenue improvements, with phase three costs including trail head improvements, hammerhead parking, and drainage improvements.

Rohrbaugh: Expressed her concerns regarding the survey, stating that it didn't offer the opportunity to talk about what the park could be, rather it focused on sports. Described the area as a transient neighborhood and indicated more outreach would be helpful.

Shoberg: Indicated the survey and public meetings determined the priorities and recommendations of this plan, noting the upcoming two-week public comment period.



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Rohrbaugh: Questioned what type of advertisement was utilized to reach the neighborhood.

Shoberg: Indicated they use email and direct mailers, as well as press releases and social media postings.

Breeuwer: Referred to the agreements that would take place with the user groups, and recommended clarification regarding NOLCP's removal of summer items and how it lines up with box lacrosse's use of the area. Questioned if flooding of the area in the fall could take place without ruining the grass, with the short window they would have to make turf improvements in time for hockey. Further questioned if the City could make a temporary exemption for double sided parking.

Shoberg: Indicated that during the week, there should be ample parking using alternate sides. Explained that they will have to work with City Police and Parking Divisions for permitting of special events.

Breeuwer: Referred to the proposed sidewalks and questioned if these would be plowed as they would be on the opposite side of the street where residents would not be responsible for shoveling.

Shoberg: Indicated they will address sidewalk snow plowing at the next meeting.

Breeuwer: Questioned if they have a map that shows the frequency of playground use in the area, as equipment is expensive and ensuring installation in a park that will see actual use is important.

Shoberg: Confirmed this information will be provided at the next meeting. Referred to site map and noted the close proximity of playgrounds at Portland Square, Endion Park, and Munger Park.

Wodash: Questioned if residents in the neighborhood are competing for the same off street parking as park visitors.

Shoberg: Confirmed yes and stated that on any given night, roughly 30-40 participants are using the rink; however, the entire group is not there at the same time. Stated the importance of parking enforcement with the new plan, including parking specifics in each groups agreement.

Wodash: Referred to the survey and noted that it did not ask folks what they would like to see in the park, only how they currently use the park. Questioned which rink the lacrosse group wanted to use.

Shoberg: Confirmed they prefer the grass rink because it's safer.

Wodash: Questioned what limitations there would be in establishing the new grass, specifically whether hockey would be displaced.

Shoberg: Stated they will determine a specific phasing schedule.

Torch: Requested that ongoing maintenance costs be added to the plans estimates.



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Shoberg: Confirmed this will be added to the final version.

Schmidt: Requested the plan include who will fund each portion.

Shoberg: Indicated this will be included.

Crosby: Questioned if Commissioner Rohrbaugh heard any specific request from neighbors.

Rohrbaugh: Indicated she didn't hear many specifics, however the survey had limited answers and felt very sports related. Noted the current difficulty in visualizing summer use as the ground is extremely muddy in its current state.

Edmondson: Referred to Grant Community Recreation Center and questioned whether this had been considered as an alternate location as it has a large open space and facility. Stated that Lower Chester Park feels tight and the neighborhood itself feels very intimate.

Shoberg: Confirmed that staff did research alternative locations and the cost to utilize them, specific to qualifiers such as existing buildings, service area, and drive time. Stated that Lower Chester consistently scored the highest in these categories. Noted that Myers-Wilkins currently runs programming out of Grant Recreation, and the City does not own the field.

Jim Filby Williams: Stated that Grant Recreation has limited parking and the building is in worse shape than Lower Chester, therefore in more imitate danger of future demolition. Confirmed that improvement costs would be dramatically higher at locations where they would have to start from scratch as boxes, grading, and lighting are very expensive.

Schmidt: Questioned what age group is playing lacrosse.

Shoberg: Stated that the age group varies.

Schmidt: Referred to the grassy area and questioned if it was possible to have a sustainable and dry space in the summer after hockey.

Shoberg: Confirmed they will improve turf conditions; however, it will not be maintained exclusively as a dedicated field.

Schmidt: Expressed the importance of making lighting a priority, as the current lighting is so intense it's an issue of light pollution.

Shoberg: Agreed with President Schmidt that this will be a concern going forward. Noted the cost of new technology, but agreed with the importance of reducing trespass light into adjacent properties.

Wodash: Requested confirmation whether the rink would be available to the public when hockey is not utilizing.



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Shoberg: Confirmed yes, that the space could be used outside of programmatic hockey.

Westerlund: Questioned if there had been any discussion on age delineation and whether one age group could use Lower Chester, while another used a different site. Stressed the success of the hockey program and questioned how the City will come to decide additional space for hockey as necessary.

