

EDINA PARK BOARD
7:30 p.m.
MAY 12, 1998

MEMBERS PRESENT: Andrew Montgomery, Jean Rydell, Phyllis Kohler, Bill Jenkins, Tom White, Andy Herring, Dave Fredlund, Beth Hall, Dave Crowther

MEMBERS ABSENT: Becky Bennett, John Dovolis

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Janet Canton, Susie Miller

OTHERS PRESENT: Frank Cardavelle, Marjorie Ruedy, Dick Bielke, Ann Sheely, Greg Benson, Tami Kaminsen, Debbie Mahon, Colleen Pause, Peter Pause, Lois Cardarelle

I. ADAPTIVE RECREATION SUPERVISOR

Mr. Keprios introduced Susie Miller, the new Adaptive Recreation Supervisor. Ms. Miller informed the Park Board that she graduated from Mankato State University with a degree in Therapeutic Recreation. She explained that she did her practicum under Jackie Doncavage, former Adaptive Recreation Supervisor, at West Hennepin Community Center. After that she worked for a long-term care facility for a couple of years and most recently worked at the Senior Center in Coon Rapids. Ms. Miller pointed out that the reason she chose her field of work is because of adaptive recreation and therefore is really excited about her new position.

II. APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 14, 1998 PARK BOARD MINUTES

Jean Rydell MOVED TO APPROVE THE APRIL 14, 1998 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Beth Hall SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

III. MNDOT PROPERTY LIMITED USE PERMIT - NEIGHBORHOOD REQUEST

Mr. Keprios noted that as his staff report outlined he received a letter from Frank Cardarelle requesting that the City maintain approximately two acres of trees and grass in the Northwest quadrant of the intersection of Crosstown Highway 62 and Highway 100. He noted that he was informed by MNDOT that they would need a letter from the City requesting access to that area to be used as a park. Mr. Keprios pointed out that he

researched this piece of property to see if it had ever come before the Park Board in the past and found out it has not.

Mr. Keprios indicated that he did talk to MNDOT and they are willing to send him an application for a limited use permit which would allow the City to move the fence and maintain that piece of property. However, they would probably not be interested in selling the property. A Limited Use Permit would grant the City access and the City would be held responsible for maintenance of it for a period of ten years.

Frank Cardarelle, resident, indicated that the reason he suggested this is because the neighborhood does not have a park within a half mile. He stated that obviously there are some hoops to jump through and some problems but right now the land is mainly being used by the rabbits. They would like to see it used for the kids and for people to walk their dogs, have a few picnic tables put in, etc. He pointed out that the neighborhood doesn't expect it to be a big expensive park, they just want to see it mowed. Mr. Cardarelle indicated that the topic of moving the fence has come up. He noted that he is a surveyor and therefore does a tremendous amount of staking and does a lot of work for fence companies. He stated that it would probably be cheaper to build a new fence rather than move the old fence. He commented that another problem is money and he understands everyone is on a tight budget. However, the neighborhood would like to see it used rather than just sit there and noted that MNDOT would prefer to work through the City rather than through the neighbors. Mr. Cardarelle pointed out that the young kids in the neighborhood now have to play on the parking lot at Normandale Church.

Ms. Kohler asked what would the access be in which Mr. Cardarelle replied it could be accessed from Wilryan Avenue and by 62nd St. Mr. Cardarelle gave a brief history of the land and explained that it used to be where his grandfather's farm was and was then known as Robert's Estate. Therefore, he feels Robert's Park would be a good name for it.

Mr. Montgomery asked why this land hasn't been used for buildable lots. Mr. Cardarelle noted that the survey from 30 years ago shows 3 buildable lots. However, he indicated that the neighborhood would rather see it as open space and a park than see houses built there.

Mr. Crowther asked Mr. Keprios for his perspective on the suitability of this piece of property for a public park. Mr. Keprios replied that he personally doesn't see this piece of land as a park because it is right off the clover leaf of an extremely highly traveled freeway. He stated that there is no question it would beautify the area, however, he does not feel it is prime real estate for a neighborhood park.

Mr. Crowther asked what is the city's position on leasing versus owning property or parks. He asked if the city currently has any parks that they do not own outright. Mr. Keprios replied no, however, there are some small pieces of property owned by the state next to freeways that the city does maintain just to keep the city more beautified. He noted that it is fairly minimal and the reason the city does it is because the state does such

a lousy job of maintaining their property. Mr. White asked if the city maintains this piece of property right now in which Mr. Keprios replied no.

Ms. Kohler asked what would be the down side of having a 10 year lease. Mr. Keprios explained that the down side would be the added maintenance and the cost of putting in a fence, however, he stated that he doesn't have the numbers at this point.

Mr. White asked Mr. Keprios if he has talked to the neighborhood about having them make a gift to cover that expense in which Mr. Keprios commented that he hadn't considered that.

