



Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail - Edina
Community Assessment Team

Meeting 2 Minutes

January 13, 2010

Prepared by: Heather Gates, Planning & Development Secretary

Submitted on: February 10, 2010

Present: Kelly Grissman, Planner
Jonathan Vlaming, Senior Manager of Planning
Heather Gates, Secretary
John Keprios, Director of Parks and Recreation – Edina
Kevin Bigalke, Nine Mile Creek Watershed District – Administrator
Richard Johnson, Segment 1 Representative
Bob Lubar, Segment 2 Representative
Robert Schwartzbauer, Segment 3 Representative
Reid Kilberg, Segment 4 Representative
Dave Henry, Segment 5E & 7 Representative
Michael Wolff, Segment 8 Representative
Harvey Johnson, Segment 9 Representative
Peter McCarthy, Segment 11 Representative
Nancy Crain, Segment 19 Representative
Wendy Amundson, Segment 20 Representative

Absent: Eric Burfeind, Edina High School Science Teacher
Brent Christensen, Graduate Engineer
Alice Hulbert, Bike Edina
Randy Lehr, Water Resources Manager
Joseph Hulbert, Edina Park Board

Meeting Start: 6:30 PM

1. Brief welcome and thank you to all team members for volunteering to assist in the Community Assessment Team
 - A. Reviewed Agenda
 - B. Community Team Member Introductions
 - C. House Keeping:
 - i. Any letters sent on behalf of CAT should be signed or have some type of acknowledgement that everyone has seen and approved of correspondence.
 - ii. Please review meeting minutes in a timely fashion so they can be placed on website
2. Address the questions in the letter sent by CAT:
 - A. Jonathan went through the letter and answered the questions brought up within the letter. Jonathan will check with the Park District's general council to see if it is allowed to use taxpayer's money for a postage

budget. A few members said that they have many elderly along their route and they do not have access to email. They would rather send letters to everyone in their segment. The Park District said staff could send a mass mailing to everyone in the segments with instructions on how to access information on the web site and how to contact their segment representative.

3. EAW Update

- A. EAW will be ready late March or early April
 - i. Park District is meeting with consultant in January to review progress/preliminary findings.
 - ii. EAW review process will include a 30-day public comment period and two identical open houses with a presentation of the findings.
 - iii. Response to public comments will become part of the EAW/record.
 - iv. EAW findings will help quantify the potential challenges of some segments.
 - v. EAW includes all segments – not just creek based routes.

Associated Discussion:

CAT members had several questions regarding the responsible party for paying for screening and easements, the design and location of screening, and construction phasing. Screening, if required as part of the regional trail project, is the financial responsibility of the Park District. The determination of the screening location, size, and type will be resolved during the design phase of the regional trail; however, the CAT may provide recommendations as to where screening should occur and to what extent. Due to the length, expense, and scope of the regional trail, construction would occur in phasing to best capitalize on potential funding partners and sources and to provide logical trail connections within the City.

4. Nine Mile Creek Watershed District – Kevin Bigalke

- A. Brief overview on Watershed District rules and regulations. The Park District will need to follow all rules and regulations similar to private residents.
- B. Updated CAT on creek & trail alignment in Hopkins
- C. Explained why it was necessary to realign the creek in Hopkins and why it will be necessary to do the same in parts of Edina
- D. Many factors are considered in determining if a creek or body of water should be rerouted:
 - i. Creek health;
 - ii. Stability;
 - iii. Ecological function;
 - iv. Impaired water (does it support fish and other species?); and
 - v. Magnitude of bounce after rain/storm melt event
- E. Due to the cost, the project will be done in sections and paid for by the entire Watershed District not adjacent property owners.
- F. The Watershed District will look for ways to preserve and restore habitat along the creek corridor.
- G. In some cases where the creek bank is unstable, the bank may be resloped and then restabilized with riprap and vegetation. This will also help redirect velocity.

- H. Creek restoration work will involve tree removal. Trees will be replaced but not at the same size, species composition, or necessarily the same location. Effort will be taken to preserve significant creek corridor trees. Buckthorn and box elder are all undesirable trees that will likely be removed as part of the project.
- I. The work will require backhoes, bulldozers and other heavy equipment. Effort will be taken to minimize potential impacts on adjacent properties and expedite work as feasible.
- J. There will be a short-term visual disturbance.

Associated Discussion:

The CAT expressed concern over the funding of the creek restoration project and potential for assessments to adjacent neighbors to cover the project. Kevin reiterated that all property owners within the Watershed District will equally pay for the creek restoration work. Kevin also stated that the Watershed District has the authority to issue special assessments but has not done so and the Board has not recently discussed this as a potential funding solution. The Board has historically taken the position that the projects the Board funds and oversees have regional benefits and should be funding accordingly.