Shoberg: Stated that in their initial conversations with the hockey organizations they discussed splitting the program into two facilities, however quickly realized this would not be possible as the sites are volunteer maintained. Explained that two sites would require additional volunteer maintenance and flooding efforts.

Mabel Galvin (public): Indicated she has lived on East 5th Street for over 54 years, raising her children there and choosing the location mainly because it was a quiet dead end street. Explained that she and a fellow neighbor received approval from the City to put in a new garden along 5th Street, including a concrete bench and table. Stated that the proposed hammerhead would do more harm than good and the additional parking would increase use by non-residents such as college students. Suggested shuttle bus use for the hockey group.

Butch Williams (public): Stated that his grandfather established residency on 5th Street dating back to 1890. Indicated he owns a house across the street and has had involvement with various recreation programs over the years. Indicated that recreation areas facilitate youth sports and are important for health. Discussed the drainage issues and indicated that money had been previously invested by the hockey group to fix this issue. Stressed the importance of finding a good solution for the grass area.

Ryan Sandefer (public): Indicated he lives on Lakeview Avenue and as a member of the hockey board is in support of the proposed Mini-Master Plan concept. Indicated that all youth have access to the program, noting the Association's willingness to waive fees and provide equipment to those needing financial assistance. Referred to the survey results and stated they indicate a community based hockey program is favored. Urged Commissioners to support the concept.

Wendy Saliin (public): Stated her involvement with NOLCP and their hopes for a timely resolution. Indicated that contrary to what was stated, the process was not made transparent to NOLCP. Stated that they were first approached to design what they felt was a healthy park, however their desires were dismissed. Confirmed there is a tense relationship between NOLCP and the hockey group and it requires conflict mediation. Stated that nearly the entire park remains flooded after the hockey season.

Jason Wall (public): Indicated he is a board member of NOLCP. Stated that there is currently competition between the groups. Noted that their park has become a sports complex versus a neighborhood park. Explained that a healthy park relates to health and wellbeing in the area. Urged Commissioners to scrutinize the plan as it was not a true master planning process, rather a decision was made and now groups are being consulted to make it work.

Jon Bakke (public): Shared he is a board chair with NOLCP. Stated that a neighborhood park should



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serve the neighborhood and community. Indicated the group presented this vision to the City, one that included sustainable green space and four season use. Confirmed they are not against hockey; however, other park uses should be considered.

Corbin Smith (public): Indicated he lives in district two after relocating from a rental house next to the Lower Chester hockey rink. Explained that with very little flat ground in Duluth, this location serves box lacrosse well and other little league groups. Thanked NOLCP for their support and confirmed that from box lacrosse's standpoint, they are supportive of a plan that has extra opportunity for lacrosse space.

Patrick O'Connell (public): Stated he is the President of the lacrosse organization that serves 200 youth and an additional 100 high school level students. Thanked the Lower Chester community and CLCH for welcoming them. Expressed support of a second rink with grass as they anticipate an increase in lacrosse players. Explained that Lower Chester Park's location is centrally located and with Duluth being a City on a hill, flat space is limited.

Brett Klosowski (public): Stated he is the President of Duluth Amateur Hockey Association (DAHA) and lifelong resident of Duluth, with many years of involvement in youth athletics. Expressed full support of the plan, noting the survey and public comments that support hockey at this location. Explained they are down to seven rinks in the City without other site possibilities. Stated the importance of neighborhood based hockey programs, noting youth are required to stay within a specific geographic area. Confirmed two full size rinks are necessary to continue the program at Lower Chester. Expressed respectful disagreement with NOLCP's opinion of the engagement process being unfair, and indicated the hockey program felt the process made good progress.

Annie (public): Thanked commissioners for their time and indicated she has been a member of NOLCP for two years. Explained that the plan does not represent a true compromise and does not serve the needs of the entire community and elderly, rather youth and college students. Confirmed that Lower Chester cannot sustain a hockey program where boards are installed in September and come down in June, regardless of the rinks location. Expressed concern that drainage improvements will not correct the problem and they will still be left with unusable green space after hockey season. Encouraged Commissioners to continue discussion and find a true compromise.

Mary Faulkner (public): Stated she bought a house two years ago on 5th Street because of its close proximity to Lower Chester Park. Expressed desire for usable green space and a playground as she has a young daughter and currently the best option is Endion Park. Suggested improvements to the trailhead and indicated a priority for the City should be respecting and honoring the work done by the neighbors who put a great deal of time and energy into the park. Expressed concerns regarding the current safety of 15th Avenue.

