



ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES ADVISORY COUNCIL

City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation

Regular Meeting

Lower Cascades Park – Sycamore Shelter

Wednesday, June 14th, 2023

4:30 - 6:00 p.m.

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I. CALL TO ORDER at 4:35pm

II. ROLL CALL –

Denise Gardiner, Autumn Brunelle, Cathy Meyer, Kim Brackemyre, Bill Jones, Marne Potter, Jeff Ehman, Dave Parkhurst, Angie Shelton

Staff: Steve Cotter, Joana Sparks, Rebecca Swift, Haskell Smith, Jolie Blevins, Casey Hallenbeck, Gillian Field, Tim Street

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 2023 approved

IV. AGENDA

A. Public Appearances

A-1 Public Comment Period
Ray Major attended the meeting.

B. Old Business

B-1 Trail System Master Plan for Griffy Lake Nature Preserve – Spectrum Trail Design

Cotter provided updates on the Griffy Loop Trail Project. He first asked how people felt about totally closing down the existing trails after new trails were built, and building entirely new routes. This will happen during the summer season. Spectrum Trail Design LLC began working today on the South section of the Loop Trail, starting with the segment along Dunn St. to the dam. Next week Scenic Construction will start the dam section of the Loop. The remainder of the South section and dam will be done by the end of the year. He believes the new Loop Trail will be more sustainable. Street explained the walk with DNR and liked attention to detail on the proposed South loop trail. This will make the trail much more moderate connecting east/west sides. Once the alignment is completed some steep old trails sections will be closed. Some consolidation and improvement from trailheads and down to the loop will also be done this year. Possibly 1 bridge will be built over a narrow ravine (5-6 feet). The goal is only natural surface for trails. Swift added that more trail signage will be added with budgeted money along with boot brushes, etc. Next week the Dam Crossing will begin being worked on, crushed limestone will be added, wood/chain link fencing, and stairs.

Other project updates: Rogers Family Park is close to completion, weather has impacted tree planting and other challenges. Contractor will be contacted in the fall again. Parking lot is open now, and new boardwalks have been added in some wet areas.

C. New Business

C-1 Education Update

Swift provided Bug Fest save the dates– September 23, 2023 at Karst Farm Park. Volunteers are still needed for the 10th annual BugFest. Over 1,600 people attended last year with around 20 exhibitors, and they are looking for exhibitors for this year's BugFest. She also mentioned how the Department is co-hosting a Hoosier RiverWatch training at Lower Cascades, open to the public. Training education will be shared, only 25 spots available. She mentioned further education opportunities like a Wild Edibles Program, SUP opportunities, as well as reaching out to local Scout groups. Swift brought final proofs for RCA interpretive signs to ask members to provide any last minute feedback before they were sent to the manufacturer.

Brunelle provided updates for Monroe County Parks and Recreation working with local Scout groups, Nature Club on Mondays and Gardening club on Thursdays. She is also doing Wild Edibles program through WINGS, teaming up with DNR for a "forage to fork " program at Karst Farm Park. She is also looking for sponsorships for BugFest starting at \$25.

Questions/comments for County: Bird Fest updates from SAS–no BirdFest this year, but will do a smaller activity (Bird Carnival/Citizen Science–It's for the Birds) since they still have a reservation at Karst Farm. More information to come.

Urban Greenspace Outreach Coordinator, Gillian Field, provided updates on Weed Wrangles to reach out to the public for invasive species removal and why people should care. Winslow Sports Park has groups come every day to get woody invasives under control– called 'Wildlife Corridor Plan' then moved to Winslow Woods to get boundary areas under control. They are also hosting evening Weed Wrangles at various parks with "Adopt-a-greenspace" volunteers.

C-2 Miller-Showers Park Management Plan

Blevins provided updates on the Millers-Showers Park Management plan, with the urban greenspace team putting this together as a way to preserve institutional knowledge with help from Joanna and Gillian. These documents will continue to be updated, with the ultimate goal to communicate, establish, describe, and provide information for the goals and intentions of managing these greenspaces. Big takeaways from Miller-Showers: No data prior to 1929 so further research is recommended. Indigenous use is also recommended to incorporate the full scope of human history. Ponds will be dredged soon because of sediment settling. More information will be brought to the next meeting to see dredging impact on local plant/animals species.

C-3 Park Ridge East Park Management Plan

Sparks provided updates on the Park Ridge East Park Management plan, with the goal of replicating the plan from Miller Showers Park to this park. GIS data collection is helping with that, and they are working on ways to digest this information to include in management documents that will be made accessible to the public. The topographic results survey concluded there are serious erosion issues on $\frac{2}{3}$ of property. Storm greenwater certification training scholarship from NRPA, local community is very engaged with the project. Weed Wrangle and Native Pollinator Garden at Park Ridge East on June 22, 2023.

C-4 Lesser Celandine Management Updates

Sparks provided updates on the lesser celandine management in the green spaces around Bloomington. The season has passed for treating this plant, but it is still challenging to manage because of its physical form and it grows in riparian zones. Extensive control with good success has been accomplished at Griffy Lake, as well as Winslow Woods and Switchyard Park. Meyer has helped manage individual plants at Bryan Park and found where it is coming from in the neighborhood. She is trying to make a community outreach plan and encourage people to take action. New chemicals were employed at Southeast Park to manage this invasive species, and with the help of MC-IRIS, we hope to find the best management plan for lesser-celandine. The plant is a monster, but good progress has been made in managing it, specifically at Griffy Lake Nature Preserve.

C-5 Management Plan Goals (Leonard Springs Nature Park)

Next year's budget includes funding for management plan for Leonard Springs Nature Park. Staff is looking for feedback for what this plan should include/would include. Strategic plan goals for next year. Will be old business on the next meeting's agenda. Looking to expand parking and access for park. Might contract out management plan for internal staff and the public.

C-6 August 2023 Meeting Agenda Items

Gateway Project Updates, Stiltgrass Management, Encroachment at Winslow Woods Park

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:01 pm.

**NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY, August 9th, 2023
Winslow Woods Park – Shelter**