



I. Call Meeting to Order

Vice President Crosby called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Present: Amanda Crosby, Jill Joyce, Erik Torch, Dennis Isernhagen, Britt Rohrbaugh, Dudley Edmondson, Dean Vogtman, Kristin Bergerson, Em Westerlund (City Council Liaison).

Not present: Tjaard Breeuwer, John Schmidt, David Kirby (ISD 709 School Board Liaison), Frank Jewell (St. Louis County Board Liaison).

III. Approval of January 9th Minutes

Commissioner Torch motioned for approval of the January 9th meeting minutes; second by Commissioner Isernhagen. Unanimously approved.

IV. Presentations

- A. Meet the New Recreation Specialists (Informational) – Alicia Watts, Operations Assistant Manager

Crosby: Indicated Alicia Watts would be introducing the two new Recreation Specialists.

Watts: Thanked the Parks Commission. Stated it has been exciting to bring on two additional members to our programming team. Mentioned Sam Werle originates from Winona, MN. Stated Sam holds a degree in Environmental Education from the University of Minnesota, Duluth. Highlighted that Sam has spent the last five years in youth development programming for the Duluth YMCA and most recently served as a coordinator for Youth Outdoors. Indicated Sam's hobbies being woodworking, outdoor recreation and reading. Shared Megan Lidd holds a degree from the University of Northern Iowa in Leisure Youth and Human Services and Spanish. Indicated she directed summer camp programming for YMCA's in Iowa, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey. Shared Megan previously worked for Big Brothers and Sisters in Philadelphia. Indicated Megan has worked for Positive Energy Outdoors, Lowell Elementary, and the St. Louis River Alliance. Stated both Megan and Sam will need to be excused to attend the Skate for the Heart event held at the Heritage Center tonight.

Werle: Introduced himself. Shared the excitement he has to be a part of the Parks and Recreation Division and looks forward to engaging the community in throughout the City.

Megan: Thanked the Commission. Indicated she was excited to be here.

Crosby: Welcomed both Sam and Megan.

Torch: Indicated he was happy to have both Sam and Megan on the team.



Crosby: Dismissed Sam and Megan to work at the Skate for the Heart event.

- B. Natural Resource Commission (Informational) – Erik Birkeland, Property and Facilities Manager and Diane Desotelle, Natural Resources Coordinator

Crosby: Shared Property and Facilities Manager, Erik Birkeland and Natural Resources Coordinator, Diane Desotelle will be presenting on the new Natural Resources Commission.

Jim Filby Williams: Stated Mayor Larson's initial State of the City discussed the Environmental Advisory Council to bring a more intentional, science based, and public focus to environmental protection in the City of Duluth. Stated this was determined with community members and stakeholders to proceed in a different way. Shared that one change is to morph the current Urban Forest Commission to cover all natural resources concepts. Indicated the second change would to include a group that would focus on climate protection. Highlighted that many have asked what the need is to convert the Urban Forest Commission to a Natural Resources Commission. Expressed the need comes from having extraordinary natural resources in Duluth that are rare and complex. Shared the valuable resources that we have including 10,000 of public green space, trout streams, coastal wetlands on the world's largest freshwater estuary, wildlands that occasionally hold wolves and moose and two state scientific natural areas. Mentioned since 2012, the City has undertaken a couple of dozen stream restoration projects, costing several million dollars. Stated several knowledgeable City Staff and agencies worked on these restoration projects well, but there was not commission or board review and just went to city council, being passed without discussion. Indicated other communities have a dedicated Natural Resources Commission. Shared the Urban Forest Commission indicated they were under occupied with their current and narrow charge they held. Highlighted the engagement had with the Urban Forest Commission to craft the new Natural Resources Commission.

Birkeland: Introduced himself as the Property and Facilities Manager, stated this also includes the management of Park Maintenance. Mentioned he has stepped in as the administrative liaison for the Urban Forest Commission. Indicated that when he started working for the City, we did not have a City Forester. Mentioned the City previously has a forester, but that individual retired and the position was not refilled. Stated the work of the Urban Forest Commission brought a high level of science knowledge to protect forests and boulevard trees. Indicated the commission pointed out the City wasn't addressing the fact that we no longer has a forester. Highlighted a City Forester was hired and works for Park Maintenance and serves as the lead of the tree crew for the city and its residents. Stated the City Forester implements the Emerald Ash Borer management plan, grant writing, and provides an educational campaign. Stated the City was tasked to think through how the commission would involve more natural resources concerns. Indicated the Natural Resources Commission was put together to be an advisory group for the mayor and the City Council to develop recommendations on how to protect and restore natural resources, public input, advising on issues, policies, and programs, work on the Duluth Natural Areas Program along with a host of other issues. Stated this commission will host professionals with water resources, plant expertise, and other natural resource fields. Indicated there are 3 open seats on the commission. Stated this was intended to expand on different disciplines that have been underutilized and to involve with more natural



Meeting Minutes of February 13, 2019

City Hall – Room 303
411 W 1st St



resources concerns.

Crosby: Thanked Erik Birkeland.

Torch: Indicated that the Parks Commission has reflected on natural resources concerns in the past. Questioned how the tension would be managed between two commissions. Stated there will be times where one commission takes a stand that has tension with the other. Shared that these situations will arise, but there would be work put into managing these issues as smooth as possible. Stated that tensions are not always a negative thing.

Joyce: Questioned who decides who will be appointed to the Natural Resources Commission.

Birkeland: Stated there is an open application process from the Clerks office. Indicated it is up to Administration to make a recommendation to the Mayor and to be approved by City Council.

Joyce: Stated a hydrologist should be involved with our abundance of water resources.

Birkeland: Agreed with Joyce.

Joyce: Thanked Erik Birkeland.

Crosby: Thanked Erik Birkeland for the purposeful presentation.

C. Communication to City Council Protocol (Action Item) – Erik Torch

Crosby: Indicated Commissioner Torch, Edmondson, Schmidt, and Isernhagen have been working on a Commission Communication to City Council protocol.

