

REGULAR ANDOVER OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING
JANUARY 18, 2017
MINUTES

The Regular Meeting of the Andover Open Space Advisory Commission was called to order by Chairperson Gretchen Sabel at 6:00 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1685 Crosstown Boulevard NW, Andover, Minnesota.

Commissioners present: Anna Dirkswager (arrived at 6:04 p.m.), Joy Faherty, Aaron Jarson, and Kim Kovich
Commissioners absent: Jim Olson, and Suzanne Van Hecke
Also present: Kameron Kytonen, Natural Resources Technician
Donna Aasness, Resident

RESIDENT FORUM

Donna Aasness stated the day before Christmas someone was walking all over their land. She stated that they dismissed the incident and figured that they would deal with it after the holidays. She stated that unfortunately there is not much that they can do about it. She stated that it needs to be known that people cannot walk onto their property. She stated that the vast majority of people are not walking around her property that she knows of.

Commissioner Dirkswager arrived.

Chairperson Sabel asked if people walked onto her property before the open space.

Mrs. Aasness stated that they did not have an issue prior to the open space. She stated that given the fact that there is open space, people should not be walking on her property. She stated that people are avoiding the signage areas to wander even off their paths to the neighboring property and back a different path across the swamp to get to the parking lot. She believed that this person had a purpose other than exploring open space.

Chairperson Sabel stated that she was cross-country skiing on Monday and did not see additional tracks.

Mr. Kytonen stated that the City can also run an article in the newsletter and on the City website asking people to respect the boundary of the open space areas.

Chairperson Sabel stated that if enough people are aware, there will be social pressure as well.

Chairperson Sabel asked if Commissioner Dirkswager has people coming into her yard as well, as she lives on the other side of the open space area.

Commissioner Dirkswager confirmed that they do get a few people in their yard as well.

Mrs. Aasness stated that there was no damage done but she does not want to see this becoming a regular occurrence as she wants to feel comfortable on her own property.

Mr. Kytonen stated that he has seen a deputy sitting in the parking lot on multiple occasions and therefore that should provide some comfort.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 16, 2016

Motion by Commissioner Kovich, Second by Commissioner Dirkswager, to approve the minutes of November 16, 2016. Motion passed 5-0.

CONTINUE DISCUSSION OF OVERALL COMPREHENSIVE PRIORITY LIST FOR ALL OPEN SPACES

- a) Review Updated “Management Task Summary” Table for Each Open Space**
- b) Review Updated Comprehensive List Table**
- c) Draft Final, Updated Table**

Mr. Kytonen noted that each of the management plan tables have been updated for consistency and to reflect the discussions. He stated that the costs have been updated to be more accurate. He began with Martin’s Meadows and asked for any input from the Commission.

Commissioner Dirkswager asked the intention of this discussion. She stated that a meeting with the Council should be scheduled and then a strategy for presentation should be developed.

Mr. Kytonen explained that for the past few years there has been a management plan developed for each open space area. He stated that the Commission has worked to further refine the management plans that could be provided to the public as well to show that the City is maintaining the open space areas.

Commissioner Dirkswager stated that she found it helpful that Mr. Kytonen provided more details on the action items.

Commissioner Faherty suggested that the completed items be pushed to the bottom of the list to make it more clear the items that are still planned to be included and the cost reflected as paid.

It was the consensus of the Commission to add additional language clarifying items currently marked as completed and ongoing, to identify that certain elements have been completed yet there is ongoing maintenance required. As well as redesigning the table to place items that have been completed listed at the bottom of the table and separated with an identifier.

Commissioner Dirkswager asked if there is funding for these actions.

Mr. Kytonen replied that there are grant funds available for Martin’s Meadows.

Commissioner Kovich asked if the funds still available for Martin’s Meadows.

Mr. Kytonen replied that there is about \$40,000 available.

Commissioner Kovich stated that the Martin’s Meadows open space is in great shape but could use more information in the kiosk.

Commissioner Dirkswager asked if there is a spending deadline and whether the funds are transferable to another open space.

Mr. Kytonen replied that there is an extension through June of 2018, but noted that it is unclear if the funds are transferable.

Commissioner Kovich stated that he was at North Woods Preserve and is concerned with the water levels and with the snow melting that there would not be good access to the open space. He suggested that additional wood chips be placed.

Mr. Kytonen stated that the parking area is the best access for the open space but explained that if that is a wetland they cannot dump things into it. He stated that staff will further research options and this item should be made a priority.

Commissioner Kovich noted that the kiosk at North Woods also needs some information put inside of it.

Commissioner Dirkswager suggested that the priority list the Commission created at the last meeting not be shared with the public.

Chairperson Sabel referenced the over seeding mentioned in the table and asked if that was included in the report from Jason Husveth.

Mr. Kytonen confirmed that the item was included in the report from Mr. Husveth. He stated that if the action is well thought out and planned it would be a good measure.

Chairperson Sabel stated that the boardwalk for Dalske's is too late to be included in the Capital Improvement Plan for 2017 and therefore the dates should be updated as the earliest these items could be included would be the 2018 budget.

