

**Barnesville Planning Commission
Regular Meeting
Monday, May 4, 2009**

The joint meeting of the Barnesville Planning Commission and the Park Board was called to order by Planning Commission Chairman Merlin Strom at 6:30 p.m.

Planning Commission members present: Steve Mortenson, Margaret Follingstad, Merlin Strom, Paul Karsnia, Mike Detloff, Matthew Wever and Karen Lauer, Zoning Administrator.

Planning Commission members absent: Pat Berndt and Mike Osten.

Park Board members present: Patty McGowan, JR Davis, Jan Bauer, Brian Meyer, Webb Ross and Dave Riddering, Public Works Superintendent.

Others present: Roland Holm and Pam Aakre of the Barnesville Record-Review.

Minutes from the April 7, 2008 Joint Meeting with the Planning Commission and Park Board were reviewed. Motion by Follingstad, seconded by Ross to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

1. Update from Park Board on Master Planning for Park System

McGowan distributed a report highlighting the 2008 Parks and Recreation Projects, as well as the plans for 2009. Riddering stated that the concept of planning for a regional park in the southeast corner of the community is still alive although based on current residential growth this would be 15-20 years into the future. There continues to be focused efforts on enhancing the parks currently in place. One identified need is the development of more softball and t-ball fields. It was noted however that budget constraints have been challenging as in recent years, the Park Board budget was been reduced. Follingstad suggested that the Park Board look at incorporating either a wading pond or water jets into one of the neighborhood parks.

Riddering noted that an important long-term project will be the removal of sediment from the sediment pond near Blue Eagle Lake. The estimated cost of this project is \$200,000 to \$400,000. The City Council has approved spending \$12,000 for Houston Engineering to complete sediment testing as well as plans and specs. This will position the project as being "shovel ready" should any stimulus grants come available.

2. Parkland in Future Subdivisions

Lauer indicated that she is continuing to work with the City Attorney John Shockley regarding changes that the State of Minnesota made during 2008 related to parkland dedications, specifically as it relates to payment in lieu of land dedication. It is anticipated that there will need to be some changes to the City's subdivision ordinance. Recommended changes will be brought to the Planning Commission in the months ahead.

3. Development of park/green space near depot on Front Street

Lauer reminded the group that the 2004 Comprehensive Plan presented some conceptual ideas as to the development of the railroad owned property located between the depot and Midwest Bank. A small triangle of this property is owned by the EDA. Ideas included possibly enhancing the area with playground equipment, seating areas, plaza space etc. It was noted that permission would be required from the railroad and Riddering reminded the group that the 2011 Front Street reconstruction project may also impact the ability to utilize the space for public purposes.

4. Creating bike and pedestrian trails within the community

McGowan questioned that while trails are noted in the Comprehensive Plan, how important are trails? An excerpt from the Metropolitan Council of Government's newsletter noted the increased demand from the public for both bike and pedestrian trails was distributed to board members. Lauer noted that trail systems may offer a competitive advantage when young families are looking at housing options. Creating trails, much like other recreational improvements is very expensive. A map identifying publicly owned property within the City as possible "connectors" was reviewed. Riddering shared a

concept that he had presented to the Park Board that would connect all of the Barnesville Parks using existing trails, new trails across publicly owned property, sidewalks and streets. Riddering felt that matching funding through the DNR might be possible to create a trail across the fairgrounds. This is the same program that was used for the trail around Blue Eagle Lake. Rather than actually stripping the streets, because of potential problems associated with eliminating parking in front of homes, Riddering suggested that signage could be used to designate the trail system.

Some of the concerns raised regarding this multi-surface trail system included:

- safety concerns when utilizing the street areas
- the dangerous condition of many sidewalks in the community
- the cost of snow maintenance on trail areas across public property
- rules concerning use of property near right-of-ways and wetland property

Lauer reported that one possibility might be to work through Minnesota's Safe Routes to School program which provides matching grant dollars to provide sidewalks to schools. Raising the matching money would be a challenge, although a partnership with the school providing 25% and the City providing 25% could be a possibility. Another idea was to approach the Booster Club for financial support. Lauer has the materials and promised to provide them to Riddering for further review.

5. **Other discussion**

McGowan suggested that as a community we look at enhancing the current park brochure to include essential services that may be of interest to visitors to the community, such as the grocery store, drugstore, liquor store, car repair shops, etc. Although this information is included in the Goods & Services Directory it was felt having all the information in one place may be beneficial. Perhaps businesses would pay for an ad to cover the cost of producing a brochure. In the future, paths could also be included on this brochure.

