



CITY OF WAUWATOSA
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COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Tuesday, March 7, 2006 – 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Alds. Krol, Maher, Meaux, Purins, Stepaniak, Subotich, Sullivan, Treis (7:20 p.m.), Bruderle-Baran (7:05 p.m.), Becker, Birschel, Grimm, Herzog, Jenkins, Kopischke, Krill -16

ALSO

PRESENT: Ms. Welch, Community Development Director; Mayor Estness

Ald. Stepaniak in the Chair

Hart Park Final Design. Ms. Welch stated that preliminary plans for the expansion of Hart Park were developed some years ago and current activities are not intended to duplicate those efforts. Upcoming discussions will result in a detailed concept plan of the enlarged Hart Park that will specifically place improvements on the site. The final plan will show the locations of trails, trees, open fields, for example, and enable staff to develop costs and begin financial planning for the construction.

An ad hoc committee planning committee has been appointed to work with the Parks Board to create this final plan. Requests for proposals were sent out to 14 firms to assist in the plan development. Six firms responded and an award was made to Schreiber/Anderson Associates, Inc. of Madison. Dave Schreiber and Rhonda James will make the presentation this evening.

Mr. Schreiber stated that one goal in this process is to educate the community about the park's potential and opportunities. The target date for completion of the plan will be July 4, 2008.

Ms. James stated that the expansion of Hart Park provides an opportunity to strengthen the connection between the park and the village area of the city, such that it becomes a formal destination. The park can become a focal point of both education and entertainment, and can serve as a catalyst for the redevelopment of adjacent areas adjacent. Hart Park will be an all-season park with activities for visitors of all ages (i.e., playgrounds, picnic areas, walking paths, possible festivals, possibly a skate park.) It will provide a variety of landscaping, from formal, groomed gardens to naturally landscaped areas. The park connects to the Oak Leaf bike trail as well. Educational opportunities may include signage explaining flood management activities. Activities will be designed with public safety in mind.

A chart of the four phases of the development plan process was distributed. The phases and timelines for each are as follows:

- Background Research and Data Collection (February – March 16, 2006)
- Design Program and Master Plan Update (March 16 – April 18, 2006)
- Preliminary Design Development (April 4 – June 2, 2006)
- Final Design Development (May 16 – June 20, 2006)

Ms. James explained that the intent of Phase 1 is to revisit the master plan. During Phase 2, open houses will be held to consider whether any new ideas ought to be incorporated into the master plan. Phase 3 will see the development of hard details so that it can be determined that all desirable elements can be accommodated. Phase 4 is the final design development stage where accurate costs are identified for each component of the improvements. Construction documents in the form of specifications will be developed, followed by the bidding of the project and the start of construction.

Mayor Estness spoke of this exciting endeavor facing the city. She noted that projects of this size tend to generate rumors; every effort will be made to address these situations with truth and logic within the public forum. The existing park will increase in size from 19 acres to nearly 50 acres and will be city-owned and maintained. It is projected that neighborhoods north and south of State Street will become even more attractive to invest in because of their proximity to the park. This area is convenient for families and businesses alike and it close to downtown Milwaukee.

Ald. Sullivan urged serious consideration be given to a skate park and applauded the concept of mixed used throughout the park which are designed to appeal to all.

Ald. Maher asked that the actual target completion date be something other than July 4, 2008, so that Independence Day activities can take place in the park.

Ald. Krill asked about current and proposed development on State Street. Ms. Welch replied that additional development is envisioned; the initiation of the flood management project served as a catalyst for people interested in living there. It will be desirable to live within walking distance of Hart Park. This, in turn, will reflect favorably upon the business climate. The park will serve as a link between new development on State Street and the village area. Ms. Welch acknowledged that there is concern about over-development in the area, but noted that the park acts as a vital balance to that development by offering open space.

Ald. Krol asked about final costs estimates, noting that while a benefactor would be desirable, it is likely not realistic. Mr. Schreiber replied that staff has already challenged them on this and have made them aware that once a cost is identified, it is vital to live with that estimate. Plans will be sufficiently detailed so that unit prices can be identified. Unit prices will be based on previous bids and discussions with local contractors.

In closing, Mr. Schreiber stated that public open houses will be held on March 16 (Tosa West High School, 6 – 8:30 p.m.) and on April 1 (Wauwatosa Civic Center, 10-11:30 a.m.)

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Carla A. Ledesma, CMC, City Clerk

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