



ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES ADVISORY COUNCIL
City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation
Regular Meeting

Wednesday, February 9th, 2022
4:30 - 6:00 p.m.

Join Zoom Meeting:
<https://bloomington.zoom.us/j/84954375916?pwd=MUprR241WG9VVTBUejk5UFVYUWFJdz09>
Meeting ID: 849 5437 5916
Passcode: ERAC

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:33PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Dan Myers, Bill Jones, Melissa Laney, Dave Parkhurst, Jeff Ehman, Autumn Brunelle, Denise Gardiner, Cathy Meyer

Staff: Steve Cotter, Joanna Sparks, Tim Street, Rebecca Swift

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 2021

Parkhurst moved to approve to the meeting minutes, Jeff Ehman Seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. AGENDA

A. Public Appearances

A-1 Public Comment Period

No public comments were submitted this meeting.

B. Old Business

B-1 Hidden River Pathway Project Updates

Street provided updates on the progress of the Hidden River Pathway through Waldron Hill Buskirk Park, noting that Milestone is working north of 3rd street with the underground infrastructure sites from Lincoln to the Southern limits of the project close to 2nd St and Washington are complete. The southeast corner for the park needs to be restored and undergo playground installation, but is undergoing delays related to goods and services.

Myers asked if there would be additional landscaping included in this project. Street responded that there are no plans to do any significant landscaping aside from upgrading existing native beds, which Sparks confirmed.

B-2 Lower Cascades Project Updates

Street provided updates on the ongoing efforts of rebuilding the wall on the western side of the stream within lower Cascades Park to create more room for the stream to flood and reduce the channelization of the water, noting that the first tier of limestone block has been placed. The second tier of block is going in which will be shortly followed by a third tier installation, which is anticipated to be finished around May 1. The final part of the project will be tree restoration efforts by the stream, in the northern section of the upper cascades, and between the old water treatment plant by Griffy Dam. Approximately 23 trees were removed during the project and 115 are planned on being planted as part of the restoration efforts. There is now a path to the waterfall shelter, with a boardwalk and viewing platform in progress.

Ehman asked how long the stream bank was exposed and erosion mitigation measures. Street responded that geofabrics have been used when construction was not actively being done. No major flooding/rain events occurred when the stream bank was pulled back that would have caused any significant erosion.

Brunelle asked what happened to the old limestone blocks used in the vertical wall. Street responded that the Army Corps of Engineers was consulted given the mix of materials, notably from the WPA project, used to construct the wall. The limestone blocks have been kept on site and may be used for future projects.

Jones asked if the design of the wall would require binding agents to avoid limestone block movement and if it would be rebuilt as a vertical structure or staggered. Street responded that due to the weight of the blocks binding agents would not be necessary, and that the plan is to have each tier of stone laid halfway up behind the row below it.

Myers asked if the bottom of the stream was at bedrock, or if the channelized water will continue to erode the stream. Street responded that it depends on the section of the stream, but many sections are bare bedrock along the bottom.

B-3 ERAC 2022 Appointments

Swift asked if anybody was willing to step up as ERAC chair, noting that Myers would be willing to continue as Vice Chair, but may not be in Bloomington after May upon graduation. Laney noted that she would be willing to continue as chair. Ehman moved to pass a motion to elect Laney and Myers as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively – the motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

C. New Business

C-1 Election of Officers

Swift noted that 2022 appointments were just completed in this meeting.

C-2 Education Update

Swift said that some winter programs are continuing, which will end in February, but it is getting close to the time of education events ramping with the spring and summer months approaching. Nature day

programming will resume in March and go through April. Earth day events on April 22 at RCA Park are being planned, in addition to volunteer opportunities.

Sparks added that weed wrangles are being organized for Thursdays and Saturdays at Lower Cascades at 1:00 pm and Fridays at Latimer Woods at 1:00 pm to work on managing Asian bush honeysuckle.

For Monroe County updates, education programs are beginning to pick up. An event in January, in collaboration with JL Waters, will provide an introduction to backpacking and outdoor gear course. Partnering with the Sassafras Audubon Society, a program on the whooping crane was held. Monroe County will have an online component for the Earth Day event at RCA. Currently a wildlife management plan and weed wrangles at Karst Farm and the Limestone Greenway. A multi-year invasive species management plan is being developed with MCIRIS for Jackson Creek Park. A stream cleanup is planned for April 30 at Jackson Creek, being hosted by CBU and MC Stormwater as part of a provision in the Lower Salt Creek Watershed Management Plan grant which requires a stream cleanup and educational component event.

Gardiner noted that the Wildflower Foray is being planned for the weekend of April 22-24 with a website posted when the events and information are finalized.

C-3 Clear Creek Trail Extension Updates

Cotter asked Cathy Meyer for clarification on which portion of the trail extension, noting there have been multiple extensions. Meyer clarified, stating that after a site visit to Wapehani, and wanted to know that what the plans were for the area that the city added to the park. Cotter responded that there are tentative plans to use the Weimer Road bed near Tapp Road and Wapehani Road as a trail once Weimer is rerouted to the west through the PIC development, but is up in the air. Ideally, this would connect to the proposed powerline trail which would make a new route from Wapehani to Switchyard.

C-4 Griffy Loop Trail Project Updates

Cotter provided updates, noting that due to budget constraints prefabricated block was chosen over limestone for the lake's edge. Additional changes to the project include installation of railing to some of the steeper sections of the north and south trail sections, routing of the trail bridge from the south to the parcel of unknown ownership. The trail had a southwest angle in the design, but the trail will continue along Headley road until stairs can be taken directly west to connect to the nearest trail. Application for a next-level grant was submitted for the unfished portions of the project, asking for \$500,000 - \$300,000 of which would go to dam improvement, with additional funds for north shore trail construction.

A contract with Spectrum exists to update the trail portion of the Griffy Lake Master Plan to provide recommendations for existing and future trails – this includes \$6,000 for a pilot ravine crossing along the western corner of the lake at the south corner of the dam.

Street added that the lake level has slightly rebounded due to lowering of the water no longer being necessary at this stage of the project.

C-5 Climate Action Plan Implementation

Swift provided updates on how the CAP goals and action items relate to Parks and Recreation, noting that during the staff retreat, smaller working groups were made to address areas of improve, such as the Climate and Sustainability Action team. The purpose of this working group is to address the multiplicity of issues presented by climate change by breaking down CAP goals and action items into division relevant and manageable workloads.

Swift added that she will share the CAP documents for ERAC members to review, if interested.

C-6 2022 Initiatives and Topics of Interest

Swift mentioned bringing the finding from the bird, reptile, and amphibian report compiled by West, Inc. for the next meeting. Myers mentioned interest in learning more about the Lower Salt Creek Watershed Management Plan. Ehman mentioned a desire for a presentation on the trails master plan and a site visit of the Wapehani restoration project.

C-7 April 2022 Meeting Agenda Items

SYP Wetland Monitoring report updates, Griffy Lake Master Plan Inventory

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:41pm.

**NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13th, 2022
LOWER CASCADES PARK– Sycamore Shelter**