Mike Casey (public): Indicated he is heavily involved with the Irving neighborhood. Stated that you cannot have ice and play on the grass at the same time as the ice damages the grass. Indicated that surveys administered by the City are a great attempt and great failure as they do not pay attention to the details. Questioned the difference between a Master Plan and Mini-Master Plan and expressed excitement for Mr. Roche joining the Division as he is hopeful change will come.



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Hank Storm (public): Indicated he lives across from the rink and has coached hockey for 17 years. Explained that he is not against hockey or DAHA; however, those that live in the area must be considered as the space is too small.

Shoberg: Confirmed parking improvements will happen on 5th Street, however no parking lot will be added and they will keep the existing parallel parking, with the only change being sidewalks on the park side of the street and a hammerhead at the end. Explained that no additional parking lots were added.

Wodash: Stated that lacrosse voiced desire for more time on the rink and questioned if this could be accomplished with a pleasure rink.

Breeuwer: Requested clarification from NOLCP whether the organization feels there is any way to accommodate their dreams and wishes while still including a second rink.

Wendy Saliin (public): Explained that their board met with Jim Shoberg and Jim Filby Williams in June, at which time the retaining wall was proposed. Indicated they made a list of ideas and desires, and although the creative solution of fitting two rinks is a great idea, it doesn't solve the problem of the green space being flooded.

Breeuwer: Requested that Ms. Saliin email him the list of ideas NOLCP submitted to the City.

Roche: Suggested a five-minute intermission.

Schmidt: Called meeting back to order at 7:38pm.

B. Lower Spirit Water Access Update – Lisa Luokkala, Project Coordinator, City of Duluth Parks and Recreation Division (informational)

Luokkala: Explained that the Western Waterfront Park and Trail (WWFT) Mini-Master Plan has undergone a very large and complex planning process that includes more than just the trail itself. Referred to the recommendation of five public water access points along the St. Louis River Estuary, noting Lower Spirit Mountain Riverfront Park. Indicated the Lower Spirit site plan is being shared tonight due to the timeline extension of the overall WWFT Plan. Stated the 10-acre site sits below the BNSF railroad on the lower side of Grand Avenue, and is a combination of county-forfeit and private land. Explained that the site has approximately 1500 feet of river shoreline and is opposite of Tallas Island. Referred to the timeline extension and explained that this site plan is being reviewed separately because the delays have imposed challenges for other City Departments who have been awaiting the passage of the overall WWFT Plan in preparation for determining the terminus of the new public road construction called Kayak Bay Road. Explained that City, State, and private partners need to know where the road ends, as the road project is now fully funded and must be ready for bid by spring of 2018. Stated that consent from the Parks Commission and City Council is now necessary, separate from the larger WWFT Mini-Master Plan. Described the existing condition of the site:

- An existing trail easement for the WWFT exists through this land parcel



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- Spirit Mountain pump house on this location since 2015
- Aging benches and infrastructure
- Newly resurfaced WWFT in 2016
- The site is not City owned property
- State and federal agencies have worked on this site
- Wetland area was dredged as part of the larger restoration efforts led by the DNR in 2010
 - Resulting in open water between two land masses

Luukkala: Stated that an initial concept plan was generated in 2014-15 to determine the initial amenity desires for the site:

- Paddle center
- Swimming beach
- Building
- Pavilion
- Plumbed bathrooms
- Footbridge
- Additional trails
- Campsites

Luukkala: Stated that they had a 39-member stakeholder committee that spent one of their three hour meetings focusing on the two proposed river front sites. Confirmed that initial site plans were brought to the first and second public meeting. Provided snapshot of what they heard from the meetings and online survey regarding the site:

- Northland Paddlers Alliance communicated support for access to the river
- Accessibility constraints to the river were highly mentioned
- Nature paths desired
- Parking lot desired
- Pollinator plantings desired
- Permanent bathrooms desired
- Leave the area untouched

Luukkala: Shared their research on recreation and population hubs in the area and noted the lack of non-motorized launches and staging areas. Explained there also exists a large trail gap from the Pulaski parking lot to Lower Spirit Mountain. Described their site recommendations:

- New trailhead with directional signage
- Drop off parking (10) and trailer parking (7)
- Portable toilet with changing enclosure
- Staging area for outfitters/group education
- Accessible paddle sport launch
- Beach access with shore fishing
- Landscape restoration and planting
- Rename area to "Spirit Landing"
- Work with Spirit Mountain Recreation Area to identify opportunities for new regionally significant events at this location
- Work with MN DNR on their on-going monitoring of sediment



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- Restore and/or preserve adjacent lands

Luukkala: Confirmed that the proposed road would be maintained and plowed by the City. Referenced the St. Louis River Natural Area Plan and indicated that the Lower Spirit site would be part of the proposed designation process. Provided examples of different accessible launch types. Described the other Council approved plans that included reference of Lower Spirit and Kayak Bay Road; Riverside Small Area Plan and the Water Trail Plan. Stated that the rough budget estimate for this project is \$475,917. Explained that this plan will be posted on the website for a two-week comment period and they hope for Parks Commission approval at the February meeting.

