

MINUTES
CITY OF DELANO
Park and Recreation Commission
Wednesday, April 22, 2020
7:00 PM

1. *PLEASE NOTE, due to COVID-19, the meeting will be conducted via Zoom video conferencing as allowed under Minnesota Statutes, Section 13D.021. For those who would like to view or listen to the public meeting, please log into Zoom:*

<https://zoom.us/j/91135335933?pwd=MTdIZ21PK3pMaXIWRTZGUDJFWjdVQT09>
Password: 597868

2. **Call to Order**

Chair Werth called the meeting to order at 5:00pm via virtual conference.

3. **Roll Call**

Members Present: Joe Schleper, Jonathan Werth, Kevin Koehler, Sarah Berres, Marnie Lucas, Jessie Koch, Delano Schools Liaison Chris Runke

Members Absent: Tom Schaffer

Also present: Phil Kern, City Administrator

Motion by Lucas, second by Koehler, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed.

4. **Approval of Agenda**

5. **Minutes**

- A. March 2020 Meeting

Motion by Schleper, second by Koch, to approve the minutes of March 24, 2020, as presented.
Motion passed.

6. **Order of Business**

- A. Liberty Landing Park Plan

Kern presented the Commission with the proposal for play equipment for Liberty Landing Park as prepared by Landscape Structures. Kern reviewed that the structure is designed primarily for 5-12 ages, but would be accessible for all ages. The play equipment layout also includes swings and a few freestanding play pieces. Landscape Structures has custom-designed the equipment for the park and is providing the equipment at a 50% reduction of market price. Kern also stated that the developer is ready to install the basketball/multi-use court and the trail

through the park.

Schleper asked about the future of trail connections with the neighborhood. Kern stated that the neighborhood is designed to connect to developments both north and south and getting trail traffic north to the intersection of County Road 16 and Raymond Avenue. Schelper stated it would be good to provide a safe connection across County Road 16 to get to other neighborhood and parks.

Sutherland discussed the open space area to the east adjacent to the Crow River. He shared that this area would be available for neighborhood and community access and wanted to make sure that the connection from the neighborhood to that area was accessible. Kern stated that this connection would be made through the second addition, and in the interim, a path would be provided from first addition. Koehler asked if there would be river access through the floodplain area. Kern and the Commission discussed the access that would be available.

The Commission approved without objection the plans for play equipment.

B. Discuss Tennis/Pickleball Courts

Kern reviewed with the Commission a recent request from the School and Boys Tennis Coach about wind screening and lighting at the High School tennis facility. Kern reviewed with the Commission that the lighting project is estimated at around \$35,000 and the wind screening of new courts is around \$5,000. The Park Improvement budget planned \$75,000 for tennis and pickleball courts in 2020. Kern reviewed that past discussions have focused on a joint pickleball/tennis facility on either the Riverside/Art Walk Park across from Peppermint Twist or on land along West River Road. The driver for these locations is keeping the pickleball use separate from residential land uses based on best practices learned from other communities.

Werth questioned the locations, primarily the West River Road site due to access issues. The site does not have access to pedestrian or biking trails and residents wishing to access must cross County Road 30 or Highway 12 at very high traffic locations. Sutherland inquired about other sites and asked what other sites had been considered. Kern shared that the Greywood development area at one point was looked at, but due to its uncertainty that area has fallen from the list of likely sites. The Commission discussed the request to have tennis facilities west of the river and Highway 12 to improve accessibility in town. The High School has many courts, but the are generally not available by pedestrians or bicycling for persons on the west side of town.

Koehler inquired about purpose of the project, questioning if the goal was establishing additional courts or trying to relocating existing courts. The Commission reviewed that past feedback from residents and School coaches to expand the availability of the sport in town by adding additional courts. Koehler stated that the likely demographic using pickleball can and will drive, and perhaps the two uses don't need to be tied together. Runke stated the Commission should review whether the goal is to address an immediate need or should it be part of long-term western park. The Commission generally agreed that the need is current and probably shouldn't wait exclusively for a larger park area.

Sutherland reviewed the land along West River Road is zoned and designed for commercial use and he questioned if it made sense to put them there. Kern confirmed the zoning and stated the idea would be a temporary one, stating that the City acquired this property in 2008 and has made it available for commercial development without success for the past 12 years. Schleper stated that he likes Koehler's suggesting of splitting up the uses and keeping pickleball by labyrinth, due to the similar crowds that may be using the Art Walk park. He liked the idea of proposing tennis on West River Road. Koehler stated he understood the commercial purpose of the properties on West River Road, but he likes the idea of putting the land to use. Schleper stated that the uses are similar but are targeting two different demographics and might work better to separate.

Werth inquired if two different sites creates budget issues. Kern stated that it might make a small impact on the construction budgets without the opportunity to share fences and have one vs. multiple mobilization efforts by a contractor. Operationally, the only likely additional cost would be for portable toilets, if included in the project plans. Werth recommends keeping pickleball by the labyrinth and separate tennis courts to one or two different sites. Schleper proposed that the Commission review the idea of combination tennis/basketball surfaces at both Highland Ridge and Parkview Hills. The Commission generally agreed with this idea, to continue pursuing pickleball at the Riverside/Art Walk Park and tennis at both Highland Ridge and Parkview Hills. Berres asked if staff could get the layouts designed so the Commission can review and determine feasibility in these locations.

C. Review request for batting cage at Central Park

Schleper stated that the High School baseball and youth baseball programs were requesting authority to add a batting cage at Central Park, along the north (left field) fence line of the main baseball field. Lucas asked if it will be open to the public. Schleper replied that it would be open at all times and it would be the second batting cage in the park. Sutherland likes the idea of replacing the tree that would be lost with planting two.

Motion by Lucas, Second by Werth, to approve the proposed batting cage addition as presented. Motion approved.

D. Discuss Splashpad and Playgrounds during health emergency period

Kern reviewed with the Commission that playgrounds remain posted strongly discouraging use due to the City's inability to keep them clean and sanitized. Kern shared that as advisory recommendations changed at the State and Federal level, staff would monitor for potential changes. Kern also stated that staff was reviewing options for limited operations of the Splashpad this summer, if guidance changed. The Commission discussed and agreed that keeping options open was a good plan.

E. Discuss community garden

Lucas shared that a community member posted on social media a request that the City consider

reestablishing community gardens in parks. Lucas and Kern reviewed the history of community gardens at both Central Park and Barb King Inspiration Park. The City currently is not operating any community gardens. The Commission discussed the possibility of recreating smaller raised gardens in parks around the City. The Commission discussed both the labor and cost of building raised gardens and also the maintenance of these areas. The Commission agreed that it would remain open to the possibility and would recommend individuals or groups looking for service project ideas would be the preferred method for proceeding.

7. Outstanding items from previous meetings

8. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:45pm.