

RECREATION COMMITTEE

AUGUST 8, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Rick Rettig. Committee members present were Jim Matuszak, Rick Rettig and Jonathan Smith. Also present were Mayor Olmstead and City Administrator Bridgette Kabat.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Susan Berry, 341 W. Front Street, commended the City on the pedestrian crossing at Riverside Park. She said that it is not ideal, but it is better than nothing. She asked if there will be benches at Riverside Park. Ms. Kabat said that in the 2018 budget there will be funds for amenities such as seating and sunshades at the park. Ms. Berry also asked about hoses that are often stretched across the ramp. Ms. Kabat said that she will follow up with the contractor regarding that issue.

Chip Pflgebraar, 401 W. Front Street, asked the hours for Riverside Park. Mr. Rettig said the hours would be the same as for the other parks which is sunrise to sunset.

HOOD PARK PARKING IMPROVEMENTS – CONTRACT WITH TETRA TECH

Mr. Rettig stated that the committee just received the cost estimates and preliminary design. He said that one concern he has is the lack of greenspace since it is a park. He said that we have parking concerns at other parks, especially Woodlands where people frequently park on the grass because there is no parking available. He said this would be almost \$500,000 for parking at one of our parks that is not the most used. Mr. Smith said that this would help individuals not have to cross Front Street to get to Riverside Park and there is a multi-use path going in and this is basically where it starts. He said that he does understand the comments about more greenspace and landscaping. Ms. Kabat said that any comments that this committee or City Council has will be relayed to the architect. She said that this is not a final design by any means. Mr. Rettig asked if there has been any discussion with the Army Corp of Engineers. Ms. Kabat said that it is not required if you are above the average high water mark along the Maumee, which this project is. Mr. Matuszak said that we do need parking in the downtown area, but he's not sure this is what we need. He said that he was not a proponent of Riverside Park, and he does not want to spend that kind of money. He said the estimate is \$438,000 plus \$50,000 for the final design, and he asked if there were any other costs. Ms. Kabat said that the preliminary design was \$12,500 and was paid from the Planning and Zoning contracts line item. Mr. Matuszak said that he counts 40 parking spaces which works out to about \$14,000 per parking space. Brody Walters, Planning and Zoning Administrator, said that they went into it with a mindset to maximize the number of parking spaces for Hood and Riverside Parks, the Boat Club, and overflow for downtown. Mr. Matuszak said that on a recent Sunday he checked the parking area at the Maple Street boat launch and it was packed, but there were only a couple of cars parked at the base of the monument. Mr. Rettig said that there is a need for parking for the downtown area but he does not know

if this parking will be utilized for the downtown area. He said there is a desire to help the Hood Park parking, but he's not sure it is worth paving paradise to put up a parking lot. He said that he would like to see other options for City Council to look at and decide what is best. He acknowledged that it would take more time and more work on the front side. Mr. Matuszak said the City only has so much money to spend and we need to decide what we want to spend it on. He said that we have spent more in the last three years than we have taken in. He said that if we need parking in parks, perhaps it could be done at other parks cheaper. He stated that when this was put in the budget he was told it was a placeholder and just because it's there doesn't mean they can spend it. Mr. Rettig agreed that was a fair statement. Mr. Walters said that given the dimensional requirements for parking spaces and drive aisles required by the Code and the features that they need to work around, he is not sure Tetra Tech could come up with another design without losing parking spaces.

Jon Orser, 125 E. Front Street, said that this is an extraordinary expenditure for something that is not needed and it will have an environmental impact.

Chip Pflgebraar, 401 West Front Street, said that to walk from downtown to the riverfront, you would have to walk through this massive parking lot and that is not pedestrian friendly.

Jim Hagen, 10741 Avenue Road, said that he sent an email to City Council members, but he is not sure this is an improvement to Hood Park. He said there is already parking there and he wonders why the City is providing parking for the Boat Club. He asked what other private entities the City provides parking for. He said that we made improvements to Riverside Park and there's not even anywhere to sit. He suggested eliminating the lower parking and instead putting in greenspace area.

Mike Cousino, 12810 Eckel Road, said that this should be left as greenspace and the City should not pay for Boat Club parking.

Mr. Walters said that we are not doing this parking for the Boat Club, however it would be naïve and reckless to not acknowledge their use of the parking.

There was some discussion regarding whether the parking was in a park or in the right of way. Ms. Kabat said there is a parcel owned by the City that is zoned Park and the remainder of the area is not a parcel. She said the final engineering design could show that it's wholly in the right of way.

Deborah Born, 125 E. Front Street, said that this is a waste of taxpayers' money and twelve trees will be knocked down. She said that they need to remember that this is in the Historic District. Ms. Kabat said that once there is a final design, it will go to the Historic Landmarks Commission.

There was discussion regarding the contingency and whether this is a parking lot for a park or public parking. Ms. Kabat said that it is all public parking.

Becky Williams said that if part of it is in the park it would need to go to the Planning Commission. She said that she appreciates that it came to the Recreation Committee and she is not necessarily in agreement with the layout.

There was a brief discussion regarding what could happen if the estimate comes back above the budgeted amount. Mr. Rettig acknowledged that it might not go forward. Mr. Smith said that we need to see the final design and get that estimate. Mr. Matuszak said that he is not in favor of the contract.

The Committee agreed 2-1 to recommend approval of the contract with Tetra Tech for the final design of the parking at Hood Park.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Smith reported that he received calls regarding dogs that are not on leashes at Woodlands Park jumping on runners, and dogs being placed in the fenced in kids' area. Ms. Kabat said that she will talk to the Animal Control Officer and the Department of Public Service.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Rettig, Chairman
Recreation Committee

Next meeting: Tuesday, September 12, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.