

EDINA PARK BOARD
8:00 P.M.
CENTENNIAL LAKES CENTRUM BUILDING
JUNE 9, 1998

REVISED 8/12/98

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tom White, John Dovolis, Bill Jenkins, Dave Fredlund, Beth Hall, Jean Rydell, Becky Bennett, Andrew Montgomery

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dave Crowther, Andy Herring, Phyllis Kohler

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Janet Canton

OTHERS PRESENT: Wilford Nelson, Marjorie Ruedy, Frank Cardarelle, Lois Cardarelle, Tami Kaminsen, Dick Bielke, Debbie Mahon, Alicia Jenkins, Tom Jenkins

I. APPROVAL OF THE MAY 12, 1998 PARK BOARD MINUTES

Jean Rydell MOVED TO APPROVE THE MAY 12, 1998 PARK BOARD MINUTES.
Bill Jenkins SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

II. MNDOT PROPERTY LIMITED USE PERMIT - NEIGHBORHOOD REQUEST

Mr. Keprios indicated that he was asked at the last Park Board meeting to put together what it would cost to move the fence as well as what it would cost to maintain the open space area. He stated that as his staff report points out it would cost approximately \$4,600 to put in fencing and the company he talked to did not feel that salvaging the fence was an option. He noted that if we go forward with this project, it would be more cost effective to put in a new fence and remove the existing one. Mr. Keprios explained that he asked his park foreman to do an analysis of what it would cost to maintain the area, in which he was told it would depend on the level of maintenance that we provide. However, if we keep it to the standard that we keep all of the other parks it would cost between \$1,500 and \$1,800 a year and that does not consider any tree trimming, grading, or any soil stabilization that might need to be done. Mr. Keprios pointed out that isn't to say that we would have to keep it at that level we could just go in and mow it two or three times a year, which is more than MNDOT currently does.

Frank Cardarelle noted that all of the neighbors are in favor of this because it would be a place for the kids to play and people to walk their dogs. There used to be a vacant lot but

now a house has been built on it. Therefore, there is no open space for people to go that is close to the neighborhood other than the street or church parking lot.

Mr. Montgomery asked Mr. Keprios if he can see any alternative to this. Mr. Keprios explained that there is an application process to go through to get MNDOT's permission to lease this property so we could put a fence in. There is no guarantee that we will even be approved, however, MNDOT didn't seem to think there would be a problem getting their approval. Mr. Montgomery asked if MNDOT would allow the fence to be moved without leasing the piece of property. Mr. Keprios replied he thinks MNDOT would allow that only if we have a limited use permit. Mr. Montgomery again stated that if MNDOT would allow the fence to be put in, then the neighborhood could take care of maintaining the property and it wouldn't have to become a neighborhood park. He indicated that he is looking for an alternative to open up the area without the City taking the responsibility of maintaining the property.

Mr. Jenkins stated that he still questions is that an appropriate space for a park. Mr. Montgomery replied that he thinks the general feeling is that it is not, however, these people would have an opportunity to have an open space area. Right now the neighborhood cannot even get to that area.

Mr. Cardarelle asked to clarify a point. The Highway Department has informed him that the request needs to come from the City and not the neighborhood. That is why they are here.

Mr. Montgomery again stated that his idea is just to move the fence so the neighborhood has access. He noted that he doesn't know where the \$4,600 would come from. Ms. Rydell commented that she's not even sure there is \$4,600 available. Mr. Montgomery indicated that assuming we have the money would that be a solution to at least opening that area up.

Ms. Hall commented that it is not an ideal situation, particularly with the highway right there. Mr. Montgomery noted that we are not taking responsibility, we are just putting in the fence. Mr. Fredlund stated that he doesn't understand what is being gained because that is not useable space.

Mr. Cardarelle stated there is 2 ½ acres there that is not being used for anything and they need to go through the proper chain of command to get a permit. The City can do whatever level of maintenance they want and the neighbors are willing to help. There are no parks or open space in this area of the City. He agrees it's not the best location, but there is no other place.

Ms. Rydell asked what is the liability in which Mr. Keprios replied that on a limited use permit the liability would probably fall on the shoulders of the City. However, it would not likely increase our insurance premium because we have a blanket policy.

Ms. Bennett asked Mr. Keprios if he thinks it is not a good spot because of the proximity to the freeway. Mr. Keprios noted that his view is this is not an area for children to play, the contours aren't right and it's too close to the freeway.

