



MINUTES
Joint Economic Development &
Parks, Recreation and Environmental Commission
Meeting – July 6, 2022
6:30 p.m.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. PREC Roll Call

Members Present.....Chair Julia O’Rourke, Commissioners Maren Hawkings, Pauline Alfors, Laura Sokol-Kraft, Gary Bank, Abe McEathron, and Kristin Hicks

Members Absent.....Commissioners Michael Spooner, Matt Johnson, and Student Commissioner Zoey Tenenbaum

Also PresentJennifer Fink-Parks and Recreation Director, and Councilmember Emily Dunsworth (attending remotely)

III. EDC Roll Call

Members Present.....Chair Harry Carter, Anthony Pledger (attending remotely), Jacqui Sauter, Mike Murlowski (attending remotely), Faycal Belkhous, Victoria Prasek (attending remotely), and Paul Zisla

Members Absent.....Commissioner Michele Norman

Also PresentBen Gozola – Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development

IV. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Bank, seconded by Commissioner Zisla to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion approved.

V. Approval of PREC Minutes

Motion by Commissioner McEathron, seconded by Commissioner Sokol-Kraft to approve the PREC minutes from the June 1, 2022 meeting.

Motion approved (Chair O'Rourke abstained).

VI. Approval of EDC Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Prasek, seconded by Commissioner Zisla to approve the EDC minutes from the June 1, 2022 meeting.

A roll call vote was taken.

Motion approved.

VII. Business Items

A. Coordinated Placemaking through Monument and Park Signage

Parks and Recreation Director Fink stated following completion of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan in 2019, PREC and the EDC have undertaken separate but related efforts that have the potential to positively brand the City for decades to come. Approval of the Parks Master Plan and subsequent improvement projects will result in significant new park signage being erected throughout the community. Likewise, recommended monument signage and other efforts to create a "unique New Brighton sense of place" are being formulated to foster greater economic development in the community. Stepping back and taking this opportunity to align the visions of PREC and the EDC will be invaluable to the goals of both Commissions and will best inform Council on design decisions as they arise. Both bodies will learn at this joint meeting where the other commission is at with their efforts and can share their ideas for improvements or additions to each body's placemaking efforts. The desired end result of this meeting is a unified approach to improvements such that citizens and visitors alike will always feel they're in New Brighton while in our City.

Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development Gozola discussed the number of entry points throughout the City, noting there were approximately 40 entry points, 20 to the north and 20 to the south. He reviewed what other cities were doing and how they were designing their entry monument signs. He understood the EDC wanted to see a simple sign design at the City's entry points. In addition the EDC was interested in repurposing existing smaller signs while having electronic display signs at strategic locations. He noted light pole banners were supported along with wayfinding or directional signage to major destinations in the community.

Parks and Recreation Director Fink reported staff was working with WSB on parks and recreation signage in order to incorporate City colors which would assist with creating a sense of place. She explained the same types of wood, stone and metal would be used on all new park signs. It was noted the City's larger parks would have larger entry monument signs with stone and wood.

Discussion included:

- The Commission supported the City having the same cohesive look and feel for the park and street signs.
- The Commission discussed how graffiti was addressed by the parks departments.
- The Commission supported the metal/wood over stone look for the park monument signs.
- The Commission discussed the number of monument and wayfinding signs that were being considered for the community. It was noted six entry gateway signs were being considered along with new monument signs and wayfinding signs within each City park.
- The Commission discussed the cost for the proposed monument signs and encouraged staff to keep an eye on the City's budget for these signs.
- It was estimated it would take 12 years to have new signage in every City park.
- Staff reported a funding source has not yet been identified for the gateway entry signs.
- The Commission liked the idea of having consistent marketing across all signs, as well as having the same building materials used for the signs in order to create a brand for the community.
- Staff discussed how all signs would incorporate the City colors and fonts in order to be complimentary.
- It was noted Long Lake was a County park within the City of New Brighton.
- The EDC and PREC Commission thanked staff for their efforts to create cohesive and complimentary gateway, monument and wayfinding signs for the community.

B. Update on Parks Comprehensive Plan Project Implementation

Director Fink provided the Commission members with an update on the progress that was being made on the City's Parks Comprehensive Plan. She commented on the bonding that had been approved for this plan and discussed the six parks that would be targeted for improvements. She stated at this time work had begun on Sunny Square Park, the Lions Park Splash Pad and Hansen Park (with the assistance of a grant). The timelines for each of the park projects was reviewed in further detail. She encouraged residents and Commissioners to provide the City with feedback on the upcoming parks projects. It was noted numbers were coming in higher than originally anticipated for the parks improvements and the City was seeing project delays. If numbers continue to come in high, the City may have to make adjustments to the proposed plan. She reported staff would continue to pursue grants to assist with the proposed parks projects.

Discussion included:

- The Commission discussed the future plans for Sunny Square Park, along with how existing playground structures would be donated overseas as parks are renovated.
- The future plans for the neighborhood centers was discussed, as well as the plans for the warming houses.
- It was noted the playground structures and amenities within each park may differ from park to park.

VIII. Announcements

A. City Council Report – Emily Dunsworth and Pam Axberg, City Councilmembers

Councilmember Dunsworth provided the Commissions with an update noting July was Parks and Recreation Month. She stated Parks and Rec Fest would be held on Saturday, July 9 at Lions Park from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. She reported the Council passed an ordinance at its last meeting that would reduce the residential speed limit from 30 miles per hour to 25 miles per hour. She noted this change would go into effect now and the City would be communicating this change to the public. She reported a map of the streets that would be impacted was available on the City's website. She explained speed limit signs would be replaced in a phased approach. She commented on the City's strategic priorities and noted the finance director provided the Council with a presentation at a recent worksession meeting.

B. Chair Updates – Julia O'Rourke, PREC Chair and Harry Carter, EDC Chair

Chair O'Rourke encouraged residents to get out and visit the City's parks and to consider signing up for fall programming.

C. Department Happenings and Upcoming Events – City Staff

Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development Gozola provided the Commissioners with an update on the Silver Lake Road visioning and planning project.

Parks and Recreation Director Fink updated the Commissioners on Chalk Fest noting this was a successful event. She stated 20 artists participated in Chalk Fest and stipends were provided to each artist through a grant from Twin Cities Gateway. She reviewed the June golf numbers noting revenues were up. She stated residents could vote early at the New Brighton Community Center and reported the City was still seeking election judges for the November election.

IX. Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Bank, seconded by Commissioner Zisla to adjourn the meeting.

Motion approved.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Gozola". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ben" and last name "Gozola" clearly distinguishable.

Ben Gozola
Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development