

DEARBORN RECREATION & PARKS COMMISSION

Jeff Stassen, Chair

Margaret Green, Vice Chair

Greg Orner, Director of Dearborn Recreation and Parks

Commissioners:

Rami Abousaleh; Jamal Aljahmi; Carolyn Blackmore; Mark Bruce, Greg Gomolak;
Warren Hartley; Kevin Kreger; Joseph Kubinski; Michael Macpherson;
John Ruselowski; John Sczomak; Johanna Seidel; Lynn Sherman;
Joe Siciliano; Eugene Smith; EmmaJean Woodyard

REGULAR MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2015

PRESENT: Abousaleh, Aljahmi, Green, Hartley, Kreger, Ruselowski, Sczomak, Seidel, Sherman, Siciliano, Stassen, Woodyard.

EXCUSED: Blackmore, Bruce, Gomolak, Kubinski, Macpherson, Smith.

ALSO PRESENT: Greg Orner (Director of Dearborn Recreation & Parks)
Eric Peterson (Deputy Director of Dearborn Recreation & Parks)
Michael Arens (Landscape Architects & Planners, Inc.)
Tom Smith (City of Dearborn retiree)
Carl Wiegand (SW Outer Drive Neighborhood Association/Penn-Vassar)
Windy Weber (SW Outer Drive Neighborhood Association/Duvall-Edison)
Daniel Thomas (resident)
Judy Thomas (resident)
Mo Hijazi (Dearborn Soccer Club)
Beth Michel (Snow Woods Neighborhood Association)
Regan Ford (SW Outer Drive Neighborhood Association)
Tim Kleczynski (River Bend Neighborhood Association)

Commission Chair Jeff Stassen called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

No changes to agenda.

Commissioner Green motioned to approve the minutes for the May, June, July, and August meetings of the Recreation & Parks Commission; seconded by Sherman.

Commissioner Green introduced the Five-Year Master Plan overview that would be included in Director Orner's report.

Director's Report

Moving forward with the RFP for the indoor soccer feasibility study. Several companies submitted bids which will be reviewed by the panel next week. The bids will then be submitted to City Council and Mayor. The feasibility study will include the capital cost, the operating



Dearborn Recreation & Parks

Aquatics • Golf • Ice Arena • Camping • Sports • Theater

expense, the market, viability for the City to construct, and, if so, if it would be a stand-alone facility or attached to the Ford Community & Performing Arts Center.

The RFP for fitness equipment for The Center has gone out and some very good bids have been received. There is a budget of \$120,000. This will be a good investment in that the present equipment is the original from 2000.

There is a below-the-ice leak at the Dearborn Ice Skating Center (DISC). To repair the leak may involve digging under the ice.

Currently paving at the DISC and the Michael A. Guido Theater circular drive.

Completed a successful maintenance week at The Center on August 31 – September 4, 2015.

A Commission subcommittee has been formed regarding the proposed smoking ban in City parks. Members plan to have discussions with the community including ACCESS, Dearborn Chief of Police Haddad, members of City Council, and the Mayor to gather information in order to make a recommendation.

Rouge River Gateway Trail: Dan's Excavating submitted a significant change order (\$400,000) which is pushing the cost of the project to \$1.6 million.

Possible construction of a cell tower at Ford Woods Park along Greenfield. Could result in a potential of up to \$1 million in compensation over 20 years to the Recreation & Parks Department.

Eppinger Pond has been filled in, and grass has been planted. Lee Morris has approached the Eppinger family regarding renaming Lake 4 at Camp Dearborn.

City Council has approved of the Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) with Wayne County for the Whitmore-Bolles Splash Pad at \$200,000 and \$50,000 for comfort station.

The liner in Dunworth baby pool has been replaced; moving forward with replacing the liner in 50-meter.

Linda Eder and Lonestar (country group) are scheduled for the professional theater season. There is also an offer in to Uncle Kracker, and select comedians are being pursued as well.

Construction at Camp Dearborn is mostly complete on four of the eight resort cabins. It is hoped that they will be completed for Halloween weekend.

There were no bids received for the zip line at Camp Dearborn project; will go back out for bid in several weeks.

The community design playscape at Crowley Park has been included in the budget at \$150,000. This will support a more elaborate playscape with a possible theme. (The average playscape can cost in the area of \$50,000.)

Recreation & Parks continues to work with City Plan and the Engineering Department regarding the Crowley parking lot issue.

There are plans to review DMC Sports Science Academy proposal.

The park surveillance equipment project (using awarded grant funds) is under way.

Recreation & Parks Five-Year Master Plan

The sub-committee is comprised of:

- Dearborn Recreation & Parks Director Greg Orner
- Dearborn Recreation & Parks Deputy Director Eric Peterson
- Recreation & Parks Commission Chair Jeff Stassen
- Recreation & Parks Co-Chair Margaret Green
- Recreation & Parks Commissioner Joe Siciliano
- Recreation & Parks Commissioner Carolyn Blackmore
- Mike Arens, consultant from Landscape Architects.

The goal for the meeting is to obtain approval/adoption from the Recreation & Parks Commission in order to submit the Five-Year Master Plan to the City Council.

The Five-Year Master Plan serves as a guide and framework for operations of the Recreation & Parks Department for the next five years (2016-2021). The Master Plan is a useful tool in the re-accreditation process as well as in procuring grants.