Torch: Reflected on the timeline for putting together the protocol to communicate with City Council. Stated the majority of the Commission and Administration wants to proceed with a number of meetings that included with the City Attorney to meet the needs to communicate in a timely manner when there is opposition. Indicated Jessica Schoonover sent an email of the draft protocol to the Parks Commission. Reflected on the document, prior calling a vote on an action item, the president of the commission would give other commissioners the opportunity to give their position and rationale. Stated the person recording the minutes will take extra care with recording notes of the comments made by each Commissioner to bring to City Council. Stated if there is a contentious issue and a Commissioner wants to share information in a more timely manner, the Commissioner has the opportunity to motion to utilize the communication protocol to City Council. Following, the president would send a summary to the City Council and the motion will come up to a vote. Highlighted that if passed, the president will engage with the communication protocol. Indicated the committee felt this was a manageable process that would be timely and address with their concerns and ideas that had been come up with. Stated that the City Council thinks this is a workable model. Requested comments from Edmondson or Isernhagen.

Edmondson: Questioned if all commissions will be using this protocol. Questioned if the other



commissions are aware of this new protocol.

Jim Filby Williams: Indicated this was not our approach for today. Stated the suggestion is well received. Shared he would contact the City Clerk and the Chief Administrative Officer. Indicated this is a pilot to the new approach and time would be needed to assess.

Edmondson: Questioned if the assessments could be discussed in the future.

Jim Filby Williams: Confirmed. Shared he would report back after a couple of commission meetings.

Crosby: Thanked Torch and Jim Filby Williams. Indicated this is an Action Item.

Action Item: Torch motioned to move The Commission Communication to City Council Protocol. Second by Joyce. Called the motion to Vote. Unanimously approved.

D. DWP Trail Technical Use and Standards Plan (For March Approval) – Jim Shoberg, Senior Planner

Crosby: Provided a briefing of the DWP Trail Technical Use and Standards Plan presentation. Indicated this item would be for approval in March. Invited Shoberg to the floor.

Shoberg: Stated this presentation consists of the draft plan for the DWP technical use and standards. Shared this is an addendum to the 2017 St. Louis River Corridor Trails plan. Indicated there is a copy of the St. Louis River Corridor Trails plan on the back of the document provided. Highlighted the Intent for tonight is to go over the components heard from the public outreach made and to discuss hot button issues. Stated this presentation is the first time it has been presented to the Parks Commission as well as the public. Mentioned the two-week public comment period will begin after tonight's Parks Commission Meeting. Indicated there will be action next month.

Stated the purpose of this addendum is to update the Council approved 2017 St Louis River Corridor Trails plan. Indicated the importance of establishing trail guidelines for recreational use for the DWP Corridor. Indicated he will provide clear recommendations on the technical usage and the construction standards of this project. Displayed the goals as followed:

1. Identify best practices for trail etiquette, safety, signage, corridor usage, and user conflict mitigation.
2. Develop infrastructure that is in harmony with the surrounding environment.
3. Provide clarity on the usage and development of the DWP Trail and corridor and clean up contradicting recommendations from past planning efforts.
4. Provide high quality opportunities for local residents and regional users.

Shoberg: Shared the engagement and presentation had with the Friends of West Duluth Parks and Trails in late November. Indicated the technical advisory group held in early December met to view the technical components applied to the trail as an existing facility. Shared a meeting was held with the Department of Natural Resources, where they provided their expertise and gathered information

on best practices from around the state. Highlighted the DWP facility as regional and significant asset within the City. Indicated this trail provides connections to regional facilities including the Munger, Jay Cooke, Spirit Mountain, Superior Hiking Trail, and the Duluth Traverse. Stated there were 2 public meetings held in both East Duluth and West Duluth, followed by a two week comment period. Shared he is looking for action on approval next month, and to also be approved by City Council later the same month.

Shoberg: Indicated the scope is very focused. Displayed the map. Indicated the yellow represents the trail corridor from the base of Spirit Mountain out 6 miles to Beck's Road along with a little stem into Mission Creek Park. Indicated the scope was purposely limited because it is easy to get into tangents that are not appropriate for the goal.

Shoberg: Reflected on the history of the rail line. Indicated the line was completed in 1912 and operational until the mid 1980s. Highlighted this rail connected International Falls to Duluth. Stated it is currently being used as an informal trail. Indicated that on average, the corridor has a right of way of 100 feet, along with some areas being more than 200 feet. Indicated this scenic strip of land was a deed to the City. Reflected on the area, indicated it consists of 2 trestle's, sits high above the estuary, 28 rock cuts and a 500 foot long tunnel. Highlighted this being one the most remote trails in town and does not consist of many access points. Shared the improvements made to the Stewart Creek Bridge. Reflected on the restoration had at the Clyde Connector trail, located at the end of 95th and Clyde Ave. Indicated social use impacted the trail that occurred prior to the rail line establishment. Shared the connections with the Munger, DWP, and Skyline. Stated that within a few hundred yards lies the Magney Snively parking lot.

Shoberg: Shared the critical infrastructure improvements that were made:

- Re-grading to meet accessibility slope standards.
- Repaired large washout between Elys and Bardons Peak.
- Slip-lined 4 major box culverts.
- Replaced and added smaller culverts.
- Installed gates at access points to encourage legal use.
- Grading of trail surface to ensure proper drainage and make ready to receive gravel surfacing.

Shoberg: Displayed the planning efforts to date:

Magney Snively Management Plan (2005)

- Strategies: Horseback riding may be permitted under certain conditions at Magney Snively, but in restricted locations. Determine designated areas for horseback riding, taking ecological concerns into consideration.
- Consider involving horseback riders in an adopt-a-trail program to maintain, repair, and restore areas that this new use may impact.
- Plan mentions mountain bike use but does not provide any future recommendations or strategies to manage.

- Snowmobiles are the only form of motorized recreation permitted in Magney Snively and includes trail that passes through the northern portion of the park
- Hiking and Cross Country trails are present within the park and noted as existing conditions.

Trails and Bikeways Plan (2011)

- Cited opportunity to create a new unpaved multi-use regional trail using the abandoned DWP railroad corridor envisioned to cross the western half of Duluth
- Significant restoration and repair needed to trestles, rail beds and tunnel on DWP
- DWP suitable for equestrian use because of hardened nature of former rail bed if improvements made
- Study feasibility in partnership with Duluth Area Horse Trail Alliance
- DWP Would enable the Duluth Traverse to be completed as planned
- Develop as an accessible trail
- Develop concept plan and preliminary cost estimates to seek funding for DWP
- Implement inspection or maintenance of trail surface and structures before opening for public use on DWP

Duluth Traverse EAW (2013)

Updated 2014

Updated 2016

- Record of Decision concluded that the DT does not pose the potential for significant environment impacts, and that, therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required

DWP Critical Infrastructure Study (2014)

- Studied the cost to repair, replace, or reroute the trail around two creek crossings at Sargent and Stewart Creeks
- Studied rock fall potential and the likely costs to mitigate the hazard.
- Off Track Mountain Bike Trail Feasibility Report
 - Determined feasible outside of Trail Corridor
 - Would cross DWP in multiple locations
 - EAW update studied route with no findings

St. Louis River Corridor Trails Plan Update (2017)

- Recommended completion of the DWP Trail system to offer safe access to natural areas in western Duluth, providing views of St. Louis River Corridor and estuary
- Suitable for biking, hiking/running, cross-country skiing, scenic slow-speed snowmobiling, and snowshoeing
- DWP trail could be hardened to support equestrian use
- DWP serves as spine for planned western Duluth trail networks with access to Magney Snively Natural Area
- Considered two options through Natural Area
 - Combining trail usage on the existing DWP corridor
 - Building low impact bike-optimized trail close to DWP trail corridor
- Potential equestrian and snowmobile use west of the Clyde Connector, disuse east of Clyde

Connector

- Develop as an accessible trail
- Implement bridge and tunnel repair
- Called for future planning efforts with users and public to determine trail use
- Update to the 2008 Spirit Mountain Recreation Authority's Master Plan
- Focus on transformation to four season recreational amenity and regional tourist attraction
- Mentions of St. Louis River Corridor trail plan and development of trail networks (walking, hiking, cycling, cross-country, snowmobile, equestrian)
- Consider various proposed trail networks through SMRA and with City to resolve alignments and mitigate any potential user group conflict
- Explore multi-use trail networks, connectivity and creation of trailheads at Spirit Mountain for all recreational users.
- Recommends off track Mountain Bike Route separating downhill users from DWP users

Shoberg: Displayed maps on summer and winter trail use. Indicated in 2017 the Duluth Traverse had a Mini Master Plan created. Indicated the MN DNR Parks and Trails, the snowmobile club from Hermantown, COGGS, Friends of West Duluth Parks and Trails, Isaac Walton League, DXC, Duluth Climbers Coalition, Wheels on Trails, and the Superior Hiking Trail Association met as the advisory group. Indicated the advisory group developed the following six themes:

Safety

- Ballast rock on trail poses safety concerns.
- Limit mph if motorized traffic allowed.
- Improve Quarry access road crossing.
- Improve Becks Road crossing.

User Conflict Etiquette

- Vocal warning when approaching horses.
- Alternative trail for fast bikers.
- Co-sponsored trail etiquette campaign supported.
- Limit access to reduce congestion.
- Share the trail signage.

Specific Trail Use

- No ATV use on DWP trail.
- No new trail sections for Duluth Traverse through Magney-Snively at this time.
- Identify measurable service level maximum.
- Allowing horses will change feel of existing trail corridor and cause vegetation to be cut back further.
- Desire for snowmobilers to use all/part of DWP.
- Ensure accessibility on trail.
- Cross Country Ski use should continue.
- Self grooming opposed to machine groomed.

Amenities/Signage

- Mounting blocks each end of Elys Peak tunnel for equestrians.
- Keep as natural as possible.

- Clearly marked trailheads.
- Nordic Ski trail grooming on Spirit Mountain from Lower Chalet to end of new Nordic center.
- Need additional signage.
- Overlook for St. Louis River Valley near Elys Peak

Trail Access/Connections

- Accessible access routes and trail loops.
- Desire for Duluth Traverse connection from Spirit Mountain to Mission Creek.
- Snowmobile access to Spirit Mountain chalets.
- Additional access point near Clyde Connector.
- Additional neighborhood access points.
- Parking area near Bardons Peak on Skyline Parkway & Commonwealth.

Other

- Puddles in Elys Peak tunnel affect climbing equipment.
- Research limestone trail surface and impact to nylon climbing equipment.
- Publicly communicate special events along trail.
- Recommend full DWP Master Planning process.
- Keep natural rock fall when possible.

Shoberg: Indicated the themes were used to categorize comments that were received from the public.

Shoberg: Stated an inter-departmental staff meeting was held to ensure the departments involved with this project. Stated this meeting addressed the lack of access points and the importance to get an emergency vehicle through the area. Indicated he went back to examine the area, stated the rail way had already developed these by created inlets for equipment to be able to turn around. Mentioned the inter-departmental meeting indicated that parking was lacking. Stated this the importance of addressing this in order to protect the environment.

Shoberg: Displayed what was heard at the East Public Meeting:

- Additional single track would become a maintenance burden.
- Add mounting blocks for equestrians before each bridge.
- Importance of emergency access to DWP trail.
- Don't overdevelop the trail corridor.
- Vegetation management.
- Clear signage and wayfinding desired.
- One way trail for bicycle traffic through Spirit Mountain to avoid downhill bike conflicts.
- Additional trailheads/parking areas.

Shoberg: Displayed what was heard at the West Public Meeting:

User Conflict Etiquette

- If there is a conflict with high-speed cyclists route them onto Munger Trail or Skyline Parkway.
- Use verbal warning when approaching or passing horses.

- Specify walking and biking lanes.
- Earbuds prevent users from hearing others passing.
- Educate trail users on trail etiquette.
- Be courteous and all can enjoy.
- Include trail etiquette in signage plan.
- Research tri-county corridor which is a good example of multi-use trail.
- Pass horses slow and wide and announce yourself.
- Let others know you are approaching – slow down – speak.
- Be friendly to horse riders.

Safety Issue

- Require dogs to be leashed.
- Not an issue.
- Bike speeds spooking horses near Spirit and Elys Peak.

