

CITY OF WARREN PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
April 5, 2016



The meeting was called to order at 4:35 PM, April 5, 2016. Members present were Dennis Crandall, Todd Ristau, Judi Wilson, Mark Zavinski and Mike Suppa. Jackie Angove and Kirk Johnson were absent. Also attending: Mary Ann Nau, David Hildebrand, Nancy Freenock, Mike Holtz and Ellen Nelson.

VISITORS

Josie Gerardi, representative from Street Landscape Committee and City Council Member Elyssa Davis, newest member of the City of Warren Parks & Recreation Commission.

MINUTES

Upon a motion by Judi Wilson and a second by Mark Zavinski to accept the minutes of the March 1, 2016 regular meeting, the minutes were unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. Nau relayed that she had received an email stating that the City of Warren was nominated and selected for a Champion of Wilds Award, specifically the Great Place Award. An awards ceremony will be held April 28. Representatives of the Green Way & Trails Committee will attend the event to accept the award.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Elyssa Davis, new council member, was welcomed.

Street Landscape Committee

Josie Gerardi was in attendance as a representative from the Street Landscape Committee. Ms. Gerardi met with Mike Holtz regarding extending the Crescent Park walk around and to the Warren Cancer Center. She will be meeting with the Master Gardeners Club about creating and installing gardens along the path to attract birds and butterflies.

Mr. Holtz met with Mark ~~Eberle~~ Eberl who is shepherding the efforts for the walking trail. They wanted to take an inventory of what things need attention. Mr. Holtz came up with 10-12 general things including regular maintenance on existing items and also adding new items including mulch, limestone and the Elks Club steps to the river. Mr. ~~Eberle~~ Eberl later listed 36 specific items that need action. The improvements will extend the use of the park.

Ms. Wilson added that the D.A.R. originally installed the steps and that the Elks Club restored them.

Mr. Holtz said they are planning to clean existing benches and add new ones, along with No Smoking signs. They are planning to make a "Healing Trail" brochure outlining points of interest along the path. They would like to remove the baseball backstop from the Karen Bonnell field but little league games are still held in the park.

Ms. Gerardi mentioned a healing garden in the fenced area behind the Warren Cancer Center.

Mr. Holtz informed the committee that a meeting is scheduled at 10:00 am on May 13 with Randy California to gather input and support from Warren General Hospital. We would like to pull the hospital in as a partner on this project.

Mr. Hildebrand thought the trail was going to extend onto Warren General Hospital land. Mr. Holtz said they would start with the walk planned and then extend at a later date. Josie Gerardi added that her committee has a lot going on with the trail on Pennsylvania Avenue for the bird overlook.

Ms. Freenock interjected that this would be a project paired up with DCNR money for 2017 as we are applying for money from the Marcelles Shale Grant. Presently the restrooms and parking are not ADA compliant. Mr. Hildebrand stated that this grant money is from Act 13, Greenway & Trails Act, and would help pay for the trail, restroom and parking upgrades. 85% of the money would be from the state grant and 15% would be local funding. We need backing from Kathy Rapp and Scott Hutchinson as this is a political matching grant.

Mr. Hildebrand stated that from Hickory Street Bridge to the restrooms, there are subsections not well known by the public. Pioneer Circle, for instance, has been lost over time. He would like to see better markings on the site and have them included in the walking trail brochure.

Judi Wilson added that the D.A.R. will be documenting the monuments this summer. Messerly Monuments had cleaned the monuments a few years ago and that is the last time they were done. Mr. Hildebrand said there were trees planted with markers for those killed in World War I. Mr. Holtz would like to see this included in the trail brochure. Mr. Crandall stated that a Boy Scout, Jeremy Linden, identified the people and families as part of his Eagle Scout project. Ms. Freenock stated that Leadership Warren is taking on the Birdstone Monument project.

Ms. Nau reviewed the City Ordinance with Ms. Davis. Any physical changes to the development or redevelopment of new or existing parks and recreation areas need recommendation from the Parks & Recreation Commission and authorization from City Council.

Mr. Suppa inquired how they were planning to begin with the list of "137" things to do for the trail. Mr. Holtz replied that for sure they were adding new limestone to the trail and that it all depends on the money available. They will be putting monetary values to the items at their May 13 meeting.

Ms. Davis asked about the fountain covering that has sunk in and filling with water. Mr. Holtz replied that it will be open soon.

Ms. Freenock asked for volunteers to meet with the Landscape Committee along with Mr. Holtz, Mr. Hildebrand, Ms. Gerardi and herself. Ms. Wilson volunteered and she was thanked by the commission. Ms. Freenock asked for nominations to approve the Walking Trail Project. Mr. Suppa made a motion to approve the project and it was seconded by Mr. Zavinski. It was unanimously approved.

New Business

Ms. Freenock stated that the five statues located at the Santa park need to be moved in late summer. Mr. Suppa said it would be appropriate to place the statues in the playgrounds. Ms. Gerardi added that locations around town were designated by the Garden Club for each statue. She also mentioned that one statue in Breezpoint is damaged. Mr. Holtz will check into it. Ms. Freenock asked the committee members to think of green spaces in which to place the statues.