While growth opportunities need to be considered, maintaining what we have is critically important. New park equipment is very expensive. Lauer reminded the group that there are matching grants for park equipment. Identifying someone to research these opportunities and write the grants was discussed as a possibility. Perhaps this is something which Leadership Barnesville alumni may be able to assist.

Holm noted that in the coming week, we plan to be meeting with the DNR regarding Blue Eagle Lake. Efforts are underway to get rid of weeds, create nesting boxes and stock the lake with more fish including possibly channel catfish. Mark & Travis Desing and Darrel Dodge have been working with Holm on this project.

The Park Board members noted they will continue to work on the items discussed and look forward to meeting with the Planning Commission again in the future. Meeting was adjourned at 8:07 pm.

The regular meeting of the Barnesville Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Merlin Strom at 8:10 p.m.

Members present: Steve Mortenson, Paul Karsnia, Merlin Strom, Pat Berndt, Mike Detloff, Margaret Follingstad, Matthew Wever, and Karen Lauer, Zoning Administrator.

Member absent: Mike Osten.

Others present: Roland Holm and Pam Aakre of the Barnesville Record-Review.

AGENDA

05-04-09-01 Motion by Mortenson and seconded by Karsnia to approve the agenda with the addition of Poppels Salvage under Other Zoning Concerns. Unanimously carried.

MINUTES

05-04-09-02 Motion by Detloff and seconded by Mortenson to approve the minutes of the April 6, 2009 meeting. Unanimously carried.

SWIMMING POOL ORDINANCE

The Planning Commission reviewed the list of above ground swimming pools in Barnesville. A newsletter article will address the issue of swimming pools that are not the real large ones. Roland Holm indicated that state codes on the fence surrounding a pool have several rules including that the fence must have automatic closure gates and the fence must be a specified distance from the pool. Karen Lauer noted that the fence is a zoning issue and enforcement of the ordinance is up to the Zoning Officer and the Planning Commission. The Commission members discussed options for the different sizes of pools and enforcement of the various options. It is important to compare the current state building code with the current zoning ordinance. Roland Holm indicated that swimming pools do require a permit. Karen Lauer will discuss the issue with the City attorney. The discussion will be continued at the next meeting.

HOUSE BEHIND THE CHIROPRACTIC OFFICE

Karen Lauer reported that the City attorney has sent a letter to the owner of the house behind the chiropractic office stating that the exterior work needs to be completed by June 1. Public works can do site work to level the lot and to take care of the weeds. The cost can then be levied against the property. The City cannot do any structural work. The Planning Commission will be updated on any changes with this issue.

FERRELL GAS

Karen Lauer reported that Ferrell Gas has indicated the tanks on the property are allegedly empty and that the extra tanks will be removed from the site within the next couple of months.

LEAGUE OF MINNESOTA CITIES ARTICLES

The Planning Commission reviewed the articles Karen Lauer provided from the League of Minnesota Cities. The Commission will try to allocate time at future meetings to discuss the articles.

BUILDING OF DECKS IN SIDE YARD

Roland Holm described a situation where a home owner has a sliding glass door on the side lot side of their home and they would like to build a deck there. The deck would be within the five foot set back. As a building inspector, he noted that a deck is considered an accessory structure. The Commission members agreed with his decision and had no issues with the decision.

BUILDING PERMIT LIST

Buildings permits for April 2009 were reviewed.

OTHER ZONING CONCERNS: POPPELS SALVAGE

Mike Detloff reported that sections of the fence are down on all four sides of the fence around Poppels Salvage Yard. Karen Lauer noted that Chief Ernst has discussed the situation with Ed Poppel and Chief Ernst did note that the soil was not in good enough condition at the time to get a forklift in to do any work. The fence does need to be reinforced as was previously stated by Ed Poppel at the December 1, 2008 meeting. Roland Holm indicated that any fence over six feet tall needs to have an engineer sign off on the project. Karen Lauer will contact Poppels to check on the status of the fence repairs.

The next Planning Commission meeting is Monday, June 1, 2009 at 6:30 p.m.

05-04-09-03 Motion by Follingstad and seconded by Detloff to adjourn at 9:08 p.m. Unanimously carried.

Submitted by:

Pat Berndt
Planning Commission Secretary