Specific Trail Use

- Let DWP be multiple use. There is enough trails already on Spirit Mountain do not need more or widened trails.
- Let DWP be multi use and don't create additional trails.
- Leave corridor narrow
- Does every trail need every use?
- Make handicap accessible
- ATV's provide those with mobility or handicaps access to trail
- Structured ATV use on the DWP
- No ATV use on DWP
- Respect the trail.
- No ATV on DWP
- Research Soo Line Trail for example of mixed use

Trail Access/Connections

- Designated parking lots versus neighborhood roads.

Amenities/Signage

- Signage with clear user expectations
- Sign entire trail corridor not just gated access points
- Horse mounting blocks at bridges and tunnel
- Porta johns at trail heads
- Lighting along trail or near tunnel
- Keep it simple and rugged, natural feel with amenities
- Don't install a lot of signs
- Low impact camping suggested along corridor.

What did we miss?

- Later public meeting start times for people that work until 4:30 or 5:00pm.
- 5:30 or 6:00pm public meeting start time.
- Clean up trash along trails and at illegal parking spots.

Shoberg: Indicated the public meeting held in the east had nine people attend. Stated the meeting held in the west had a couple of dozen people. Mentioned the comments made during these meetings were greatly appreciated.

Shoberg: Displayed the recommendations for the equestrian trail use:

- DWP currently connects to new Elys Peak equestrian trail loop via the Clyde Connector Trail.
 - Hardened surface suitable for equestrian use.
- Horses are large flight animals not always compatible with fast moving silent sports such as mountain biking.
 - Multi-use will require user education.
- Signage and education important.
- Equestrian use of the DWP recommended in the non-winter months for roughly 4-mile section of the DWP between Becks Road and the Clyde Connector Trail.
- Plan recommends equestrian use on the Clyde Connector Trail from Skyline Parkway to the DWP Trail.

Shoberg: Stated the horse trail currently connects to the Elys Peak Loop and Magney Snively. Indicated the DWP is a hardened surface that is suitable for equestrian use. Mentioned horses are not always compatible with fast paced users and they have the potential to spook. Stated signage being significantly important and will need to be reviewed thoroughly. Displayed map that showed the proposed equestrian use.

Shoberg: Displayed the recommendations for mountain bike use:

- DWP rail bed section largest remaining section of trail development for the Duluth Traverse
 - Provides off road connection between Spirit Mountain & Mission Creek trail centers
- Parallel mountain biking route the entire length of DWP was evaluated and determined feasible but not necessarily appropriate
 - Routing through Magney-Snively Natural Area could pose negative impacts to environment
 - Future update to the Magney-Snively Management Plan through the Duluth Natural Areas Program to evaluate this use
- Areas outside of Magney-Snively: recommend prioritization of parallel mountain bike segments to areas of most user density and likelihood of user conflict potential
 - DWP segment through Spirit Mountain Recreation Area from Lower Chalet to Gogebic Street to separate downhill mountain bike riders from DWP users
 - Elys Peak or Short Line Park area
- Spirit Mountain off track segment needs separation from Downhill Mountain Bike Riders
 - Compatible route identified with the newly constructed Grand Avenue Nordic Center
 - Will intercept each downhill trail before they drop onto DWP with a single track route to the bottom of the main mountain lift – recommend one-way route
 - DWP to remain two-way route for mountain bikes
- Elys Peak: recommend tunnel bypass trail to separate faster moving mountain bikers through popular park area used by many user groups

- Unsanctioned downhill mountain bike trail building has been reported in Magney-Snively
 - City will work with local groups to coordinate communication and obliterate the trails to restore the landscape to natural undisturbed state

Shoberg: Indicated the DWP remains to be the largest remaining gap for the Duluth Traverse spine. Indicated this provides a connection to Spirit Mountain and the Mission Creek trail system. Stated the parallel bike route was evaluated from a professional trail designer to determine it was feasible, but not necessarily appropriate because of potential negative impacts to the environment. Indicated the Duluth Natural Areas Program will be need to assess this. Stated the proposal also including no mountain bike use in Magney Snively, which is consistent with the 2017 plan. Shared the proposal to have mountain bike use from Spirit Mountain through Gogebic Street to the chalet as well as a bypass around the tunnel. Shared these are two zones outside Magney Snively that have high density.

Shoberg: Stated that unsanctioned mountain bike use have been reported in Magney Snively. Indicated the City will be work to create a communication plan to restore the landscape to an undisturbed state. Mentioned these are trails have been built by folks who don't believe there isn't enough existing trail, and it is not allowed within the natural area.

Shoberg: Displayed the Multi-Use Mountain Biking Trail Map.

Shoberg: Displayed the proposed snowmobile use:

- Snowmobile use currently permitted on the westernmost portion of the DWP from where the current route drops south off of West Skyline Parkway and connects to the DWP.
 - Uses about ½ mile segment of the DWP before crossing Becks Road into Mission Creek Forest Preserve
- Snowmobile use permitted on entirety of Clyde Connector from Skyline Parkway to end of 95th Avenue West
- Plan recommends snowmobile use continue on two existing winter routes described
- Concerns about speed differentials between snowmobiles and other users discussed during planning process
 - City does not have capacity to patrol or enforce speed limits
- Snowmobile use on DWP east of Clyde Connector to the Lower Chalet not recommended
 - City to work with Spirit Mountain and local snowmobile organizations to identify route on the east side of Spirit Mountain that will connect existing trail system to Lower Chalet

Shoberg: Indicated the proposed snowmobile recommendation is to use two already existing routes. Stated that snowmobile use is already permitting along the Munger and Skyline. Indicated we are not recommending snowmobile use on the interior four miles of the DWP at this time for a couple of reasons including the various speeds of other users and not having the ability to enforce guidelines on this trail. Indicated this would be a City managed trail, therefore, we are responsible for the enforcement that takes place. Stated we are recommending a snowmobile trail connection from the lower chalet to the existing system. Indicated this is something that snowmobile groups have been requesting for years. Stated this proposal would come from the east end because the Nordic Center now taking place on the west end.



