

**MINUTES
OF THE WORK SESSION OF THE
EDINA PARK BOARD
HELD AT CITY HALL
August 11, 2014
6:00 p.m.**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gieseke called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

II. FRED RICHARDS REPURPOSE VISIONING UPDATE – Facilitated by Jeff and Kathy Schoenbauer

Ms. Kattreh indicated that staff is continuing to gather input and feedback on the repurposing of Fred Richards, and tonight's information will be presented to the Park Board in a graphical form. This same information was presented to the City Council last week for the purposes of feedback, and feedback is also requested from the Park Board tonight. There will be a public open house on September 23 at 7 p.m. at the Public Works building. Following that, the Park Board will be asked at its October meeting to make a recommendation to the City Council.

Mr. Schoenbauer noted this has intentionally been a multi-step process. The first part of this is narrowing the focus and creating a vision with the city and the community. The purpose of this presentation is to accurately get the vision on the table, so the city knows what it is looking for moving forward. Creativity and innovation have been themes to date.

Mr. Schoenbauer noted the September 23 meeting will be more of an open house format, and the details continue to be worked out. Consensus seems to be quite strong that Fred Richards should be a community park to serve residents. It is nice to get away from the fear among some residents that it would be sold for development or turned into a big pond. He noted that there are still some people unhappy with the closing of Fred Richards.

Mr. Schoenbauer added that local businesses are essentially on board with the repurposing plans, including Pentagon Park. The goal is to find a balance between recreational uses and open space. Right now, 35 percent would be developed for more active forms of recreation, with 65 percent more passive recreation. All the graphics and percentages will be refined going forward, as more information is gathered. He pointed out the field games area and the regional trail location.

Member Steel asked about property values. Mr. Schoenbauer noted that a regional trail tends to uptick property values, like park land in general. His expectation is that this will certainly have no net negative effect on adjoining properties, and will most likely be seen as an increase in property values.

Mrs. Schoenbauer commented on an increase in ponding to enhance the design and aesthetic of the park. The parkway comes on and off 77th Street, and there would be some parking along there. The goal is to try to get as much access as possible from the south.

Mr. Schoenbauer noted people find urban agriculture an interesting concept; this should be kept in the report as an alternative rather than on the forefront, based upon what City Council has said. He briefly reviewed parking and the possible alignment of the regional trail.

Member Steel asked about more innovative ideas for the park and play areas.

Mr. Schoenbauer discussed the value of hiring someone with expertise in designing a playground area. Mrs. Schoenbauer noted the splash pad idea has come up multiple times.

Mr. Schoenbauer noted there is also greater interest in capturing an older segment of kids, by providing things like slack-lining. Landscape architects are paying attention to those trends, and the final report will make it clear that creative ideas want to be considered. He also commented that the design of the park will drive how much additional ponding will be possible in the park.

Member Steel asked about stagnant water. Mr. Schoenbauer responded that is a concern that would be addressed during the design phase; the Watershed District would be a good resource for that.

Member Jones expressed preference for loop trails. Mr. Schoenbauer noted loop trails and areas for rest will be part of the design.

Mr. Schoenbauer discussed naturalized buffers, noting that trails should not be any closer from 50 to 60 feet from the back of a property, but that varies depending on natural vegetation and topography. He noted that poor soils are an ongoing concern.

Member Jacobson asked about wintertime usage. Mr. Schoenbauer noted the most popular usage would be just plowing the trails in the wintertime.

Member Steel asked about potential programming and staffing. Ms. Kattreh stated there is a lot of programming capacity at this park. It would give the city the ability to offer a natural environment program. Fred Richard's clubhouse would be a home for that type of a program. Staffing could be ramped up as programming needs dictate whether it is educational or fitness programming.

Member Jones asked about a tot lot. Mrs. Schoenbauer responded there would be different areas for different ages.

Member Jones noted the city is trying to be good stewards of its limited resources. She is wondering about the cost of some of the proposed ideas. She asked about how much funding is going toward the southeast in Edina. She knows that area does not have any swing sets and they need them. A lot of city resources are going into Centennial Lakes and Edinborough Park.

Mr. Schoenbauer agreed that innovation and creativity costs money. There is a balance between desires and what is affordable. The cost of the parkway is a shared responsibility with the developer.

Member Jones asked about the road. Mr. Schoenbauer noted the city should suggest the road be on the developer's side and, from that point, it becomes a negotiation point.

Mrs. Schoenbauer added that the Pentagon Park developer's primary interest is in wellness, and so they are excited about having this area become a park.

Chair Gieseke asked about conversations with the Three Rivers Park District. Mr. Schoenbauer summarized that the Park District is ecstatic about being part of this park. They do not have a profound need for trail-head facilities.

Mrs. Schoenbauer added that the parking situation will be the trickier aspect. Mr. Schoenbauer noted that business parking self-manages, because they are used during the day rather than evenings and weekends.

Member Steel asked about costs. Mr. Schoenbauer noted preliminary costs will come in the draft report.

Member Steel added that there needs to be maintenance numbers included as well. Because reducing maintenance costs was cited as a primary factor in closing Fred Richards, unless it can be proved that this plan will save significant dollars, she cannot vote for it.

Chair Gieseke concurred with Member Steel's comments, noting this is a credibility issue with the neighborhood.

The work session adjourned at 6:47 p.m.