

## MINUTES OF THE THURSDAY JANUARY 14, 2010 PARKS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONSULTATION.

Chairman Schmidt called the January 14, 2010 meeting of the Parks Comprehensive Plan Consultation to order at 4:40 p.m.

**Roll Call.** Chairman Schmidt asked for a roll call and the following Commissioners were present: Hoifeldt, Schmidt, Airhart, Johnson, McCulloh, and Mook. Absent: Borne. Others in attendance: John Gibson, Matt Jermier, Josh Vandekamp, McKinlee Gibson, Becky Schuett Brad Deets, Ben Landhauser, Brett Douglas, Barbara Heller, Grant Thompson, Councilman Casey Harvey, and Councilman Shane Blanchard.

**Discussion of the Parks Comprehensive Plan.** Brett Douglas of Genus Landscape Architects, consultant hired by the City to develop the Parks Comprehensive Plan, opened the discussion outlining the firm's anticipated time schedule and process for completing the Parks Comprehensive Plan. The Commission and others in attendance were asked to provide their thoughts on the current strengths of the park and recreation system in Waukee.

Strengths identified by the group included: the variety of spaces currently dispersed throughout the City; the leadership and planning done to connect and integrate the various park spaces with trails; a well sized central park location in Centennial Park; the number of amenities provided in Centennial Park; Windfield Park as well planned and developed neighborhood park that has adequate size and amenities needed by the neighborhood it serves; and the planning efforts that have already identified a larger complex for multiple sports fields in the Copeland Recreation Complex.

The group was then charged to provide weaknesses or shortfalls found in the parks system. Weaknesses identified by the group included: the lack in variety of spaces with amenities other than sports fields; the low number of medium sized parks of the ten (10) to fifteen (15) acre size; the deficiency of variation in amenities provided by the entire system to allow for a greater choice and option; not having the Copeland Recreation Complex in the city limits restricts the City's ability to raise and use funding to get the property under development.

The group was asked to provide some background on what the intended purpose of planning for and eventually completing the Copeland Recreation Complex has been. Commissioner Johnson indicated that the planning effort had been driven by the need to provide more sports fields and create a park that would be able to have multiple sport field types in one location. Councilman Harvey noted that, once completed, the complex would act as an economic development tool due to the incidental nature of having a complex of the planned size which would generate interest in hosting regionalized events and tournaments and in turn provide a need for supportive commercial establishments such as hotels and restaurants.

Mr. Douglas asked the group to identify the types of amenities people in Waukee go to other communities for. Walnut Hills Little League Park in Clive was noted to be a destination for youth participating in baseball and softball, but was also important because the park had amenities for people/children not participating in the sporting events. The Walker Johnson Park in Urbandale was identified as a skate park destination. Clive, West Des Moines, and Adel were identified as communities with aquatics centers or public pools that were used by Waukee residents. The Raccoon River Park was identified as a location that provided a dog park, hiking trails, walking trails, an event/conference space, and a lake that accommodated activities not currently plausible in Waukee.

Mr. Douglas asked the group to indicate how they felt certain amenities would be prioritized by Waukeel residents. The group indicated that an event/conference facility, dog park, and golf course expansion would be a high priority for the Community. A skate park was perceived to be a low priority. The group discussed the need/desire for an aquatics center and/or pool and indicated that many surrounding communities already had facilities of similar size to one another and questioned if another facility would be necessary in Waukeel. Commissioner Mook questioned if there would be an opportunity to look at creating a larger aquatics center that would be more regional in size and be able to provide an amenity different from the existing facilities in the area.

Commissioner Johnson indicated that he felt it would be important for the new plan to identify opportunities for parks and trails to be used in multiple seasons, specifically trying to suggest winter activities that could be accommodated such as sledding, ice skating, and cross-country skiing. Commissioner Airhart suggested that recognizing where and how the golf course might be expanded to eighteen (18) holes would be beneficial to the business community as well as provide a potential location to include a conference/meeting type space. He also noted that a location for a miniature golf course could be an added amenity that would interest young families with children.

The group was asked if there were any existing or potential partnership opportunities between the City and the school district, YMCA, Sports Plex West, or similar entities. The group indicated that the Waukeel School District would be eliminating sport opportunities for seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) graders due to a lack of space to host the number of youth interested in participating in various activities.

**Adjournment.** Motion by Commissioner Airhart, second by Commissioner Johnson, to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 P.M. Ayes: Schmidt, Airhart, Johnson, Hoifeldt, and Mook. Nays: None. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.

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Joe Schmidt, Planning & Zoning Chairman

Attest:

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Wayne Johnson, Planning and Zoning Secretary