

SPECIAL RECREATION COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 22, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 6:09 p.m. by Chairman Rick Rettig. Committee members present were Jim Matuszak, Rick Rettig and Jonathan Smith. Also present were Bridgette Kabat, City Administrator, and Jon Eckel, Public Service Director.

RIVERSIDE PARK/MULTI-USE PATH

Ms. Kabat stated that Mr. Eckel, Brody Walters, Planning and Zoning Administrator, Doug Dariano, City Engineer, and Alice Godsey, Director of Public Utilities were present to answer any questions the Committee may have about the 10' wide multi-use path that would extend from the former Boat Club to the west edge of Riverside Park. Mr. Matuszak asked if the \$20,000 in the Budget Amendment for Hood Park Multi-Use Path is the same as this portion. Ms. Kabat said that those funds were put in there because we thought we might need to change the alignment for public access for property owners, but may not need it. Mr. Matuszak asked if the grant money from TMACOG is all for this portion and Ms. Kabat said that it is. Mr. Rettig asked about the placement of the bollards. Mr. Walters said there would be two sets of bollards. The set that would be placed on the east end of the path would be a lockable bollard and property owners along Water Street would be given a key so they can access their property. A second set of bollards would be placed further west on the path but to the east of Riverside Park to prevent those with a key to the first set of bollards from going into the park area. Mr. Matuszak asked how much the bollards weigh. Mr. Walters said there are different styles and Mr. Eckel said that the one that the Street Division uses is 45 to 50 pounds.

Chip Pflgebraar, 401 West Front Street, said that it would be difficult to get to his property from Green Lane. Ms. Kabat said that the Law Director and City Engineer met with representatives of the Attorney General's office and the design meets their guidelines. Katina Holland, 335 West Front Street, said that they have to be given access to their properties. Mr. Walters stated that homeowners on the west side of Riverside Park would have to access their property from the west. Steve Wise, Commodore of the Boat Club, asked about the area between the bollards and how many keys each property would be given. Mr. Walters said that there would be one key per property and that between the bollards there would be a 10' wide section that would be paved asphalt but he doesn't know what will happen with the remainder. Mr. Smith asked about access on the other side. Mr. Eckel said that there is a bollard at the west end and there is a gate at Green Lane. Several members of the audience said that the bollard on the west side is down and has been for a while.

Mr. Matuszak asked if there could be landscaping along the path to encourage people to stay on the path. Ms. Kabat said that property owners east of Riverside Park have not expressed any concerns, but they can reach out to them. Mr. Matuszak said that on the west side of Riverside Park he would like to see something more natural even if we don't get grant money. Ms. Holland stated that they have riparian rights and have to have

access to their property 24/7. Mr. Walters said that access doesn't necessarily mean vehicular access. Mr. Rettig asked about signage restricting vehicular access as opposed to bollards. Ms. Kabat stated that the Service Director has looked at signage for voluntary compliance and they do not feel it's the best option but they can continue to explore it. Mr. Walters added that Mr. Keis and Mr. Judson who are property owners in this area are interested in limiting access. Mr. Rettig said that he has heard some say that it's been like a racetrack along Water Street.

Mr. Wise said that he does not get the concept of why they want to restrict vehicular access. He said it should be kept as it is now and vehicles can get to Riverside Park to enjoy a picnic.

Rachel Wesley, 563 E. Indiana Avenue, said that her mother drives down to Riverside Park now and that right will be taken away. She spoke about the stairs at Hood Park being closed during the winter and she said that the slope at Riverside Park has to be 1:16. Mr. Walters explained that the ramp will be 1:20 which is less of a slope than 1:16.

Mr. Rettig said that with regards to the multi-use path and creating or restricting access, access means different things to people. He said that we currently have a parking lot with a great view and it is not much more than a glorified dog path. He said this will give people the ability to have access to the riverfront and to do it safely. He added that it is important that people be able to maintain their property, but Riverside Park should have the feel of a pedestrian park and provide an area that is safe and accessible, not a parking lot.

Mr. Eckel said that the steps at Hood Park have been closed off because the handrail has been broken three times by skateboarders. The last two winters they were closed until they could be cleared. In the future, they plan to treat the stairs at Hood Park and the proposed ramp at Riverside Park with brine. Ms. Wesley asked about skateboarders on the ramp at Riverside Park. Mr. Walters explained that with the slope being 1:20 it will not be exciting for skateboarders and although he does not believe it is necessary, they are looking at truncated domes to discourage skateboarders.

Mr. Matuszak said that regarding access to property, we will not be restricting it more than it already is if we have the same application on the east side that we do on the west. Mr. Smith said that if the bollard on the west has been down, we've been giving them access. Mr. Eckel said that access on the west is available. There is enough right of way that we can get the Vector down there.

