CITY OF EAU CLAIRE
WATERWAYS AND PARKS COMMISSION
(Meeting Minutes)

June 26, 2019

Members Present: Joshua Miller, Tom Fiedler, Susan McLeod, John Bodkin, Ron Doering, Jeanne Mueller, John Lor, Kate Beaton, Kirk Dahl, Jenni Sterling

Members Absent: Meredith Ball

Staff Present: Jeff Pippenger, Trevor Wittwer, Josh Solinger, Pat Ivory

The meeting was chaired by Joshua Miller at the City's Central Maintenance Facility Conference Room and called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes: The minutes of the May 22, 2019 meeting were approved as written.

Business Agenda.

A. Recommendation on naming the Forest Street Special Area as the Veteran's Tribute Park. Jeff Pippenger provided an overview of the request from the Eau Claire Veteran's group to name Forest Street Special Area as Veteran's Tribute Park. This request was first submitted to the Waterways and Parks Commission on March 27th and the City's park naming policy calls for a 60-day public comment period. Jeff reviewed the policy and noted that during the comment period that the City had received 206 responses, the majority of which supported the name change.

Mark Beckfield, representing the Veteran's Foundation spoke in support of the naming of the park. Mr. Beckfield discussed the proposed development of the facilities for the park and the financial commitment of the veteran's group to pay for the improvements. He noted that there are gardens in other parks and those parks are not named after the gardens.

Tami Schrafnagel, representing the North River Fronts Neighborhood Association indicated that the neighborhood had several meetings with the veteran's group relating to the site plan improvements, but that naming the park as Veteran's Tribute Park was not discussed. Ms. Schrafnagel suggested the name, Forest Street Community Park with the Veteran's Tribute Trail.

Jane Lindblad, representing a POW veteran's organization spoke in support of the name change.

Barb Killen, spoke in support of the name change noting that the veteran's park improvements will enrich the community.

Lee Hennick, spoke in support of the name change noting that the level of financial commitment of the veteran's group justified the name change.

Chuck Gable, stated that he was in favor of some form of an amended name for the park that recognized both the gardener and veterans groups.

Jo Ellen Burke, stated that she was concerned that this issue was pitting the two groups against each other. She suggested that the two groups meet and discuss possible alternatives.

Deadra Jenkins, indicated that she was a gardener in the park and was delighted to see that the veterans group planned to create a tribute walk in the park. She suggested an alternate name for the park "Forest Street Community Gardens and Veteran's Tribute Park".

Joe Mauer, stated that he liked the idea of the veterans developing their walk, but calling the entire park the Veteran's Tribute Park would be misleading to the other users of the park.

Brandon Buchanan, stated that the two groups needed to work together to come up with a name for the park. He also suggested that the Commission vote no on the proposed naming.

Andrew Scepitz, also suggested that the Commission vote no on the recommended name and that the two groups jointly discuss an agreeable name.

Mark Jackson, suggested an alternate name of "Forest Street Park and Veteran's Tribute Trail".

Laura Lepel, spoke in support of the name change.

Sally Johnson, spoke in support of the name change.

Joe Hile, spoke in support of the name change noting that the park will honor and remember our veterans.

Kay Olson, spoke in support of the name change.

Angela Deutchlander, spoke in support of the name change noting that the park name would create greater awareness of the area.

Brady Buch, spoke in favor of the name change.

Leon Salander, stated that the area should just be called the "Veteran's Tribute", omitting the word park.

Bonnie Ackley, stated that the veteran's group followed all the procedures for requesting the name change.

Patrick Mohr, spoke in support of the name change.

Carrie Kernan, stated that the veteran's group was a welcome addition to the park, but that the two groups needed to discuss an alternate name for the park.

John Arnette, discussed the hardships veterans have experienced, particularly the nation's POWs.

Mike Corrigan, suggested an alternate name for the park, "Veteran's Tribute Park" that then incorporated signage for the Forest Street Garden.

The Commission then discussed the naming request. Several members noted that the veteran's group had followed the City's naming policy process and met the criteria of the policy. Others noted that a vote on the renaming was premature as the user groups of the park should meet and try to work out a name that both the gardeners and veterans can agree with. Most Commission members noted that it was disappointing that both groups were in disagreement as both groups will be an asset to the park and the community.