The CAT requested clarification on what the Park District and Watershed District would pay for. Kevin, Kelly, and Jonathan stated that the Watershed District would split the trail/boardwalk costs with the Park District for creek-based routes with the exception of any mitigation requirements, which would be the sole responsibility of the Park District. Any road-based routes would be the sole financial responsibility of the Park District. Creek restoration work would be the sole financial responsibility of the Watershed District. The Watershed District will also provide funding for 25 percent of related easement expenses.

5. Public Safety – Officer Danny McCullough

A. Brief overview of Three Rivers Park District Public Safety

- i. Public Safety has a total of 27 commissioned police officers. There are an additional 15 Public Safety Officers (PSO).
- ii. There are typically six police officers and six PSOs on duty at any given time within the Park District. These numbers can vary day to day, depending on special events and so forth.
- iii. Two police officers and three PSOs are specifically assigned to trails. There is no other police department in the state of MN that has a dedicated unit to cover trails. Combined with other Public Safety on duty, the trail patrol covers approximately 100 miles of trail/day during the spring/summer/fall.
- iv. In 2009, 8 police officers covered 5,476 miles on bicycle. This does not include miles of trail covered by foot patrol, automobile, ATV, or snowmobile.

B. Regional trail safety overview

- i. The majority of recent citations were given to bikers not stopping at the stop signs and dog owners either not cleaning up after their dog or not having their dog on a leash.
- ii. The Park District has not had any violent crimes such as rape, robbery, or assault occurred on the Park District's regional trail system.

- iii. In 2008, the Park District had approximately 80 public contacts on our regional trail system. In 2009, the Park District had approximately 250 contacts on our trails. This includes warnings, citations, and medical calls. A few of these contacts may also be vandalism reports. In 2009, this roughly breaks down to about 100 citations and 150 written warnings and medical responses.
 - iv. An overwhelming majority of incidents on trails are very minor (petty misdemeanor) violations such as cyclist not obeying traffic signs, dogs off leash, etc. On occasion, a marijuana violation has occurred in the Hopkins/St. Louis Park area, but not often.
 - v. Trails are extremely low crime areas, even if the area that the trail goes through is a high crime area. For example, there are certain sections of the Cedar Lake LRT Trail in St. Louis Park that go through "rough" areas. The Park District has not had any serious incidents in those areas.
- C. Regional trail public safety response overview
- i. If a 911 call comes in, it is possible to have a Park District officer and/or a City police officer respond to the call – it will depend on the incident as well as the location of the closest officer. In general, local agencies will be the first responders for 911 calls reporting a serious criminal or medical incident. For 911 calls reporting minor incidents, such as a complaint about a biker who was going fast and almost hit them, a dog off leash, or vandalism, the Park District will be the primary response agency.
 - ii. Park District public safety monitor calls/dispatch on their radios and respond accordingly.
 - iii. Due to mutual aid agreements, every regional trail in Hennepin County on any day of the week has 2 police agencies (Park District and local city) providing patrol and response services.

Associated Discussion:

The CAT was interested in how many times outside agencies (local public safety departments) responded to incidents on Park District regional trails. This data is not readily available as it is not tracked or compiled in this manner.

The CAT team also expressed interest in how many times a regional trail is generally patrolled over the course of a day. Danny responded that most regional trails are patrolled twice a day, but this could vary depending on use, recent incident, and acting public safety initiatives (trail stop sign enforcement).

The CAT asked how two trail officers could cover the entire regional trail system and respond to incidents in a timely fashion. Danny explained that the regional trails are patrolled by the entire Public Safety Department and not just the trail patrol, which is specifically assigned to the regional trails. There are typically six police officers and six PSOs on duty and prepared to respond to regional trail incidents. In addition, the local public safety departments provide assistance on regional trails as needed, similar to the Park District providing public safety assistance to local public safety departments throughout local communities as needed.

8. Next meeting will be on Wednesday, February 17, 2010, at the Edina Senior Center.

Meeting adjourned: 8:50 p.m.

To the best of the writer's ability, this document accurately reflects the business transacted during the meeting. If any attendee believes that there are any inconsistencies, omissions or errors in the minutes, they should submit their proposed revisions to Kelly Grissman at kgrissman@threeriversparkdistrict.org by Wednesday February 17, 2010. Unless objections are raised prior to February 17, the Park District and CAT will consider this account accurate.

References discussed at this meeting and referred to in these meeting minutes will be available on the Park District's web site at a future date.

C: All invitees