Torch: Questioned what the sense of urgency is with the road plans and when construction is anticipated if the plan is approved.

Luukkala: Stated that the road and parking spaces would be built at the same time as it's more cost effective to wrap parking in with road construction considering mobilization and contractor costs. Stated that a separate grant will be utilized for signage and park bench implementation in 2018.

Torch: Referenced the workshop Ms. Luukkala attended on climate adaptation and questioned if some of these concepts were being used considering how close the site is to the water's edge.

Luukkala: Confirmed that their planning and restoration goals consider climate adaptation and shoreline resilience as it balances recreation and restoration. Stated that the size of infrastructure at this location was scaled down to balance access and conservation.

Isernhagen: Questioned what the estimated utilization of this launch site is.

Luukkala: Explained they do not have specific projections; however, they anticipate this site will be utilized as it is 600ft from Spirit Mountain, with an additional 150 units of housing nearby. Stated that the roadway would have a connector trail that would run adjacent to the road, connecting the WWFT, Munger Trail, and Superior Hiking Trail.

Isernhagen: Questioned where long term maintenance funding would come from.

Luukkala: Confirmed that funding is not secured, however a portion comes from half and half tourism tax.

Jim Filby Williams: Stated that the total cost of the road, trail, and water access is approximately \$3.1 million with about \$2.2 million provided by the State (MnDot, DNR, County). Explained that \$200,000 comes from the City, however it will not be from the Parks Fund and will be used for the intersection at Grand. Stated that the remaining \$750,000 will be provided by half and half tourism tax funding. Explained that there is roughly a \$100,000 gap in phase II funding, however with the plan's focus on accessibility, they are confident state and federal partners will help close this gap.

Isernhagen: Questioned who would be responsible for road maintenance.



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Luukkala: Confirmed the road would be plowed and maintained by the Streets Division. Explained that in terms of the trail, natural surface trails are not plowed.

Wodash: Referred to accessibility and questioned how far it was to get to that access point from the parking lot.

Luukkala: Explained that although the distance seems far, it has a lot to do with the grade, noting that accessibility is a spectrum versus a yes or no. Stated that nomination for designation would provide access to a network of folks who have worked on similar projects.

Crosby: Indicated she received a similar question from a community member; however, agreed with Ms. Luukkala that accessibility should be viewed on a spectrum.

Wodash: Questioned how the number of parking spots versus trailer was decided, as the amount seems unbalanced.

Luukkala: Stated that they wanted to differentiate the lower loop and keep it modest, however the number of desired spots could be modified.

Wodash: Requested more information about the 32 acres of undeveloped land.

Jim Filby Williams: Stated that the St. Louis Natural Area Management Plan will look to minimize the footprint through good design, while encouraging visitors to the area.

Wodash: Requested that the projected maintenance costs be included in the final plan draft. Referred to a comment received from Mike Casey regarding geese habitat and nesting at this site and questioned what the plan is for this area in regards to them.

Jim Filby Williams: Confirmed they have begun outreach to the MN DNR and other community partners impacted by nuisance geese, and will work towards alleviating the problem.

Breeuwer: Stated that the proposed path next to the road could be a dangerous setup.

Jim Filby Williams: Stated that the City Engineering Department is working closely with the County and MN Dot to carefully design the mix of bike, pedestrian, and motorized traffic here and at other locations such as the Munger Trail and Kayak Bay Road.

Breeuwer: Questioned if the area would be paved.

Luukkala: Confirmed the roadway and parking lot would be paved, however the WWFT will remain natural crushed limestone. Stated that the only other paved trail section would be near the trail head by the kiosk or repair station.

Breeuwer: Requested clarification of the proposed staging area.



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Luukkala: Stated the two grassy areas would be near the drop off locations.

Rohrbaugh: Expressed excitement about the stop light at Spirit Mountain to turn onto Grand Avenue.

Schmidt: Questioned how much of the road would be covered by the County.

Jim Filby Williams: Stated that the County investment of \$900,000 may be expended on any portion of the road and adjoining trail, but not the parking lot.