ACTION TAKEN: Ron Doering moved to recommend approval of the name change to Veteran's Tribute Park. Tom Fiedler seconded the motion. The motion did not pass with a 3-7 vote with Commissioners McLeod, Fiedler, and Doering voting in support.

Susan McLeod then moved that the Commission recommend that the user groups of the park consider starting the park naming process over again and that the user groups of the park meet to discuss possible names for the park. Kate Beaton seconded the motion. The motion carried with Ron Doering voting no.

Jenni Sterling left the meeting.

B. Recommendation on Hobb's Wall Art. Jeff Pippenger provided an overview of plans to add mural wall art to the interior lobby at Hobb's Ice Arena. The murals would celebrate the history of figure skating and hockey in the Eau Claire area and would feature local skaters in the figure skating and hockey programs.

Denny Zacho and Chris Bell were present at the meeting and discussed the murals.

ACTION TAKEN: Jeanne Mueller moved to recommend approval of the mural. John Lor seconded the motion. Jeanne Mueller then moved to amend the motion requesting that the City work with the figure skating and hockey groups to try to include some local participants of varied diversity in the mural. Kate Beaton seconded the motion. All votes were in favor. The motion carried. The Commission then voted on the primary motion and it carried unanimously.

C. Recommendation on Downtown Riverwalk extending from Lake Street to the Pablo Center and from South Barstow Street to South Dewey Street. Trevor Wittwer provided an overview of plans to construct sections of the riverfront trail within the Downtown area. One section would be on the east side of the Chippewa River from Lake Street to the north end of the Pablo Center and the other section would be on the south side of the Eau Claire River from South Barstow Street to South Dewey Street. The trail sections will be a minimum of 12 feet in width with some sections wider as the topography will allow. The section west of the Pablo Center will be 16 feet in width. Plans will include overlooks at the end nodes of each street. The trail will also extend under the Grand Avenue Bridge. Trevor noted that the section between Farwell Street and Dewey Street will be constructed in 2020 and Engineering will work with the library regarding questions raised by the Library Board. A letter from Bob Eierman, President of the Library Board noted that several of the design details still need to be addressed regarding the trail design in the area to the north of the library.

ACTION TAKEN: John Lor moved to recommend approval of the construction of the sections of the Riverwalk, noting that design details relating to the section north of the library needed to be discussed with the Library Board. Kirk Dahl seconded the motion. All votes were in favor. Motion carried.

D. Recommendation on trail construction extending from Carson Park Drive west to the City parking lot located west of the Menards Tennis Center. Trevor Wittwer provided an overview of the construction of a trail along the south side of Half Moon Lake extending from Carson Park Drive west to the City parking lot located west of the Menards Tennis Center. The trail would be 12 feet in width. Amenities such as fishing pods, a pier abutment, and benches will be added if budget allows. The City's Comprehensive Plan shows that the trail will eventually extend further west and then along the west side of Half Moon Lake to Rod and Gun Park.

ACTION TAKEN: Tom Fiedler moved to recommend approval of the trail. Jeanne Mueller seconded the motion. All votes were in favor. Motion carried.

E. Recommendation on the stair reconstruction project at Carson Park and west of Birch Pavilion. Trevor Wittwer provided an overview of plans to reconstruct the stairs west of the Birch Pavilion within Carson Park. The existing stairs are in deteriorated condition and have been closed to the public. The replacement stairs will be constructed at the same location as the existing stairs and will use decorative concrete formed to look like pillow-cut limestone. The existing circular seating area will also be reconstructed. Conduit for future lighting will also be installed.

ACTION TAKEN: John Lor moved to recommend approval of the project. Ron Doering seconded the motion. All votes were in favor. Motion carried.

F. Recommendation on 2020-2024 Capital Improvement Plan related the Parks and Recreation, Hobb's Ice Center, and Fairfax Pool. Josh Solinger provided an overview of the

2020-2024 Capital Improvement Plan related to Parks and Recreation, Hobb's Ice Center, and Fairfax Pool. Josh noted that the plan provided detailed project listings for 2020 and more general listings of projects for 2021-2024.

ACTION TAKEN: Kate Beaton moved to recommend approval of the 2020-2024 Capital Improvement Plan as presented. Susan McLeod seconded the motion. All votes were in favor. Motion carried.

Other Items.
-The Commission reviewed the special events listing and Director's Report.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 p.m.

Susan McLeod by PHA

Submitted by,
Susan McLeod, Secretary