

Memorandum

Department of Public Services

DATE: October 4, 2013
TO: Michael G. Herring, City Administrator
FROM: Mike Geisel, Director of Public Services



SUBJECT: Meeting Minutes – 9/16/2013 Parks and Recreation Committee

A meeting of the Parks and Recreation Committee took place on Monday, September 16, 2013. Those in attendance included Chairperson Elliot Grissom, Ward 2, Councilmember Mike Casey, Ward 3, and Councilmember Bruce DeGroot, Ward 4. Also in attendance were Mayor Bob Nation, Former Mayor Bruce Geiger, Councilmember Barry Flachsbart, Ward 1, Councilmember Derek Grier, Ward 2, Councilmember Dan Hurt, Ward 3, Councilmember Connie Fults, Ward 4, City Administrator Mike Herring, Community Services & Economic Development Director Libbey Tucker, Director of Public Services Mike Geisel, Director of Parks and Recreation Tom McCarthy and Executive Secretary Kathy Lantz.

Chairperson Grissom called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Agenda Item #1: Approval of Minutes –

Councilmember Casey motioned to approve the May 30, 2013 Minutes of the Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember DeGroot and passed by a voice vote of 3-0. (Councilmember Nancy Greenwood was absent from the meeting.)
Chairperson Grissom changed the order of the agenda.

Agenda Item #4: Recommendation to Participate in BioDiverseCity - A Program of the Missouri Botanical Garden

Ms. Libbey Tucker, Community Services & Economic Development Director and staff liaison to the Citizens Committee for the Environment (CCE), is requesting that the Parks & Recreation Committee approve the City's partnership in a new initiative being offered by the Missouri Botanical Garden (MoBOT) called BioDiverseCity St. Louis. This is a plan to promote, protect and plan for biodiversity throughout the greater Metro area. Ms. Darcy Capstick, Chairperson of CCE, and CCE member Bob Ernst, attended a summit at MoBOT regarding this effort and brought forth the recommendation to the CCE that the City participate. Ms. Tucker stated that CCE feels that Chesterfield is already a leader in this effort due to over 22 years of celebrating Earth Day, being the first and only Certified Community Wildlife Habitat in the State of Missouri (in 2005), hosting several recycling opportunities and encouraging improvement in curb-side recycling, helping companies like Monsanto

reach their certification goals with the Wildlife Habitat Council, and helping with the planting of several pollinator gardens in our parks and encouraging residents and businesses to do so also. The Committee and the City already have a special relationship with the Butterfly House, a division of MoBOT, for these efforts too. Ms. Tucker stated that there is no financial commitment to this program.

Ms. Tucker stated that currently there is one City-owned, certified pollinator garden which is at Eberwein Park. There are other non-certified pollinator gardens in the City located at Dierberg Park and by the pool at Central Park.

Councilmember Casey motioned to approve the recommendation to participate in the BioDiverseCity Program. The motion was seconded by Chairperson Grissom and passed by a voice vote of 3-0.

Agenda Item #2: Veterans Honor Park

Mr. Mike Geisel, Director of Public Services, stated that the City had expressed interest in the development of a Veterans Memorial at Central Park. City Council had authorized and directed that a portion of Central Park, located just north of Veterans Place Drive, be set aside and designated as the future location for a Veterans Memorial. Former Mayor Nations, former Acting Mayor Flachsbarth and former Mayor Geiger had directed that the Committee and staff interact with and attempt to facilitate discussions with various groups of interested veterans. Unfortunately efforts to make the Veterans Memorial a reality lacked traction and were not much more than a wish with little direction or momentum. Over the course of the last year, a small committee has taken the initiative to move this project forward.

Mr. Geisel stated that this committee, consisting of Lee Wall, Jan Misuraca, Nancy Sansone, Stan Dampier, David Kanevsky, and former Mayor Geiger; have visited and researched various other Veterans Memorials, worked with the architect of the amphitheater to ensure consistencies and developed a concept. The committee envisioned the name to be Veterans Honor Park instead of a 'Memorial Park' in order to honor past, current and future veterans and, not a somber place to visit but would create a place people would want to visit and find comfort.