Mr. Smith asked about overflow issues. Ms. Godsey said that the Phase III improvements at the Treatment Plant are now online and we are hiring an engineering firm that will be looking at combined sewer overflows. She said for a typical year we've minimized the overflows, but with extreme weather events such as those in August of 2014 and June of 2015, there will be overflows.

Patrick Slee, 1023 Maple Street, said there are a lot of people going fast down Water Street and there is no signage for Water Street or the dead-end. Mr. Rettig said that he

is in favor of restricting parking from Riverside Park. Dave Dicke, 416 W. Third Street said parking is critical to parks and there are 100 families at the Boat Club alone. Mr. Rettig asked how many parking spots there are at the Boat Club. Mr. Dicke said there are 30-35 in the gravel, 30 at the bottom and 15 along Louisiana and they are hunting for parking now. Mr. Rettig said that he is a fan of the Boat Club and maintaining their presence along the riverfront is important to him. Mr. Smith asked if when the Boat Club has an event if we could make arrangements to keep the bollard down. Ms. Kabat said that it could certainly be discussed. Mr. Smith asked about electronic access. Ms. Kabat said that this has not gone out to bid yet and there are several options and we are not at the point that we know what all the options are. Mr. Smith asked if there is any way we can provide better access on the west side. Mr. Eckel said that the access is good, there is just a lock and key that homeowners can get from the Department of Public Utilities.

Mr. Rettig asked, and Ms. Kabat agreed, that the purpose of the meeting was to go out to bid for the multi-use path. Mr. Smith asked what the cost of the project would be. Mr. Dariano said that the cost is \$122,000 and 80% of the construction cost will be reimbursed by TMACOG. Mr. Matuszak asked about the use of crushed stone and if it is ADA approved. Ms. Kabat said that they met with representatives of the Ability Center and they said it is not. She said that they looked at other materials but they would have been at least twice the cost and the Filter Pave did not hold up like they hoped it would.

Mr. Wise said he can see why they don't want parking at Riverside Park, but he hopes the City will work with them on parking at the Boat Club.

Mr. Smith said that he is okay going to bid for the multi-use path as long as there is the same access and the bollards are easily movable. Mr. Matuszak said that he is not ready to vote because he has more questions. The Committee agreed 2-0 to recommend going to bid for the multi-use path.

Ms. Kabat asked if the Committee has any questions about the Budget Amendment with regards to Riverside Park. Mr. Smith asked about lighting at the park. Mr. Rettig said that he thinks it is important to run the electricity, and if we fail to soft light, this area may invite vandalism. He said it is like an insurance policy on our investment. Mr. Eckel added that they have found that lighting is the only thing that helps deter vandalism. Mr. Rettig said that the proposed lighting would not go into adjacent properties. Ms. Kabat said that the lights would be in the railing and there would be minimal spillage. Mr. Walters said in his experience the spillage has been 8' – 4' on either side of the light. There was also discussion regarding the possibility of cameras in the area. Ms. Holland suggested motion activated lighting on both ends of the park at the path. Ron Visser, 856 Bridgeton Lane, asked about bathrooms. Mr. Rettig said there are portable restrooms at Hood Park.

PABSC AGREEMENT

Mr. Eckel said that he can assure the Committee that any additional language they would like to see in the agreement with PABSC would be acceptable to them. Ms. Kabat said that she gave the Finance Director all the reports that were given to the City from PABSC

and Mr. Creps said that fulfills what he would like to see. She said that as far as PABSC's tax exempt status she can't answer that, but they are current with their non-profit status with the Secretary of State's office through 2020. Ms. Kabat added that their tax exempt status is not part of the agreement. Mr. Smith said that there were some questions regarding their record keeping since they City is working with them. Ms. Kabat said that at this point the alternative is that there would be no baseball or softball because we do not have the manpower or time to run the program. Mr. Rettig said that the alternative is like Bowling Green with a full-time Recreation Director. Mr. Eckel said that the agreement with PABSC has been a great working agreement and a beneficial relationship for the City. He said that it is his understanding that the issue was a filing error on the part of their past Treasurer. Mr. Smith asked if Mr. Creps has the financial statements that he wanted. Ms. Kabat said that Mr. Creps indicated he has no reason to believe there are any issues with the current board or past board and he is satisfied with the documents he received; it is more than what he hoped for. Mr. Smith asked if there could be a response as to why their tax exempt status has been revoked. Mr. Eckel said that there has been some difficulty with the exchange of information between the old officers and the new officers. Mr. Smith said that perhaps it should be a one year agreement until the tax issue is resolved. Mr. Rettig said that he has had discussions with Chris Tinney, PABSC President, and he has a great deal of confidence in this group of people and that they are operating with the right intentions. He said that it is their mission to restore faith in PABSC. Mr. Rettig said that he is not overly concerned, but he respects the concerns and although he is not opposed to a two year agreement, he is okay with a one year agreement. The Committee agreed 2-0 to recommend approval of the agreement with PABSC. Mr. Matuszak abstained.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Rettig, Chairman
Recreation Committee