Mr. Dovolis asked how much of the neighborhood is in support of this. Mr. Cardarelle replied that the whole neighborhood would like to see that piece of land as open space or a park area. Mr. Dovolis asked if a petition should be done to see what support they actually have from the neighborhood. Mr. Keprios replied that his guess is that the neighborhood could easily find support for this issue. Mr. Keprios suggested that possibly a compromise could be made. Maybe the City could pay for half of the fence and the neighborhood pay for the other half, as well as, the City mow it twice a year and if the neighborhood wants it at a higher level than they can contract that out or mow it themselves. This could be a possible compromise where people could walk their dogs and gain access to the property without having to maintain it at the same level as the rest of the park system.

Mr. White indicated that he suggested at the last Park Board meeting that possibly the neighborhood could put together a financial package as a gift. He explained that he is all for open green space, however, when there are safety and money concerns attached, he is not willing to consider it. Mr. White stated that if the neighborhood would give a gift and pay for the fence as well as maintain it, then he would at least consider recommending it to the City Council.

Mr. Cardarelle noted that he doesn't expect the Park Board to approve a large park, they just want the fence to be moved and the area mowed. He indicated that he has not asked the neighbors about how they would feel about contributing financially. He stated that he knows all of the neighbors would sign a petition. Mr. Dovolis pointed out that he thinks the biggest issue is financial restraints. Mr. Keprios asked the neighborhood if they are asking that the City come up with the \$4,600. Mr. Cardarelle stated that he knows there are few retired neighbors who have said they would be willing to move the fence, however, at this time they don't even know if they even have a permit to do that. Mr. Cardarelle pointed out that first they need to get permission through the City from the Highway Department to use it. After that, it's one step at a time.

Tom White MOVED THAT THE PARK BOARD RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL THAT THE CITY REQUEST PERMISSION FROM MNDOT TO MOVE THE FENCE SUBJECT TO THE CAVEAT THAT NO CITY FUNDS BE USED FOR THAT FENCE AND NO CITY DOLLARS WOULD BE SPENT ON MAINTENANCE WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE NEIGHBORHOOD WOULD COME FORWARD WITH THE MONEY FOR MAINTENANCE AND FOR THE FENCE. Dave Fredlund SECONDED THE MOTION.

Ms. Bennett stated that the bottom line is when you have a hired staff saying it's not a safe place for people to play and spend time at than she feels it doesn't need to go any further than that.

Mr. Montgomery suggested that possibly a joint committee could be formed with a few residents and Park Board members, including himself, just to explore the idea because he doesn't know what all of the MNDOT problems are. He stated that he likes Mr. White's motion from the point of view that we are not putting any of our dollars on the line but we could still explore the possibility of MNDOT moving the fence. Mr. Montgomery added that the fence is going to get moved at some time because eventually a developer is going to come in and build on those three lots.

MOTION:

IN FAVOR - Andrew Montgomery, Tom White, Beth Hall, John Dovolis, Jean Rydell, Dave Fredlund

OPPOSED - Becky Bennett, Bill Jenkins

MOTION CARRIED 6 TO 2.

III. OTHER

A. Centennial Lakes Putt Putt Course - Mr. Keprios indicated that he is very proud of what Tom Shirley and his staff have done with the Centennial Lakes Putting Course. The Park Board thanked Mr. Shirley for his work on the course. Mr. Keprios also pointed out that the water fall features placed throughout the course were built by Northern Water Gardens, the same people who will be working on the fountain at Arneson Acres.

B. Tree Damage - Mr. Fredlund asked about the tree damage to the park system. Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that they don't have a dollar estimate on the loss of trees but are accumulating the numbers and assessing the total damage. There currently is talk about a reforestation plan where the city will assist with a boulevard tree planting plan. As for the parks, the crews have not been able to even start the parks yet. They are still taking all of the trees from the boulevards and are working 16 hour days including weekends. It was asked what parks got hit the worst and it was noted Utley and Wooddale.

C. Senior Center - Ms. Rydell asked what is the status with the Senior Center in which Mr. Keprios replied that right now a work session is going on with the City Council and staff. He indicated that the Senior Center is one of the items they will be discussing along with other options for the Lewis Engineering Site. He noted that he should have more information available on this at the next Park Board meeting.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Jean Rydell MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:30 P.M. John Dovolis SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.