Mr. Geisel gave a power point presentation showing the area designated for the Veterans Honor Park which is between the flags in front of the amphitheater and the pavilion and restrooms in Central Park. The present concept for the Veterans Honor Park creates a linear streetscape so there are street trees along both sides of the memorial, a grove of trees at the site which are colorful with the seasons and they surround a stone monument and water feature with crushed granite pathways leading to the memorial. The memorial would overlook the east stream walk at the lake. There is a circular water feature and embedded in this feature is a five-pointed star with text at the five points and emblems of the military branches with a thin skim of water covering the bottom of the feature running off into a trough and recirculating over the

bottom. Around the water feature would be seven flags, the United States of America flag, POW flag and the flags of the five branches of the military (Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine and Navy). Around the water feature and trees would be concentric benches for sitting and reflecting. The flags and flag poles at the memorial would be smaller than the 50-foot poles for the flags for the amphitheater.

Mr. Geisel stated that the Veterans Honor Committee is asking that the City 'pledge' up to \$500,000 on a dollar-for-dollar matching program for the Honor Park. Also, the Committee requests that the City consider authorizing \$70,000 of the \$500,000 to be used immediately for preliminary engineering. The concept would allow the Veterans Honor Park Committee to begin fundraising and would show that the City is committed to the project which would help with fundraising. After preliminary engineering has been completed, the Veterans Honor Park Committee would return to the Parks and Recreation Committee for review of the design, the refined cost estimate and also review the their fundraising efforts to assure that there is significant progress before the City spends any more money. At that time, the Parks and Recreation Committee would decide if they should proceed with the project.

Ms. Jan Misuraca, spokesperson for the Veterans Honor Park project, reviewed the committee's concept and stated that this Honor Park would be a tribute to veterans who have answered the call to serve. Ms. Misuraca stated that the City has shown their dedication to this project by donating the land. Ms. Misuraca stated that over 100 corporations will be contacted for donations and the committee is exploring grant opportunities. Many corporations have already expressed interest. The committee has already donated their own personal money to the Veterans Honor Park.

Councilmember Hurt expressed concern at the timing of this request and stated that perhaps other non-uniformed groups, such as the CIA and FBI that also serve the country, should also be included in this Honor Park.

Councilmember Grier stated that it would be interesting to find out how many veterans are living in Chesterfield.

Former Mayor Bruce Geiger stating that he has been working with this committee for a couple of years and they are very active and enthusiastic with this project. The committee has gone through many concepts before deciding on this one and he would encourage cooperation between them and the City.

Mr. Herring stated that the City's portion of this funding of this project would come from available funds of the General Fund – Fund Reserves, above and beyond the City's '40% policy.'

Mr. Geisel stated that this plan is at the very early concept level with a cost estimate that includes all design and construction services and it includes both a design and construction contingency, for a total estimated budgetary estimate of \$1,700,000.

Councilmember Fults stated that Veterans Place Drive was named such with the idea of creating a Veterans Memorial and is especially pleased with the name Veterans Honor Park. She also stated that this park would complete the vision for Central Park and the project has her support.

Mayor Nation stated that he appreciates the work and effort made by the committee. He expressed concern with spending \$70,000 without knowing how successful the fundraising will be.

Ms. Misuraca stated that knowing the City has pledged the \$70,000 is a very powerful tool to use in fundraising by showing how committed the City is to the project.

Councilmember Casey motioned to recommend and forward to City Council for approval that the City earmark up to \$500,000, dollar-for-dollar matching funds, from the General Fund – Fund Reserves, and authorize the \$70,000 of this amount to immediately begin the preliminary engineering. The motion was seconded by Chairperson Grissom and passed by a voice vote of 3 to 0.

Ms. Misuraca confirmed that the Veterans Honor Park Committee understands that the City has the final decision on the design of the Veterans Honor Park.

Mr. Geisel stated that earlier there was discussion to include various other groups, CIA, FBI, etc. for this memorial but this Veterans Honor Park is to recognize the five major branches of service. He stated that there had been discussions earlier in the process to include all 'fallen heroes' including police, firemen and others but the consensus was to do something separately as that would change the character of the Veterans Honor Park.

Mr. Geisel stated that there are possibilities with the library and potential for a genealogical center of incorporating interactive portals to access some veteran databases with personalized stories for some real learning opportunities.

Chairperson Grissom thanked the Veterans Honor Park Committee for coming to the meeting and for their work on this project.

Agenda Item #3: Riparian Trail – Professional Services

Mr. Mike Geisel stated that the location of the Riparian Trail, as well as the means and methods used to construct the trail within the 'conservation easement,' was heavily restricted by the Corps of Engineers. The Corps of Engineers decides the path of the trail. Due to storm water events in the couple of years, the creek channel adjacent to the Riparian Trail has eroded significantly in areas to the extent that the trail itself is jeopardized. Any work that is done in a protected easement needs Corps of Engineers approval. Much more is involved than merely stabilizing a section of the trail. Staff has inspected the current conditions and identified multiple areas that should be

addressed in an ongoing effort to preserve and protect our Riparian Trail investment.

Mr. Geisel stated that this was not a budgeted project going into the year but due to savings on other projects, there are funds in the Capital Projects Fund to pay for the repairs. Staff is asking for authorization from the Committee to identify this as a project in order to hire an engineer to prepare plans for fixing the creek damage which will cost approximately \$60,000. If this is approved by the Committee, a contract will be brought back to the full City Council for approval for engineering services.

The channel stabilization that is necessary is much more comprehensive and complicated than a simple placement of 'rubble' to protect a channel wall. It is necessary to contract with a design specialist who is well-versed in 'fluvial geomorphology.' This skill set is beyond staff's internal capabilities and the work involved is outside of the time available from our in-house engineers.

Mr. Geisel stated that he believes that we should engage an engineering consultant to review existing conditions, propose repair alternatives, prepare permitting documents, and assist in the preparation of bid documents if necessary. Mr. Geisel stated that we have sufficient funding in the capital projects fund to contract for these professional services.

Councilmember Casey questioned why this is not a problem for MSD.

Mr. Geisel stated that MSD is responsible for storm water and does not maintain unimproved open channels. Unless it is an improved channel, MSD does not take care of problems on private property and the City of Chesterfield is the owner of this property. Mr. Geisel stated that we are trying to protect the Riparian Trail as a park so staff considers this a viable expense.

Councilmember Casey motioned for approval for authorization from the Committee to identify this as a project in order to hire an engineer to prepare plans for fixing the creek damage at the Riparian Trail. A contract will be brought back to the full City Council for approval for professional engineering services. The motion was seconded by Chairperson Grissom and passed by a voice vote of 2 to 1. Councilmember DeGroot voted no.

Agenda Item #5: Mission Statement – Parks and Recreation Citizens Advisory Committee

Mr. Tom McCarthy, Director of Parks and Recreation, stated that the Parks and Recreation Citizens Advisory Committee is very passionate about the City's parks and recreation programs. The Advisory Committee was reviewing their Mission Statement and wanted to make a few minor changes. Mr. McCarthy stated that the Advisory Committee would like to be more involved in helping with:

1. Green space and conservation areas;

2. Advocate for improvements, operations and maintenance standards consistent with NRPA CAPRA accreditation; and
3. Assist with events as needed.

Mr. Geisel stated that creating a Mission Statement was a necessary step in obtaining the CAPRA accreditation.

Mr. Geisel stated that citizen committees have a defined set of goals and can act as ombudsman or another arm of the City that if they come into contact with people who have opportunities for us they can and should be involved in bringing this to the attention of the Parks and Recreation Division.

Councilmember Casey expressed concern that members of the Parks and Recreation Citizens Advisory Committee do not get overly aggressive and involved in seeking out private property owners that they are able to make arrangements and move forward to City Council that we are going to embrace their idea that the City buy property to make a park.

Mr. Geisel suggested adding a caveat 'as requested.'
Councilmember Flachsbart stated that the proposed Mission Statement already has 'as directed.'

The Committee was comfortable with that wording.

Councilmember DeGroot motioned to approve the updated Mission Statement for the Parks and Recreation Citizens Advisory Committee. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Casey and passed by a voice vote of 3-0."

Agenda Item #6: Executive Session –

A motion was made by Councilmember DeGroot and seconded by Councilmember Casey to go into Executive Session (closed meeting, as provided by RSMO 6120.021 (2), for the purpose of discussing possible real estate transaction and/or a contractual relationship. A roll call vote was taken with the following results: AYES: Grissom, Casey, DeGroot; NAYS: none. Councilmember Greenwood was absent. Chairperson Grissom declared the motion as passed and called the Executive Session (closed meeting) to order at 6:22 p.m.

Agenda item #7: Adjournment

The Committee adjourned their meeting at 7:29 p.m.