

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES
January 5, 2016

Therese Longe, Vice-Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at 851 S. Eton.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ross Kaplan, Therese Longe, John Meehan, Ryan Ross, Lilly Stotland and Bill Wiebrecht

MEMBERS ABSENT: Art Stevens

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: No current students assigned to Parks and Recreation Board

ADMINISTRATION: Lauren A. Wood, Director of Public Services, Jana Ecker, Planning Director and Connie Folk, Recreation Coordinator

GUESTS: Patty Bordman, Anne Bray, Meredith Carrel, Chuck Dimaggio from Burton Katzman, Andrew Harris, Dana Marcus, Michael Porris, Tom Rifai and Cindy Rose

Therese introduced Lilly Stotland as the new Parks and Recreation Board member. Lilly filled the term of Patty Bordman.

It was moved by Bill Wiebrecht, seconded by Ryan Ross that the minutes of the December 5, 2015 regular meeting be approved.

Yeas – 6 (Ross Kaplan, Therese Longe, John Meehan, Ryan Ross, Lilly Stotland and Bill Wiebrecht)

Nays – 0

Absent-1 (Art Stevens)

AGENDA ITEM #1 – Nominations of 2016 Parks and Recreation Board Chairperson/Vice-Chairperson

Bill Wiebrecht nominated Therese Longe as Chairperson; Therese accepted the nomination.

Yeas – 6 (Ross Kaplan, Therese Longe, John Meehan, Ryan Ross, Lilly Stotland and Bill Wiebrecht)

Nays – 0

Absent-1 (Art Stevens)

Bill Wiebrecht nominated Ryan Ross as Vice-Chairperson; Ryan accepted the nomination.

Yeas – 6 (Ross Kaplan, Therese Longe, John Meehan, Ryan Ross, Lilly Stotland and Bill Wiebrecht)

Nays – 0

Absent-1 (Art Stevens)

Therese continued with the Parks Board meeting.

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AGENDA ITEM #2 – 1193 Floyd Street Easement Agreement

Therese stated to the attendees of the Parks and Recreation Board meeting that the Parks and Recreation Board is an advisory board to the City Commission therefore the Parks and Recreation Board opinions in this or any other matter does not cause a project to be stopped or for it to go forward.

But instead the Parks and Recreation Board's role is to advise the City Commission on issues regarding the recreational programs for the City of Birmingham.

Because the Parks and Recreation Board goal is to promote a recreation program in park development for the City of Birmingham; Therese would like to ask the presenters and the commenters this evening to restrict their remarks about this project to issues that involve the effect on St. James Park and the easement request itself.

Therese stated that all the comments that were received through emails about appropriate materials being used should be directed to the Planning Board. Therese stated that this project will be heard at the Planning Board on Wednesday, January 13, 2016 and then to the City Commission afterwards.

Jana Ecker stated that 1193 Floyd project is adjacent to the St. James Park and had been presented at the July 8, 2015 Planning Board for preliminary review. Jana Ecker stated that the the request for a temporary construction easement and a permanent maintenance easement is being sent to the Parks Board for review and comment before advancing to the City Commission for review.

Jana stated that the applicant is requesting a 6' of City property along the northern edge of St. James Park abutting the property line of 1193 Floyd Street for construction of the building at 1193 Floyd for a maximum time period of 18 months. Jana stated that the applicant is also requesting a permanent maintenance easement to allow current and future owners of 1193 Floyd Street access onto City property for the purpose of cleaning and maintaining the proposed building and site long term. Neither the temporary construction easement nor the permanent maintenance easement requested would permit the easement holder to construct any permanent structures on City property. However, the granting of such easements may preclude the City from constructing permanent structures on this 6' strip of St. James Park.

Ross Kaplan asked if applicant could answer questions about the chain-link fence that will be removed for the project, if that chain-link fence will be replaced and who is responsible for maintaining the fence for the safety of users of the park.

Jana stated that question regarding the chain-link fence should be directed to the applicant who is attendance this evening.

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Bill Wiebrecht asked from the City's perspective what benefit is there to grant the easement to the applicant.

Jana stated the only benefit is if somebody determined that tearing down the existing building that is considered obsolete and putting up a new building would increase the tax value of that property as a result this could be construed as a benefit by some.

Bill asked what restrictions are there to the City for the use of the 6' easement going forward.

Jana stated a permanent structure could not be built in that 6' space.

Lilly asked if a played structure is considered a permanent structure.

Jana stated she believed so but that would be best directed to the City of Birmingham attorney for clarification.

Jana introduced Chuck Dimaggio from Burton Katzman to discuss the 1193 Floyd easement.

Chuck stated that vehicles will not be driving on the 1193 Floyd easement; the project will be fenced off during construction which will be physically fenced off from St. James Park for the safety of the users of the park.

Chuck stated the existing chain-link fence will be removed during the construction period. Chuck stated that a fence could be installed after construction or adding landscaping where the existing fence was could also be installed.

Connie stated that the YMCA installs a tent for a summer camp program from the week after school through Labor Day weekend, travel baseball uses the St. James field, tennis courts are rented and the open space is used for tot soccer.

Therese opened up the meeting for public comment.

Anne Bray stated that she is leery about granting easements. Anne stated that open green space is at a premium.

Meredith Carrel stated that when she went to the Planning Board meeting that the developer was marketing the view of the park for possible tenants. Meredith stated she is not comfortable having her three children who use St. James Park if this project is approved. Meredith stated that the unknown of the replacement of the fence makes her uncomfortable.

Dana Markus stated that her concern is the permanent nature of the easement and the fence being removed during the construction and the unknown of the replacement of the fence. Dana stated she opposes this development.

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Tom Rifai stated for future developments notifications should be expanded out 300' perimeter or more for any proposed developments.

Ryan Ross asked Chuck Dimaggio how many of their apartment properties are adjacent to parks. Chuck Dimaggio stated one of their properties is on Southfield Road across from Crestview Park.

It was moved by Bill Wiebrecht and seconded by John Meehan to recommend to the City Commission that the Temporary Construction Easement and Permanent Maintenance Easement Agreement concerning the location 1193 Floyd Street be denied.

Yeas – 6 (Therese Longe, John Meehan, Ross Kaplan, Ryan Ross, Lilly Stotland and Bill Wiebrecht)

Nays – 0

Absent-1 (Art Stevens)

COMMUNICATION/DISCUSSION ITEM #1- Parks and Recreation Board Roster

Connie provided the Parks and Recreation Board with a current Parks and Recreation Board Roster.

No action was required by the board.

COMMUNICATION/DISCUSSION ITEM #2- Long Range Planning Session

Lauren reported to the Parks and Recreation Board that the Long Range Planning Session will be Saturday, January 16, 2016 at 151 Martin Street and the agenda will be available on the city website.

No action was required by the board.

COMMUNICATION/DISCUSSION ITEM #3- Proposed 2016-2017 Capital Projects

Lauren provided to the Parks and Recreation Board 2016-2017 Capital Projects

No action was required by the board.

COMMUNICATION/DISCUSSION ITEM #4- Golf Courses History of Rounds 2012-2015

Lauren provide the Parks and Recreation Board the current golf course history of rounds 2012-2015

No action was required by the board.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

No Unfinished Business

NEW BUSINESS:

No New Business

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA:

Therese stated that the next meeting will be held on February 2, 2016 at 6:30 pm at DPS

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Connie J. Folk, Recreation Coordinator

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