Shoberg: Displayed the recommendations for E Bikes, ATV, and OHV being:

- Until further determination by the City of Duluth, all classes of electrical motor assisted bicycles shall not be allowed on the DWP
- Usage of All Terrain Vehicles, Motorized Dirt Bikes, and Off Highway Vehicles of any sort are not within the scope of this planning process
 - Use of ATV or like recreational activities within the City limits of Duluth is a separate planning process and will not be addressed at this time

Shoberg: Displayed the next steps being:

- Presentation to Parks Commission – February 13, 2019 (Informational)
- 2-week comment period on DRAFT Plan
- Post draft plan online for comment
- Compile graphics for final plan draft
- Presentation to Parks Commission– March 13, 2019 (Action Requested)
- Council Approval – TBD
- Seek funding opportunities to implement recommendations

Shoberg: Stated the documents would be posted on the website tomorrow for online comment. Indicated the Commission has a draft plan, and the final plan will be compiled after the comment period. Stated he is requesting Action from the Parks Commission on March 13th and City Council approval March 25th.

Shoberg: Displayed the upcoming projects that are happening in 2019 being:

- July 2019 – Legacy grant funds available
- July/August 2019 – Design Sargent Bridge & DWP Restoration
- September 2019 – Final design Signage & Wayfinding
- October 2019 – Regulatory & informational signage installed
- January 2020 – DWP & Sargent Bridge to bid
- February 2020 – Award DWP & Sargent bridge construction contract
- May/June 2020 – DWP & Sargent Bridge construction begin
- Summer 2020 – Tunnel bypass trail
- November 2020 – Construction complete
- November 2021 – Wayfinding project to bid
- December 2021 – Award wayfinding contract
- June 2021 – Begin wayfinding installation
- July 2021 – Wayfinding installation complete
- August 2021 – Final inspection & DWP Trail grand opening
- Spring 2021 – Becks Road parking lot improvements
- Summer 2021 – Trail connection to Munger Trail
- Summer 2021 – Parallel mountain bike route outside of Magney - Snively

Shoberg: Stated there is a Legacy Grant that Parks and Recreation is hoping to receive, if approved, it will go to restore the Sargent Creek Trestle. Indicated that restoration will be occurring under the



Meeting Minutes of February 13, 2019

City Hall – Room 303
411 W 1st St



Sargent Creek Bridge in partnership with the Soil and Water Conservation District. Mentioned if we are approved for the Legacy Grant – it will go towards signage/wayfinding and trail capping. Opened the floor for questions from the Parks Commission.

Crosby: Questioned if this meeting will allow for public comment.

Shoberg: Confirmed. Stated this meeting is for comments from the Parks Commission and the public.

Crosby: Thanked Shoberg.

Vogtman: Encouraged the public and the Parks Commission to visit the Stewart Creek Bridge. Shared this view is the best in the City. Questioned if the Clyde Connector Trail is currently slated to have horses and mountain bikes.

Shoberg: Confirmed.

Vogtman: Indicated a concern with all of the curves along the trail. Shared a mountain bike could meet a horse around a corner easily. Stated he walks the trail often and referred to the loose rocks that occur on the trail. Questioned if there would be horse use along the Clyde Connector during the winter time.

Shoberg: Indicated there will not be equestrian use during snowmobile season.

Vogtman: Questioned what the plan is to keep ATV's off the DWP.

Shoberg: Stated the City installed 7 gates with boulders which were found to be successful. Indicated the design is easily replaceable if they damaged. Indicated some gates have already been damaged and it was easy to replace. Mentioned with the help of the gates and social enforcement, this will help to keep ATV's off the trail. Indicated there is still going to be the potential is illegal use even with these efforts.

Vogtman: Questioned if ATV's are currently using the trail.

Shoberg: Confirmed.

Vogtman: Indicated this will be a dangerous situation if there are ATV's and horses on the trail. Indicated he would like to further look into preventing ATV use on the trail. Thanked Jim Shoberg.

Torch: Indicated the potential for conflict on the Clyde Connector is there, but stated he doesn't see this area to receive a ton of mountain biking use. Stated he is an avid mountain biker, and going down a double track trail is not an enjoyable experience.

Vogtman: Indicated he is not a mountain biker, thanked Torch for pointing this out. Stated the confirmation felt that the biking community will provide feedback.



Meeting Minutes of February 13, 2019

City Hall – Room 303
411 W 1st St



Torch: Indicated there are plenty of places where mountain bike use and equestrian use is managed effectively. Questioned the plan to update the Magney Snively Natural Area Plan. Questioned the impacts this will make for what exists currently.

Jim Filby Williams: Indicated there are commission and City Council guidelines to follow. Stated the Duluth Traverse Master Plan itself calls upon no construction of mountain bike trails in the area. Indicated it also calls upon us to place reasonable limits of additional mountain bike construction once the system is fully built. Stated the Duluth Natural Areas Plan for Magney Snively clearly discourages mountain biking trails in Magney Snively, being an open question to be examined in the Duluth Natural Area planning. Indicated Administration is not interested in the possibility of having mountain biking within the Duluth Natural Areas Program in Magney Snively. Stated the areas are the most precious ecological area within our City. Indicated it is not be suitable to add mountain biking trails within the area. Shared there is potential to have this on the far area with less valuable resources.

Torch: Questioned how horse waste will be managed within this multi-use area.

Shoberg: Stated there is a recommendation within the plan to have horse manure bags must be worn on the DWP. Indicated the scope of this project does not reflect all trail, only the DWP.

Torch: Thanked Torch.

Edmondson: Questioned how wide the trail is and what is the necessary width to have two-way traffic.

Shoberg: Indicated the City is following best use practices for what already exists with the current density. Mentioned the width ranges from 10-20 feet, with most of the trail width being ten feet. Indicated the trail has the proper width necessary for two-way use.

Edmondson: Question if the trail is level or has grade.

Shoberg: Indicated it is mostly flat, but there are several areas that were regraded due to flood damage from the removal of structures. Mentioned two wood structures in 2015 and 2017 that created a dip in the trail. Stated when the City regrades an area ABA and ADA accessibility requirements are used.

Edmondson: Questioned if there is a final layer of gravel.

Shoberg: Indicated the proposal has crushed limestone, which is similar material to the Western Waterfront and Old Hartley Road. Stated this material meets the requirements for being firm and stable under ADA trail standards.

Joyce: Questioned what a slip line is.

Shoberg: Displayed the picture. Stated it is an industry term used to line an existing structure.



Meeting Minutes of February 13, 2019

City Hall – Room 303
411 W 1st St



Displayed an image that shows a culvert lined with a plastic pipe.

Joyce: Thanked Shoberg. Questioned if using an already existing infrastructure could handle a 200 year flood.

Shoberg: Stated the structures are built to withstand significant events. Mentioned the old concrete will stay, but the new plastic pipe will be placed in the interior to plug gaps in order to prevent water from escaping.

Joyce: Questioned if there are appropriate access points for emergency vehicles to get onto the trail.

Shoberg: Indicated there is access at the Clyde Connector Trail from Skyline and 95th as well as an access point along West Skyline Parkway.

Joyce: Thanked Jim Shoberg. Questioned if the entry points already exist.

Shoberg: Confirmed, but they are grown in. Stated vegetation management practices will need to come into play for clearing.

Joyce: Thanked Jim Shoberg. Questioned the overlap of snowmobile use along the western section.

Shoberg: Indicated this has been here since the 70s. Stated this is a straight section with significant sight lines. Mentioned snowmobiles will on be on this portion for a $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ of a mile for the multi-use. Shared we have a very wide trail with good sight lines, users will be able to see others coming along the trail. Stated this is the biggest advantage we have compared to a narrow trail that is twisty. Displayed the map, showed the current shared use.

Joyce: Thanked Jim Shoberg for the explanation.

Crosby: Stated there are many shared uses on the Duluth trails. Requested an example of another Duluth trail that holds a similar concept.

Shoberg: Stated the Amity Trail from the top of 7 Bridges Road, indicated this portion of the trail currently has snowmobile, equestrian, and mountain bike use. Mentioned this shared use has been occurring for a long time, and officially occurring for three years. Stated this shared use trail is working out with the wide trail and long sight lines. Mentioned this trail has not received many negative comments from the multi-use.

Crosby: Thanked Jim Shoberg for having informational meetings on both ends of the City.

Rohbaugh: Indicated there is often misinformation for equestrian use. Requested people to reach out to her on shared trails and how a biker should react when they see a horse. Indicated this concept is new to Duluth but is done all over the world. Stated this can be a positive action and that everyone can work together.



Crosby: Indicated she would set a 3:00 timer for each individual for public comment. Stated she will provide a warning when there is 15 seconds left. Opened the floor for public comment. Requested everyone to state their name for the record.

Dwight Morrison (public): Stated he tried to look at things from an accessibility viewpoint. Mentioned he wanted to bring up an issue that is currently happening within our parks, which is the error of omission. Stated there are 8 items that need to be covered and there are 4 outstanding, shared he will provide his report to Jim Shoberg. Indicated access is very important, stated it is hard to get on the trail with a wheelchair, cart, or walker. Indicated it would be good to address the access routes. Stated in 2013 accessible trails were pushed, but they missed addressing the access points. Stated he would like to address more frequent access points for a person with a disability. Indicated having wheelchairs, hikers, horses, and mountain bikers is questionable. Mentioned there are two solutions to address this concern – make the trail wider and get the conflicts off the trail, being the mountain bikes. Shared his previous work with horse production in the past, indicated he would not want to walk a horse down a straight trail. Shared he will create a report and submit for public comment.

Crosby: Thanked Dwight Morrison (public).

Jane Bushey (public): Stated she will discuss her observation of the usage on the trail. Mentioned her home along the DWP. Indicated she sees everyone on the trail from her kitchen window and her garden. Stated she has never seen a horse on the trail. Shared the most use she sees are hikers and bikers. Mentioned she has seen large groups of bikers and has offered water and directions to the users. Indicated there is a problem with motorized usage on the trail. Mentioned there was a snowmobile on the trail right before this meeting. Reflected on the energy she uses to notify the public of the rules. Mentioned the ATV fire from last year that could have started a forest fire. Stated something must be done to address this. Suggested to have signage and enforcement to take place. Mentioned motorized users are good at pushing gates. Stated there was a car parked in front of the gate and indicated there is a sign posted that indicates no parking in front of the gate. Indicated something must be done and expressed the frustration of the motorized use on the trail. Stated she would like to see the trail for families. Stated that motorized users have indicated there is no signage posted and they can do what they want.

Crosby: Thanked Jane Bushey (public).

Shoberg: Stated a Legacy Grant will fund a full signage package in hopes to have the no signage excuse go away.

Art Johnson (public): Thanked the Parks Commission for preserving the historical parks. Indicated the contractors have been very good to work with, shared that he has given them water once in a while. Thanked Jim Shoberg for the patience and listening to the comments made by him and Jane. Stated twice in the last 6 months people come down the trail to their house and ask how do they get back to top. Shared he has given people rides in his car back to Spirit Mountain. Stated he likes the trail use and that it has been really good. Indicated he has lived in this area for 12 years and has asked to put up signs for years. Shared he is glad to see something happen and the trail being limited. Stated he

does not want grooming during the winter time. Shared that fat tire bikes already use the trail. Indicated COGGS has groomed when they are not supposed to and Jim Shoberg has talked to them to indicate that they can't groom the trail. Mentioned snowmobile use has been happening more than ever before because of the Clyde Connector. Stated he hopes to keep working with the City. Shared they count the number users, currently the highest use has been 12 hikers per day. Mentioned seeing one horse in the last year. Stated there are more snowmobilers than skiers and hikers. Indicated snowmobilers mostly don't know because of the lack of signage. Indicated the gates do not stop the ATV's and the snowmobilers. Thanked Jim Shoberg for the hard work.

Mike Casey (public): Shared he has lived in the area for 22 years and uses the DWP. Indicated he would like to clarify that the area ranges from Clyde Avenue into Spirit Mountain for the most part. Stated that snowmobile use from Clyde Avenue to Elys Peak has been light. Shared that Art's points are valid, but only reflect what goes on by his house. Indicated that there a lot of community members who are also using other parts of the trail. Indicated he is not representing the group. Stated he is fully aware this trail will be a heavily used once developed. Indicated the DWP he knew is already gone with the canopy cut back. Mentioned this is the most used multi-use trail in the City. Indicated Amity is wider. Shared he sent a video to other commissions in the past. Asked who has been on the DWP to Elys Peak. Requested a digital copy of the draft. Stated the draft has conflicting statements in regards to horses and bikes, mentioned it states it is wide with long sightlines, but with snowmobiles it is stated as narrow with many pinch points. Stated that as a user of the trail the latter is more accurate. Mentioned the concern with the current user conflicts. Stated the need to address this. Shared he does not think horses should be eliminated from the trail. Indicated the Clyde Connector and the DWP intersection is a highway for snowmobiles. Stated there are no barriers in the plan and hopes to see this corrected. Reflected when the commission had a Trails Committee, shared he used to be a part of this committee. Shared the disappointment felt that e bikes are seen as negative. Stated e bikes are peddle assisted and are not scooters. Stated the City needs to get their act together because e bikes are coming. Stated we need to come to term for what they really are. Indicated e bikes are becoming more popular and are good for seniors and those who have handicaps. Stated the public meetings were excellent. Mentioned 9 people attended the meeting on the east end, and a vast majority on the west end. Stated the concern mostly lies with individuals on the west end.

Crosby: Thanked Mike Casey. Invited Dick Haney (public) to the floor.

Dick Haney (public): Stated we are fortunate to have the interest on the use of the trail because we have something that is really precious. Indicated everyone should be able to use this trail, but not for every use. Shared he would like to see the types of use minimized to preserve the nature of the trail and to minimize the contentions and the safety issues. Stated this trail has a 3% grade, mentioning that everyone can use it. Mentioned it has limited access points but it meets ADA standards through a beautiful forest. Stated he was a former recreational professional and is involved with the Friends of the West Duluth Parks and Trails. Indicated he would like the recommendation to be limited to human powered uses only. Stated there are other trails for equestrian use. Indicated there are snowmobile trails in the area that can be used. Mentioned he has had conversations with his son on speed limits on trails – indicated this would not work. Stated that equestrian use will not mix with other users. Recommended that snowmobile and equestrian use be removed from consideration for the trail.



Meeting Minutes of February 13, 2019

City Hall – Room 303
411 W 1st St



Indicated we can love this trail to death but we need to protect it. Stated he has lived near the Amity Trail and this situation is not similar to the DWP. Stated that once the DWP is completed and advertised that it will receive more use. Thanked the Parks Commission.

Crosby: Thanked Dick Haney (public). Invited Denette Lynch (public) to the floor.

Denette Lynch (public): Questioned if the rock boulders on the DWP left the draft recommendations plan.

Shoberg: Questioned if Denette was referring to the Traverse. Indicated this was an idea and it is not recommended.

Denette Lynch (public): Questioned if there would be any winter trail grooming.

Shoberg: Stated there might be winter trail grooming on the portion of the Clyde west, but not from the Clyde east.

Denette Lynch (public): Questioned what the grooming would be for.

Shoberg: Stated it would be for winter biking.

Denette Lynch (public): Questioned why they groom for bikes. Stated she was glad to see signage involved in this plan. Indicated that signage has lacked on roads. Questioned if this was intentional.

Shoberg: Indicated there will be road signs.

Denette Lynch (public): Questioned how snowmobiles will get to Spirit Mountain chalet.

Shoberg: Indicated the language does not have a defined route yet. Stated a meeting will need to be held with Spirit Mountain and the snowmobile group to determine the best route.

Denette Lynch (public): Indicated the term multi-use is unclear. Stated the City uses this term a lot..

Shoberg: Stated this means it can withstand mountain bike use as well as other users with adequate sightlines.

Denette Lynch (public): Questioned if Jim understands the semantics of the term. Indicated the term is an attitude thing that mountain bikers own the trail and others may use it. Stated the terminology is vague. Thanked Jim Shoberg.

Crosby: Opened the floor for additional questions from the Parks Commission.

Vogtman: Mentioned the agreement had that the DWP will be a heavily used trail one it is advertised. Questioned why e bikes are not allowed with the current plan. Questioned if there is potential to have them.



Jim Filby Williams: Stated that the provisional opposition is not an intent to permanently prohibit all e bikes from Duluth's trails. Indicated a consequential policy decision would need to be had and will require a great deal of thought and public engagement. Stated the City does not have the capacity at this time to give this question a justice.

Vogtman: Questioned if this could be visited in the future.

Jim Filby Williams: Indicated the question is wholly open. Stated some trails are more conducive to e bikes than others.

Vogtman: Thanked Jim Filby Williams.

Crosby: Thanked everyone for sharing their comments. Stated the next meeting will be an action meeting on the plan.

V. Commission Committees

- A. Administrative (E-board) – meeting date: Thursday, February 28th at noon at the Parks Office
Chair – Amanda Crosby, Jill Joyce, Tjaard Breeuwer [Alicia Watts, Lisa Luokkala, Jim Filby Williams]
- B. Golf Committee – meeting date: February 14th at noon at the Parks office, Chair – Erik Torch, Dennis Isernhagen

VI. Commissioner & Liaison Reports

IX. New Business

- A. Annual Meeting Date Change to April 17th (Action Item)

Crosby: Stated we are looking to change the Annual Meeting date to April 17th from April 10th because of Spring Break. Indicated this change will allow more people to attend the event.

Action Item: Vogtman motioned to move Annual Meeting to April 17th from April 10th. Second by Isernhagen. Called the motion to Vote. Unanimously approved.