REPORT OF OFFICERS

No report.

REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

No report.

CITY STAFF REPORTS

David Hildebrand & Mike Holtz – Lacy Playground

- Mr. Holtz passed out copies of Lacy Park Playground map to the group. Mr. Hildebrand gave a history of the park. In 1997-98 Lacy Foundation, Kathy Johnson et al, raised funds to renovate the pavilion, bocce court, restroom and playground. In 2000 the City of Warren took over and not many improvements have been made since. A \$300,000 DCNR grant was applied for with ½ from the state and ½ a local match.
- Marion Street – considering eliminating horseshoe pits and adding (2) ADA parking spaces.
- Plans are to install an ADA interior trail west to the baseball field and going by the basketball court and pavilion. This would connect parking to the pavilion and to baseball, basketball, and new playground equipment and continue to the restrooms which will be ADA compliant inside and out.
- Considering moving basketball court 8 feet to the north, by restroom sidewalk to Madison and adding lights, fence and new surface in dragon colors (blue/white).
- Possibly eliminate bocce courts and make (1) shuffleboard court and (1) ladder ball court. Build up the whole park like Beaty so better utilized by the East side residents.
- Mr. Hildebrand, Mr. Holtz & Doug Scieford met with Kathy Johnson. She gave them a letter of recommendation; as did the Warren County Planning office.
- Judi Wilson asked if (2) ADA parking spaces is enough. Mr. Holtz replied that 2 spots work well at Beaty and that Shurfine is agreeable with folks parking in their lot. Adding a third ADA parking spot would be costly as there is a tree in the way.
- Ms. Nau commented that the pavilion is small and wondered if it could be increased in size. If any changes are made to the pavilion it would need to be brought up to ADA standards.
- Mr. Hildebrand suggested submitting the application with spaces as they are. If spaces are off site we would need a long time lease and it bogs down the application.
- Mr. Crandall suggesting having disc golf in the open space.

Mike Holtz – DeFrees Park

- Mr. Holtz stated that a new fence that was funded in 2015 is going up and will mirror the old one. Green slats will go all the way around and give better privacy.
- Mr. Crandall asked if the water issues were resolved. Mr. Holtz replied yes, last year.
- Mr. Holtz mentioned that playground equipment has been ordered. Swing set and replace three other items with new comparable ones. Sand box will be made in house and will have a roof. DPW will fix down spouts at the back of the restrooms and will be cutting down some trees.

Mike Holtz – Betts Park

- We can do improvements as we just received a grant. Betts Foundation wants them done. Second half of the summer will add ADA compliant restrooms and eliminate the concession stand but some storage will remain.
- Mr. Crandall inquired if City ordinance prevents folks from bringing food into the park. Ms. Nau said no but if they want to set up food stand they will need a City health license. The pop machine will remain in the park.
- Mr. Holtz said there are plans to install a 10-12' Gazebo tent next to Nick Creola monument.
- Mr. Hildebrand & Mr. Holtz met with the Betts Foundation about future projects. In 1988 there was a plan to have a winterized community building to be used as a meeting room. Mr. Hildebrand stated that the Betts Foundation has been very generous to the City and should be on board. He also mentioned that the Foundation does NOT want a dog park at Betts Complex.

Mary Ann Nau – 2016 City Pool / Summer Playground Program

- Ms. Nau passed out new pool forms. We cleaned up the documents with input from Cathy Peterson, aquatic director of the YMCA. Rules were updated and guidelines were clarified. We no longer offer the All Inclusive parties.
- We will add the pool hours to the pool pass application.

- The summer playground program will run 8 weeks – June 20 to August 11 (10 am – 4 pm). We need Playground Leaders. Salary will be \$7.25/hour and up depending on experience and education. All will need clearances. The supervisor will fill in for the leaders when needed. There will be 1 week of training – first aid, CPR and general training. Trips were taken to the Warren County Fair and Chapman Dam in 2015.
- Matt Jones from the Career Center has been in contact with us and will provide lunches for the playgrounds. There will be a training for the park leaders.
- We have the same Playground Supervisor coming back, Rachel Beach. Only one park leader is returning.

OLD BUSINESS

Good for You. Good for All – Ms. Nau touched on some highlights from this program. Branding program was implemented. Our parks are now listed on their web site.

MISCELLANEOUS

Bike Trails – Mr. Crandall asked about putting bike trails on the street. Ms. Freenock stated that the streets are not wide enough. Mr. Holtz said they would need to be a lane on both sides of the street. Ms. Wilson asked about having a bike lane on the bridge.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Mr. Crandall asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Zavinski made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Suppa. Mr. Crandall declared the meeting adjourned.

NEXT MONTH'S MEETING

Next month's meeting will be Tuesday, June 7, 2016 at 4:35 PM.