



2-23-2021

Board of Park Commissioners
Special Meeting
Minutes

Thursday, February 18, 2021
4:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Zoom Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Kathleen Mills at 4:01 p.m.

Board Present: Kathleen Mills, Israel Herrera, Ellen Rodkey and James Whitlatch

Staff Present: Paula McDevitt, Tim Street, Erin Hatch and Kim Clapp

A. OTHER BUSINESS

A-1. The Board heard an appeal from Suzan Glowacz regarding proposed tree removals at Lower Cascades Park.

Susan Glowacz thanked the Board for hearing her appeal. To better disseminate information about the project to the community, she questioned if the project could be slowed down and timeline extended. She questioned if the bank could be widened in the eastern direction, instead of the western direction. She said there has been a theme of loss during the pandemic, and the removal of the large mature trees would be another loss. She was concerned of the impact this would have on the surrounding community.

Erin Hatch, Urban Forester the project is geared to address major streambank erosion issues along Cascades Creek. The project has undergone modifications to accommodate tree preservations, reducing the number of potentially slated for removal down to 23 mature trees. The project was redesigned to feature a narrow section reconstruction of the creek wall to allow retention of mature sycamores to the north. As part of the project, mitigation plantings are planned to replace the removed trees with a 5:1 mitigation ratio. One hundred and fifteen native trees would be plated to replace the 23 trees to be removed. The project is being regulated by the Indiana bat restrictions, and the trees must be removed by April 1st to meet those regulations. Parks and Recreation staff recommended denial of the appeal, and the continuation of the project as planned

Tim Street, Director of Operations, Eagle Ridge Consulting and staff took into consideration the following factors in the design of the project; erosion, safety, preservation of the mature trees and access. The northern third of the project was redesigned to save numerous mature trees and preserve the feeling of the park. The impact has been greatly reduced with the redesign of the plans. Due to the 5:1 ratio not all 115 trees can be planted in this area.

Laurel Cornell, Tree Commission Chair, invited Susan and the community to attend the Tree Commission Meetings held on the third Wednesday of the month. The Tree Commission is appointed by the City to work with the Urban Forester to best determine how to preserve and plant trees in Bloomington. The Tree Commission reviews all City plans for Public Work Projects that involves tree management. There are two parts to the Cascades Project, the removal of the trees, and the erosion issue. Modifications to this plan were recommended by the Tree Commission. The end result is

an excellent design that preserves as many trees as possible.

Board Comments: Jim Whitlatch inquired; if the 23 tree slated to be removed were native trees. Erin Hatch responded; there is a mixture of native and non-native trees, as well as many different types and sizes. Jim Whitlatch inquired; why trees were being removed that set back away from the bank Erin Hatch responded; the condition and location of the trees were considered. Stress from a construction site, can make an unhealthy tree a hazard. Jim Whitlatch inquired; on the size of the replacement trees. Erin Hatch responded; the trees will be standard 2' to 2 ½" ball and burlap tree. The height will vary between 4' and 6'. Ellen Rodkey inquired; how many mature trees were being preserved. Erin Hatch responded: approximately twenty mature trees were being preserved from the original design. Israel Herrera thanked Susan Glowacz for bring this to the Board, and for her concern for preserving the trees and protection of the site.

Jim Whitlatch made a motion that the appeal for the removal of trees brought before the Board be denied, the denial was based on the recommendations of the various people that spoke at the meeting, as well as the 5:1 mitigation. In the best interest of the City and the project the appeal be denied. Ellen Rodkey seconded the motion. Vote taken: motion unanimously carried 4-0. The appeal was denied.

Paula McDevitt, Director, thanked Susan Glowacz for participating in the process, the Board, the Tree Commission and staff for their work.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 4:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kim Clapp
Secretary Board of Park Commissioners