- B. Park Point Public Safety (Informational) – Jim Filby Williams, Director of Public Administration

Jim Filby Williams: Thanked President Crosby. Stated the current beach safety involves interdepartmental and other agencies. Indicated that following the two fatalities, there has been collaboration between the various City departments and agencies to discuss improvements for beach safety. Mentioned significant progress has been made with the advanced education efforts and the expanded Park Ranger program. Stated emergency response by police and fire has not made significant progress specifically to our lifeguarding system. Reflected on the improvements that have been made - 2019 all of the conventional non-electronic signage will be replaced, enhanced



and expanded with more effective electronic signage. Shared the Fire Department shares their support by going out on a daily basis to activate 2 of the 6 flag locations. Indicated the plan for 2019 is to replace the two led signs which are solar powered and have not been reliable. Stated the new signs are programmable and connected the National Weather Service in real time and will be immediately provide rip tide updates. Shared in 2018-2019 the Park Ranger program was expanded to cover all of Park Point for a 6 months out of the year. Indicated the Park Rangers provide education on rip tides with brochures. Stated that lifeguards saw the Park Rangers 2-3 times per day at the Park Point Beach House. Mentioned the Park Rangers patrol during red flag days. Mentioned billboard along I35 displayed that drives people to parkpointbeach.org. Stated the Fire Department has been equally proactive by investing several hundred thousand dollars on equipment and training. Stated a boat is placed at Pier B for rapid response rates. Indicated the Fire Department installed new and improved life rings along the beach for anyone to use. Shared the non-significant improvements being within the lifeguarding system. Stated Parks and Recreation and the YMCA will write a report that applies prevailing wind practices that applies to beach safety at Park Point. Indicated this report will define enhanced lifeguarding practices with the corresponding cost estimates. Stated this report will be discussed during the May or June Parks Commission Meeting. Mentioned this will not be a proposal, but rather to identify what would improve the program that is consistent with industry standards. Stated there are no plans to enhance lifeguard program this summer.

Crosby: Opened the floor for public comment.

Dennis Hoelscher (public): Stated he is a resident of Minnesota Point. Indicated he was one of the collaborators to discuss the current lifeguard program. Stated the five documents he provided are the work that he has done since August 2017. Stated Jim Filby Williams is providing information from August 2017, indicated he has had first hand conversations with these individuals. Mentioned he got involved because nothing was being done. Stated the documents contain specific recommendations which includes lifeguards at both the Beach House and 12th Street. Indicated he recommends lifeguards to be present from 10am -8pm and to have one lifeguard to be trained in surf rescue. Shared no one in Duluth is trained at this level. Stated surf rescue lifeguards are trained to work in conditions over 3 feet of water. Reflected on the lifeguard article from the Chicago News Tribune and how they correlate the deaths from the lack of lifeguards. Stated the current lifeguard agreements goes through 2019. Read an article from 10 years ago how Parks and Recreation ceased providing youth programming on MN Point. Indicated the program had swimming. Requested the Parks and Recreation Division to provide a certified beach lifeguard during youth programs. Indicated the training is not expensive and can be grant funded.

Jim Filby Williams: Clarified the expanded Park Ranger program was brand new as of June 2018 and has been rapidly evolving to meet the needs in the community. Indicated he spoke with the YMCA today and they mentioned the lifeguards saw Park Rangers 2-3 times per day.

Crosby: Thanked Dennis Hoelscher (public).

X. Old Business

XI. Division Report

Jim Filby Williams: Stated the new Manager will be announced soon. Indicated an email will be sent prior to the next Parks Commission Meeting.

XII. Public Comment

Mike Casey (public): Stated he represents the Friends of West Duluth Parks and Trails. Mentioned the hope to have the Mud Lake Causeway within the Western Waterfront Trail Plan. Indicated he would like to have any documents posted in the page that will be easy to find.

Jim Filby Williams: Confirmed.

Mike Casey (public): Questioned the new schedule with the government being open and the public engagement process. Stated he doesn't expect answers. Indicated some members of the public receive answers to their questions. Stated all questions should be given the same respect. Indicated he sent a question to the Parks Commission and Jim Shoberg on the Trails Committee that was referred on the DWP draft plan. Indicated he was eliminated from the process. Questioned how the public comments will effect the plan, stated he would like to see them within the plan. Indicated he doesn't know what his input is within stakeholder meetings.

Jim Filby Williams: Stated Mud Lake is being examined in context with the Western Waterfront Trail plan. Indicated a couple months ago Keith Hamre was asked by City Council to convene all commissions to discuss the decision for Mud Lake. Indicated this could occur April 30th with the Historic Preservation Commission, DEEDA, City Council, Planning, Natural Resources Commission, and the Parks Commission. Shared the intent to do the best job to tie up the questions. Indicated there are three steps which include confirming that we have an affordable way to join the US Steel property, BN is willing to sell us the property needed that is cost effective and complete the examination of Mud Lake. Indicated the hope to politely give a target date by the end of April for BN and US Steel. Indicated there is never the intent to not answer citizen questions. Apologized for the perception of this.

Denette Lynch (public): Stated she asks questions that others may be thinking. Questioned which additional buildings are included under the City's operation. Questioned the timeline for the Lincoln Park construction. Questioned the timeline of the Chambers Grove signage and if there will be signage from Grand Avenue.

Jim Filby Williams: Indicated the buildings did not refer to the construction of buildings, but the incorporation of existing park buildings that gives a sense of where we are with the lifespan and the cumulative costs to build a foundation of data.

Luokkala: Stated a 106 review for Lincoln Park Restoration project is in progress and going well. Stated collaboration with SHPO to address their concern and strategies. Shared the feeling of confidence of moving forward with a 2019 construction timeline. Mentioned the work done with Property and Facilities Manager, Erik Birkeland, to get the project out to bid this year. Shared this will be a two year



Meeting Minutes of February 13, 2019

City Hall – Room 303
411 W 1st St



construction season.

Denette Lynch (public): Thanked Luokkala.

Luokkala: Indicated the City is looking to reinstall the signs along Grand Avenue after the construction. Stated there is currently not a timeline for this project.

Joyce: Questioned the term 106 review.

Luokkala: Indicated the 106 review process follows state statute on the environmental review of any federally funded projects.

Joyce: Questioned who Erik was and his position with the City.

Luokkala: Indicated he was the individual who provided the Natural Resource Commission update and serves as the Property and Facilities Manager for the City of Duluth.

Joyce: Thanked Luokkala.

Dennis Hoelscher (public): Requested the Parks Commission to send an advisory to the Parks and Recreation Division that mandates surf lifeguards to be present during youth programs during the summer season. Stated the Park Rangers have been active.

Jim Filby Williams: Stated the first year of the expansion of the Park Ranger program covers all of MN Point.

Dennis Hoelscher (public): Thanked Jim Filby Williams.

XIII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm. Moved by Commissioner Breeuwer. Second Joyce.

XIV. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Wednesday March 13, 2019 at City Hall – Council Chamber