Pete Pause, resident, indicated there was one occasion when a drunk driver drove through the fence and came right into their house. Therefore, they would feel much better if the fence were up closer to the freeway. He also pointed out that he thinks a number of the neighbors would be willing to help with the maintenance or whatever is necessary to help out.

Dick Bielke, resident, feels that a chain link fence should provide an adequate safety barrier and this park would be a lot safer for the kids to play compared to the asphalt parking lot at the church.

Tami Kaminsen, resident, noted that she has a 9 year-old and an 11 year-old and there isn't a park close by where they can play other than the church parking lot. Therefore, it would be great to see a park at that site.

Mr. Crowther indicated that when he walked the area his only major concern is safety. He stated that even with a fence it is right along the freeway which creates a potential danger because kids will hit balls over fences and go chase them, etc. In addition, there is zero visibility to the park from the residential side because of the mature trees. Therefore, he indicated that he would be interested in the neighborhoods comments and feelings on these issues because it is your kids who would be using the park.

Mr. Cardarelle asked if there have been problems at Strachauer Park because that park is located just off of the Crosstown Highway. Mr. Keprios replied that they have had a few problems with vehicles crashing through the fenced area, which is why they have designed the park so that the athletic fields are far enough to the north. He added that the two parks are not really the same in that with Robert's Park you are within 50 ft. of cars traveling 55 mph.

Greg Benson, resident, pointed out that it is also a safety factor for kids to walk to one of the parks that is a half a mile away. He also noted that it is a fairly close neighborhood and everyone keeps an eye on everyone. Again, it would be a lot better than playing at the church parking lot.

It was asked what is the general make-up for the neighborhood kid wise. In other words, are there a lot of children? It was noted there are quite a few kids. For a long time the neighborhood was practically childless and now people have moved in and there are a lot more kids. It's also a neighborhood that doesn't have a lot of traffic. A resident pointed out that there are probably 20 kids within ½ a block or more.

Phyllis Kohler stated that she is reluctant to make a comment because she has not actually walked the property. However, if the neighborhood wants this and there doesn't seem to be much a downfall could we try it on a short-term basis. It was noted that the short-term basis would last 10 years.

Ms. Rydell indicated that she thinks this issue should be tabled until we know how much it's going to cost to fence it and maintain it. Mr. Keprios replied that he can get those figures. He also commented to the neighborhood that he finds it interesting that they don't want any playground equipment, yet they want the kids to play there. The neighborhood replied that they want open space, a couple of picnic tables, a couple of trails and the grass mowed. They don't expect anything elaborate.

Ms. Rydell MOVED TO TABLE THIS UNTIL NEXT MONTH WHEN THE PARK BOARD HAS A LITTLE MORE INFORMATION ON THE COST OF ANNUAL MAINTENANCE AND THE COST OF A FENCE. Dave Fredlund SECONDED THE MOTION.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY,

A resident indicated that the concern of not being able to see the kids was brought up. She noted that she would be opposed to cutting down any trees to make that area open space. Mr. Keprios replied that on a limited use permit basis they still won't own the property, and therefore cannot cut down any trees.

IV. REQUEST TO RE-NAME BRAEMAR WEST ARENA

Mr. Keprios explained that Lee Otis, former Edina resident, sent a letter to Andrew Montgomery back when Andy was the Chair asking to re-name Braemar West Arena to the Bill Nyrop Arena. Mr. Keprios indicated that this is a unique situation for him because he also was a very close personal friend of Mr. Nyrop. Mr. Keprios pointed out that the issue here is naming facilities. However, he noted that he feels this is more political in nature than anything.

Mr. Crowther asked if there have been any other inquiries or is it just this one individual and if it is just one individual do we need to act on a single person's request for us to do this. Mr. Keprios responded there was some talk regarding this at the start of when we were going to build the third ice rink.

Mr. Jenkins stated that he also was a very close friend of Mr. Nyrop and is also a friend of Lee Otis, however, he does have different thoughts on this. He thinks Mr. Crowther has a good point in regards to Mr. Otis being a resident of South Dakota and putting this together. However, if the rink is going to be named after a hockey person of Edina that would be the person to name it after.

Mr. Fredlund asked if the other two sheets of ice are named in which Mr. Keprios replied they are known as the West rink, East rink and now South rink, which are obviously named by their orientation.

Mr. White asked what happened to the Jerry Dalen commons in which Mr. Keprios responded that the City Council approved the Park Board's recommendation to name the Jerry Dalen's Commons at Braemar Arena.