Schmidt: Expressed concern that they may be jamming too much into one area and questioned the need for trailer parking and a staging location. Expressed excitement for a bathroom at this location. Questioned if appropriate study of the area had been conducted to make sure they were not disturbing sacred ground.

Jim Filby Williams: Confirmed the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for the road project and adjoining private development requires that prior to the start of development, an archeological firm be engaged to complete a thorough investigation of the potential presence of human remains or cultural artifacts. Stated they have also reached out to the band to begin the discussion themselves.

Richard Haney (public): Recited initiatives of the St. Louis River Corridor and stated that this area is one of the quietest in the estuary. Questioned if other nearby places could meet these needs or may have already been developed.

Mike Casey (public): Emphasized that he is not opposed to development or the desire for more housing in the Corridor; however, this area should be considered natural and respected that way. Explained that if you hike or bike the area as it currently is, it's extremely wild and he would hate to see it overdeveloped. Referred to the proposed launch site and indicated it should be a place to paddle to, not from.

Scott Neustel (public): Indicated he owns both Ski Hut locations in Duluth and as a board member of the Northland Paddlers Alliance he strongly supports the proposed launch sites. Explained that the largest problem they have locally with paddlers is where to launch at, specifically when bringing neighborhood youth. Supported the plans ability to provide connectivity.

Allison Clarke (public): Stated her involvement with City trails for over 17 years and expressed desire to keep the area feeling natural. Suggested looking at other nearby locations as potential launch areas that could be further developed. Cautioned against developing natural areas.

Will Munger (resident): Stated that he operates the Munger Inn in west Duluth and depends on hiking and canoeing. Expressed opposition to further development of this natural area and stated that it could affect his business.

Bill Lynch (public): Stated that Grassy Point is close by and has been closed for nearly two years. Questioned why the City is seeking new development over maintenance of existing sites.



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Jim Filby Williams: Stated the primary purpose of the road is to provide high quality access to the river, with funding being provided by local and state government.

Luokkala: Confirmed they are currently working with the EPA and DNR on maintenance of Grassy Point.

Denette Lynch (public): Referred to current park infrastructure and the City's inability to maintain and questioned what the plan for other recently approved Mini-Master Plans was. Encouraged looking at current infrastructure before creating a brand new park that would take additional resources. Referred to studies on nuisance geese and suggested off-leash dogs may help.

Charlie Stauduher (public): Stated he manages Indian Point Campground and expressed concerns regarding the completion of a location that could compete with his businesses in terms of water sports. Questioned what kind of signage would direct tourists to the new park, as currently the City will not allow signage to his business. Expressed desire for minimal development of this natural space.

V. Commission Committees

A. Parks and Facilities – meeting date: TBA

Chair - Michael Schraepfer – John Schmidt, Dean Vogtman, Dennis Isernhagen [Dale Sellner]

B. Administrative (E-Board) – meeting date: Wednesday, January 18 at noon in the Parks office

Chair – Erik Torch – Amanda Crosby, Tjaard Breeuwer [William Roche]

C. Trails and Bikeways – meeting date: TBD

Chair – Tjaard Breeuwer– Tiersa Wodash, Britt Rohrbaugh, Dudley Edmondson, Dean Vogtman, Art Johnston, Mike Casey, Eric Viken, Shawna Mullen [Andy Holak]

D. Recreation Programming (youth and adult) – meeting date: TBA

Chair - Erik Torch - Amanda Crosby, Dudley Edmondson, Kristin Bergerson [Pamela Page]

VI. Commissioner & Liaison Reports

Isernhagen: Confirmed that after the motion was approved at the previous meeting to assist the golf community in organizing a group to collaboratively look at golf with the City, 65 golfers have formed a formal 501c3 named, "Friends of Duluth Golf". Indicated that meetings have begun and he is optimistic of the future outcome.

VII. New Business

A. Parks Commission Officer Elections

MOTION/Second: Schmidt/Isernhagen to approve the following slate of officers to serve on the Executive Board of the Duluth Parks Commission for 2018; Erik Torch as President, Amanda Crosby as Vice President, and Tjaard Breeuwer as Secretary. Vote: 8/0.

VIII. Old Business



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes of January 10, 2018

City Hall – Council Chambers
411 W 1st St



IX. Division Manager's Report

Roche: Stated that the Division Manager's Report was emailed to the Commissioners and copies for the public are in the back of the room. Encouraged Commissioners to contact him with any questions.

X. Public Comment

XI. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:26 pm. Moved by Commissioner Schmidt. Second by Commissioner Breeuwer.

XII. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Wednesday February 14, 2018 at City Hall – Council Chambers.