



NATURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Co-Chair Heidi Schrimsher called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 380 A Avenue.

Present: Co-Chairs Heidi Schrimsher and Todd Van Rysselberghe, Nick Berardi, Frank Junga, James Kandell, Gregory McMurray and Craig Stephens. Kavya Sreedhar (Youth Member) was not present. Council Liaison Lauren Hughes was present.

Staff Present: Andrea Christenson, Natural Resources Planner/Staff Liaison

CITIZEN COMMENT

Carolyn Jones – regarding considerations related to the potential sale of property on Sunningdale Road.

Ms. Jones asked the NRAB to give close consideration to the facts that there was a lot of impervious surface in area, and that the trees were majestic and would make wonderful Heritage Trees.

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

Councilor Hughes related the Council had approved the Comprehensive Plan, the Laurel Street pathway project, the isolated tree groves project, and an Arbor Week proclamation. They had received a Metro update; heard a report on Sensitive Lands issues; tabled an unruly gatherings ordinance; and appointed Bill Ward to the Planning Commission. At the first Budget Committee meeting they had ranked top priorities. The WEB building was back on the market; the Walk for Water Event was on April 12; and Metro grants were available for restoration of park and natural areas.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Potential Sale of City property at 1061 Sunningdale Road

The Parks and Recreation Department was scheduled to provide the City Council with a report on the property at the April 15 Council meeting. No one knew what their recommendation was. During this discussion Board members considered the proximity to Forest Hills Elementary School; the fact the site was across the street from William Stafford House, so it might have historic significance; and the condition of the site, which had blackberries and ivy on it. In terms of accessibility the boulders and vegetation in front it meant it did not have much parking and seemed very secluded but kids historically played there. In terms of connectivity it was on a walking route to school. The City's policy was to have a park within a quarter mile of each residence, and this site this filled a gap. Tree canopy was being lost in FAN and this site would serve as a place to plant big, protected, fir trees. The canopy served as wildlife habitat. It might not be a good place for picnic tables because it was so close to neighbors it might invade their privacy. To build on the 8,761 s.f., triangular-shaped, property would be cramming a house on an awkward lot.

There were no adjacent neighbors at the meeting. Ms. Ockert confirmed that the neighborhood association board had voted unanimously to support retaining the property and the Heritage Tree designation. There was a question of whether the City's parks disposal policy applied to this open space.

Ms. Christenson and Councilor Hughes advised a City analysis counted it as parkland and it was classified as a special purpose park. Ms. Christenson advised that the property owners had to consent to nominating trees as Heritage Trees. The City Manager had not agreed to it. The Board talked about asking HRAB and PRAB for support. They talked about looking for Neighborhood Enhancement or Metro grants to restore it. They discussed that restoring this City-owned site might help the City achieve Metro Title 13 compliance.

Action: Mr. Berardi volunteered to speak for the Board during the public comment period at the City Council meeting and talk about the benefits of the City retaining the property.

Update on Friends of Woodmont Park

Mr. Berardi reported that he was waiting for Parks and Recreation staff to set a time to meet to talk about the draft work plan. The Board suggested this could be a candidate for a Metro grant.

Information from Board members and staff

Ms. Schrimsher planned to draft the letter to PRAB to advise them that NRAB advocated having more community gardens. Ms. Christenson talked about Arbor Week events. Members signed up to help. Mr. Berardi had attended a Budget Committee meeting to ask for funding to update the Urban Forest Report. Planning and Building Services Director Siegel had told him he would look into it. Funding for a volunteer coordinator position was already proposed. The next Budget Committee meeting was April 22. Ms. Christenson announced the City had hired a water quality coordinator. Mr. Stephens reported the Parks and Recreation director had confirmed the department followed integrated pest management practices.

Actions: Mr. Berardi planned to add signage to the Friends of Woodmont Park work plan as the HRAB was very busy with other things. Ms. Christenson was going to check to see if continued funding of the Backyard Habitat program was in the proposed budget and what Parks proposed in regard to natural area maintenance. Ms. Schrimsher was going to talk with the PRAB chair about a joint meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The next regular meeting was scheduled on May 7, 2014. Co-Chair Schrimsher adjourned the meeting at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannan Lenke Stoll
Assistant Natural Resources Planner

Link to meeting documents and meeting audio file: http://www.ci.oswego.or.us/boc_nrab/natural-resources-advisory-board-14