Mrs. Aasness asked if the over seeding had been used as a method on any of the other open space areas.

Mr. Kytonen confirmed that was completed at Martin's Meadows.

Mr. Kytonen moved onto the management plan for Maple View. He confirmed that the trail has been cut. He confirmed that signage will be installed to provide clarification on the open space boundaries and trails.

Commissioner Faherty stated that she reached out to the Boy Scout pack her son belongs to and will follow up to see if there is interest in having them create the kiosk for that open space area.

Mr. Kytonen stated that the City put that on the Facebook page as well looking for an Eagle Scout that may want to complete the kiosk project. It was noted that the project could also be good for other groups such as other Scout groups or 4-H groups.

Mr. Kytonen moved onto the Dalske Woodlands open space management plan. He stated that trails will be the highest priority this spring and summer. He noted that signage has been installed along the highways, in addition to the signs in the cul-de-sac, to identify the open space area.

Commissioner Kovich referenced the State-owned land across from the Dalske Woodlands and noted that might be an opportunity to advertise along with the open space, that you can also walk through that land.

Mr. Kytonen noted that the floating boardwalk would most likely be a grant fund item.

Commissioner Kovich stated that because that is a County ditch, a culvert may be an option.

Mr. Kytonen displayed the priority list that the Commission created at the last meeting. He asked if the list should be made more generic.

It was the consensus of the Commission that the list should not be made more generic but the costs should be consistent.

Commissioner Dirkswager stated that it seems like it would be a waste of time to prioritize the list any further. She explained that some grants only apply to certain elements.

Commissioner Kovich stated that if the list is prioritized that would provide prioritization of certain elements that may qualify for the same funds.

Chairperson Sabel stated that if they are going to ask the City Council for funds they would need a prioritized list. She stated that perhaps it would be helpful to split the list into two, one list that the Commission could complete in-house and one that the Commission would investigate outside funding.

Mr. Kytonen confirmed that he would add an additional column to the table titled funding source. He confirmed that the final table could be less detailed and more generic, rather than listing out each specific task.

DISCUSSION OF GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Mr. Kytonen stated that Great River Greening has another round of grants available and perhaps the Commission could apply for some of the other open space areas outside of Martin's Meadows. He stated that a response is required by February 3rd. He noted that these funds are strictly available for enhancement and stated this would be a great opportunity to use the newly developed priority list.

It was the consensus of the Commission to direct staff to submit an application.

Chairperson Sabel stated that cash matches will be given preference and asked if the Commission would have a match available.

Mr. Kytonen stated that there would be funds available in the budget for cash match.

Commissioner Dirkswager stated that she researched possible grants that the Commission could pursue and provided a list of the available options, eligible tasks, available funds, and funding cycles.

Mr. Kytonen noted that one of the grant applications that was mentioned with a deadline of January 27th is a detailed process.

Commissioner Dirkswager stated that she would be willing to help write grant applications as well.

Commissioner Kovich stated that perhaps Commissioner Dirkswager can work with Mr. Kytonen to submit some of the grant applications.

Commissioner Dirkswager confirmed that she would attempt to fill out the grant applications.

Mr. Kytonen confirmed the consensus of the Commission for he and Commissioner Dirkswager, and possibly Commissioner Kovich, to sit down early next week to write a grant application.

Commissioner Dirkswager stated that in the future the Commission should become more proactive and perhaps obtain bids for some of the work to gain a more accurate estimate of costs. She also suggested that a joint meeting should occur with the City Council and the Commission.

It was confirmed that Mr. Kytonen would attempt to schedule a joint meeting with the Council and Commission in May.

Mr. Kytonen stated that there might be funds available through the Anoka Conservation District as well.

WEBSITE DISCUSSION

- a) What's on the Website Currently***
- b) Management Plans***
- c) Pictures***
- d) Other***

Mr. Kytonen pulled up the City website and identified the different locations in which people can access information on the open space areas. He reviewed the information that is found on the Open Space Advisory Commission page. He stated that staff will keep adding information and photographs.

Chairperson Sabel noted that the State forest land borders the north end of the open space rather than the south as posted on the website.

Mr. Kytonen asked if the Commission wants to include the management plans on the website as well. He noted that the links could simply be posted to the website.

Commissioner Jarson stated that when he started the management plans were listed on the website and he found it helpful.

It was the consensus of the Commission to include the management plans on the website.

Commissioner Dirkswager asked if photographs should be posted on the City social media accounts.

Mr. Kytonen stated that he would follow up to determine if that would be possible.

KIOSK SIGNAGE

Commissioner Faherty stated that prior to the next meeting she would like to create an additional kiosk poster for the open spaces that still need them. She confirmed that the Martin's Meadows poster has been completed.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Kytonen confirmed that he would attempt to schedule a joint meeting with the City Council in May.

a. Next Meeting: March 8, 2017

Chairperson Sabel stated that she will be on vacation during the March meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kameron Kytonen
Natural Resources Technician

Drafted by:
Amanda Staple, Recording Secretary