Mr. Crowther noted that he attempted to talk to a couple of politicians and was unable to make contact with any of them to see what kind of feel they have for the whole issue. He noted that he feels this has been put on the agenda because of this one non-resident letter and he has not heard about this from anyone else. Mr. Crowther stated that he also was a good friend of Bill Nyrop and also knows Lee Otis, however, he feels maybe we need to do a little more work to see if it's an appropriate way to honor him or not. Mr. Crowther pointed out that the Edina Football Association has created an award in his name and is giving out a scholarship to a high school football player every year now from this point forward. However, he knows that does not mean that other things cannot be done. He stated that he would be more in favor of tabling this issue until more research can be done and more people can be contacted.

Mr. Herring indicated that he would like to put a motion on the table to not proceed with this because he feels that naming everything is getting out of control. He noted that he did not know Bill Nyrop, however, every time he turns around we are looking at another one of these requests. Mr. Herring also pointed out that we have a number of people, including an upcoming retiree, whom we want to bestow a similar honor with respect to a facility or park.

Mr. White stated that he would be willing to second the motion and vote against it, however, if people came back to us and said this is a way we think we can honor Bill Nyrop and there is a community swell of support behind it, than he would be willing to reconsider it. Mr. White stated that at this point in time he would prefer to simply table it so we can see if we can get more support for it. However, if people came back at a later date then he would be willing to reconsider it.

Andy Herring MOVED THAT THE PARK BOARD NOT RECOMMEND THAT WE NAME ONE OF THE ARENAS AFTER BILL NYROP. Phyllis Kohler SECONDED THE MOTION.

IN FAVOR - Andrew Montgomery, Jean Rydell, Phyllis Kohler, Tom White, Andy Herring, Dave Fredlund, Beth Hall.

NOT IN FAVOR - Bill Jenkins, Dave Crowther

V. **OTHER**

A. Scoreboard at Courtney Ballfield - Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the City Council did pass the recommendation 100% to put in new scoreboards at Courtney Ballfield. He noted that the scoreboards are just about ready to be put in the ground with advertising on them.

B. Wooddale Park - Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the City Council did pass the recommendation to put in portable toilets at Wooddale Park. He noted that we will readdress the issue again this fall and send out another mailing to the neighborhood.

C. Van Valkenburg - Mr. Jenkins indicated that he has been spending a fair amount of time at Van Valkenburg with the Girls Fast Pitch Association and someone is going to get hurt from a foul ball out there. Two people were just about were hurt the other day. Mr. Keprios pointed out that he is aware of the problem and is working on a plan to put netting out at Van Valkenburg. Mr. Keprios also added that Van Valkenburg wasn't originally designed for fast pitch softball but was designed for slow pitch softball, which is why there are currently no protective netting behind the backstops.

D. Courtney Ball Fields - Mr. Montgomery asked how the Courtney Fields are coming along in which Mr. Keprios replied that their target date is June 8th. He indicated that they are still putting in scoreboards and reseeding. The dugouts, the regraded fields with new irrigation and fencing and new lighting look great. Mr. Keprios indicated that our next biggest challenge out there will be the concessions building.

E. Pamela Park Fields - Mr. Jenkins asked how Pamela Park is coming along regarding the turf in which Mr. Keprios replied it is going very slowly and that they are not going to be able to be played on this year. Mr. Jenkins asked where all of those participants are playing and it was noted that they are being scattered throughout a lot of our local fields and have had to tightened up their game schedule. Mr. Keprios also commented that the Edina Youth Softball Association has to be given a lot of credit for being very cooperative and understanding.

F. Senior Center - Mr. Herring asked Mr. Keprios to explain what the current status is with the Senior Center. Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the City Council has decided not to sell the Kunz-Oil/Lewis Engineering site to the Edina School District. He noted that the City Council is looking at a lot of different options. One possibility is to put a community center/senior center at the site. The City Council is also considering gymnasiums with a senior center, as well as, relocating the library to that site which would allow for the expansion of City Hall, which is desperately needed. Therefore,

when the City Council has addressed and put to the rest the Lewis Engineering site plans, then the Senior Center will be either be resolved or we will be back to the drawing table with the three original options: stay where they are; add on to the existing Edina Community Center or go the YMCA. They have not eliminated any of these possibilities yet.

G. Aquatennial - Mr. White noted that he thought at one time there was something mentioned about the Aquatennial Swim Meet that is scheduled for the outdoor pool and asked if they were going to change the date or move it to the evening. Mr. Keprios replied that is one of the items that will be discussed at a meeting he has been asked to attend next week with Mr. Rosland and the new president of the Edina Swim Club. Mr. Keprios indicated that Mr. Crowther had asked him to put that issue on the agenda and Mr. Rosland has directed him not to because it is not a Park Board issue at this point. The issue is being handled administratively, which is a directive from the City Council. Mr. Keprios pointed out that this year the aquatennial will be held at the University of Minnesota.

H. Garden Council - Mr. Keprios noted that Garden Council had an outstanding plant sale this year.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Andy Herring MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:25 P.M. Andrew Montgomery SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.