The public input phase is crucial for the development of the Five-Year Master Plan which included:

- Approximately 2,350 survey responses.
- Four (4) previous public participation meetings.
- Stakeholder meetings:
 - The **Dearborn Soccer Club** is competing with other communities and soccer clubs that have access to indoor soccer.
 - The **Dearborn Chamber of Commerce** discussed the people who are employed in Dearborn.
 - **Dearborn Public Schools** has a population of approximately 19,800 students. Interested in web-based access to share information on the Recreation & Parks Department and partner organizations.
 - The **Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS)** provides its clients (40 percent of whom are non-Arab) with social and medical services as well as employment training.

- The **Dearborn Community Fund** is interested in teaming and working with the **Dearborn Community Arts Council** to enhance cultural arts opportunities.

Preliminary data from the surveys and meetings emphasize:

- The importance of maintaining fiscal responsibility and a “return on investment” pertaining to projects.
- The importance of a relationship with Dearborn Public Schools.
- Great interest in non-motorized trail access and water trails.
- Ford Field is most utilized with Levagood Park coming in second.
- Special events are most popular.
- Paths and trailways are very important to the community.
- Adventure and challenge amenities at Camp Dearborn are supported.
- The average annual cost per household for Recreation is \$63.58. 88.4 percent of those surveyed believe the cost is worth amenities and programs.
- 57.7 percent would support an increase in user fees as opposed to eliminating services.
- The value of the continual development of cultural arts.
- Safety in parks is critical.
- The value of the connection between the parks and their surrounding communities.

The Master Plan Sub-Committee

- Commissioner Siciliano: *“A lot of work went into it; we made sure to have the public involved and share as much input as possible.”*
- Deputy Director Peterson stressed the importance of the opportunity to pursue grant funding as well as to describe the goals, the 13 objectives, and action steps for the Recreation & Parks Department.
- Mike Arens stressed that the Five-Year Master Plan is also helpful for program development and the involvement of partnerships.

Commission Chair Stassen opened the discussion to the Recreation & Parks Commission.

Recreation & Parks Commission

Commissioner John Ruselowski stated that there were 40 items on page 93 but only showed the costs for 16 items. He also inquired about the numbers for renovating the outdoor pools.

Eric Peterson discussed Objective F of the Master Plan which states there are no plans to close outdoor pools as long as there are reasonable repairs.

Public Input

Windy Weber (resident of 2240 Elmdale, across from Edison Park) stated that she loves the walkable neighborhood but has a complaint about people not cleaning up after their dogs. She suggested additional signs to remind people to do so. She was also interested in new playground equipment.

Mike Albano (resident) inquired about whether the pool plan was forwarded to City Council. He was informed that the Commission only made a recommendation. Deputy Director Peterson stated that the Council was interested in seeing the results of a season with the two spray parks.

Regan Ford (resident of 3804 Gertrude) wanted to know how the Commission felt about the decision of City Hall/Council. Commissioner Seidel informed him that the Commission had made a recommendation and suggested that Mr. Ford discuss with City Council. (Commission Ruselowski added that the pools are important to the City of Dearborn.)

Judy Thomas (resident of 24153 Boston) was very supportive of the Master Plan and added that she believes that the neighborhood pools make people continue to live in Dearborn. She also commented on the proposed re-engineered exit for Crowley Park. She is concerned about the street being open as it may serve as a fast exit for criminals. [Ms. Thomas was informed that the project began when Mr. Kalpus (sp?) claimed he was acting on behalf of the neighborhood to open the road.] She repeated her belief that Crowley Pool attracted a nice crowd of people to the Crowley neighborhood.

Tim Harrison (resident of 3805 McKinley) inquired about the park in the Edison neighborhood and was informed that a \$25,000 replacement of the playground structure to meet today's ADA specifications has gone out for bid. Bids should be received by the end of October.

Tim Kleczynski (resident of 22195 Cherry Hill) commended the Commission and thanked them for their work. He said that he supports indoor soccer in Dearborn; he presently sends his kids to an indoor soccer facility in Canton. He also supports the Rouge River Gateway Trail and the City's special events including the Martian Marathon and Homecoming.

Beth Michel (resident of 3140 Dallas Street) inquired about the availability of the Five-Year Master Plan on the website. She also asked about the Ten Eyck Park outdoor skating rink flooding issue and was advised that DPW was looking at it and would be taking the lead on the costs and time frame.

Tom Smith (a Dearborn retiree who resides in Madison Heights) commended Director Greg Orner and Deputy Director Eric Peterson on their work. He has used the facilities at the Ford Community & Performing Arts Center for 15 years and continues to do so even after retirement.

Daniel Thomas (resident of 24153 Boston) commented that there has been an issue with weed growth in the lakes at Camp Dearborn that occurs by the end of June and that this has interfered with fishing. This is an ongoing problem, and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources is very strict about weed removal.

Mo Hijazi (resident of 6737 Kenmore), Director of the Dearborn Soccer Club, expressed his thanks for the support of Director Greg Orner, Deputy Director Eric Peterson, and Michael

Shooshanian, Sports/Parks Supervisor. He communicated his excitement about the Club's soccer program and its growth in membership over the past nine months. He also supports the possibility of an indoor soccer facility, and he advised that the Club has partnered with the Michigan Jaguars and supports the diversion of soccer traffic to the Gulley side of Crowley Park.

Regan Ford had a second comment in which he complimented the Dearborn Recreation & Parks Commission and staff. He also stated that the blue-collar neighborhoods are in trouble and need the neighborhood pools and parks.

Commission Co-Chair Margaret Green made the motion to adopt the Dearborn Recreation & Parks Five-Year Master Plan (2016-2021); the motion was seconded by Kevin Kreger. There was unanimous approval.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m.