

MINUTES OF A THE LAKEFRONT, PARKS, AND NATURAL AREAS COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK HELD ON FEBRUARY 16, 2022 5:01 PM. PURSUANT TO SECTION 7(e) OF THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT, THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS HAS MADE A FINDING THAT IT IS NOT PRACTICAL OR PRUDENT TO HOLD IN PERSON MEETINGS BECAUSE OF THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY. NEITHER THE ELECTED OFFICIALS NOR THE PUBLIC WILL BE ALLOWED TO ATTEND REGULAR OR COMMITTEE MEETINGS IN PERSON BUT WILL PARTICIPATE VIRTUALLY. LINKS TO THE VIRTUAL MEETING CAN BE FOUND ON THE PARK DISTRICT WEBSITE [HTTPS://WWW.PDHP.ORG/PARK-BOARD/MEETINGS/](https://www.pdhp.org/park-board/meetings/)

Present: Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Kaplan, Vice President Grossberg

Absent: Commissioner Freeman, President Ruttenberg

Also, Present: Executive Director Romes; Director Smith; Director Voss; Director Carr; Director Peters; Director Gogola; Assistant Director Maliszewski; Manager Grill; Manager Johnson; Coordinator Hejnowski

Guest Speaker: Greg Wolterstorff, V3 Companies

Additions to the Agenda

None.

Public Comment

None.

Approval of the Lakefront, Parks, & Natural Areas Committee Meeting Minutes from January 11, 2022

The Minutes from the January 11, 2022 Lakefront, Parks, and Natural Areas Committee Meeting were approved.

Millard Bluff Grading Plans

Director Voss reported that Millard Park and Beach is one of the District's four lakefront properties, which in recent years has been exacerbated by high lake levels, storm, and wave damage-causing failures of the slope at the toe of the bluff. Based on a recommendation from the Beach Management Plan completed by SmithGroup, staff contracted V3 Companies in April 2021 to conduct a Slope Stability Analysis and provide recommended strategies for ensuring safety and long-term preservation of the bluff in keeping with its natural character and use as a passive park and beach.

At the August 24, 2021 Regular Board Meeting, a representative from V3 Companies provided an overview of their analysis including several site recommendations with probable costs. According to the V3 report, given the existing bluff conditions and cyclical fluctuations of Lake Michigan water levels, there are several solutions appropriate for the Park District to consider as a means to address existing bluff failures and minimize the potential for future failures or loss of land at the top of the bluff. Of those solutions, staff are working with V3 Companies to restore grades to a 2:1 slope along one acre deemed critical and remove trees across four acres. These grading plans will be packaged in a single bid along with the tree removals. Staff anticipates releasing a bid in early summer for work to potentially begin in late August.

Mr. Wolterstorff of V3 Companies shared data and images collected from a drone survey. The primary concern is the top of the bluff since there is a steep 10ft drop before reaching the center of the bluff. V3 has identified five sections for selective grading to addressing these steep slopes, preserving mature oak trees, to restore a 2:1 grade. The work involved would be the removal of material at the top of the bluff, eliminating the almost vertical zones, reducing the weight of material that could slump down, which could create pockets for collection of water and increased opportunities for future bluff erosion and failure. The end result will push the top of the bluff back approximately 20 feet, requiring benches and the north path to be relocated.

Vice President Grossberg would like to know if the new path will still have a fork allowing travelers to visit the garden.

Director Voss reported that the fork will remain near the south end beginning of the path, veering west up the old access road or east up the red gravel path with steps. The second fork, at the south end of the garden, the east fork on the outside of the garden along the bluff will be eliminated. The path through the garden will remain.

Vice President Grossberg would like to know if there are drainage concerns.

Mr. Wolterstorff reported that borings showed the bluff is made up of heavy clay, so there are no drainage concerns. The plateau of the bluff is sloped to the west toward the ravine, and will remain so after the grading work occurs, minimizing potential rainwater flowing down the bluff.

Vice President Grossberg would like to know if large boulders will need to be placed along the slope.

Mr. Wolterstorff reported that large boulders are not needed for this project.

Other Business

Sunset Woods Playground

Director Smith reported that all the play equipment has arrived, however, construction has been paused due to weather. Staff are anticipating the project will be completed by Memorial Day, with a grand opening date in June.

Sheahan Woods at Sunset Woods Park

Director Smith reported that a portion of Sunset Woods Park was once owned by the Sheahan family and approximately 20 years ago a monument sign was installed along the parking lot to commemorate this. As part of the park-wide sign replace at Sunset Woods, staff would like to remove the current Sheahan Woods monument sign and replace it with an interpretive sign telling the story of the Sheahan family and their history to the park. The Sheahan family is in support of this approach but would like to retain a more visual association with the park. Staff are exploring additional options and plan to return to the Committee with a recommendation.

Rory David Deutsch Tot Lot

Director Smith reported that staff met with the City of Highland Park and the Highland Lakes Property Owners Association to further discuss the termination agreement and transfer of management and maintenance to the Property Owners Association. Staff confirmed that the City of Highland Park no longer

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needs the access path from the ponds to the Tot Lot, so the access path will be removed from the transfer agreement. Staff are still finalizing details pertaining to long-term maintenance at the site and the responsibilities of the Property Owners Association.

Open to Public to Address the Board

None.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Hejnowski

Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary