



Agenda

Minnetonka Park Board

Wednesday, August 2, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.
Minnetonka Community Center - Minnehaha
Room

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

_____ Isabelle Stroh

_____ Korey Beyersdorf

_____ Ella DiLorenzo

_____ Anne Hanley

_____ David Ingraham

_____ Ben Jacobs

_____ Katie Semersky

_____ Chris Walick

3. Reports from Staff

4. Approval of Minutes

A) June 7, 2023

5. Citizens wishing to discuss items not on the agenda

6. Special Matters

7. Business Items

A) Purgatory Park Master Plan Update

8. Park Board Member Reports

9. Information Items

10. Upcoming Park Board Agenda Items

11. Adjournment

Board Vision:

An inclusive city with outstanding parks and recreational opportunities within a healthy and biodiverse natural environment.

Board Mission:

To proactively advise the city council, in ways that will:

- Conserve & enhance Minnetonka's natural environment
- Promote quality and inclusive recreation opportunities, natural amenities and facilities to meet the needs of all
- Provide a forum for public engagement regarding parks, trails, athletic facilities and natural resources
- Adhere to the goals and strategies of the Natural Resources Master Plan and the Parks, Open Space, and Trails Plan



**Minutes
Minnetonka Park Board
Wednesday, June 7, 2023**

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

Park board members present: Ella DiLorenzo, Anne Hanley, David Ingraham, Ben Jacobs, Katie Semersky and Chris Walick. Excused: Korey Beyersdorf and Isabelle Stroh.

Staff members in attendance: Ann Davy, Darin Ellingson, Kathy Kline, Matt Kumka, Kelly O'Dea, Sara Woeste and Leslie Yetka.

Chair Walick called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

3. Reports from Staff

There were none.

4. Approval of Minutes

Jacobs moved, Semersky seconded a motion to approve the meeting minutes of May 3, 2023 as submitted. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

5. Citizens wishing to discuss items not on the agenda

Randall Neal, 14203 Glen Lake Drive proposed an idea for a chainsaw art carving contest at Kinsel Park. Neal stated that there is a very large cottonwood tree along the gravel path on the west side of Kinsel Park; this tree has experienced several lightning strikes and other damages in recent years. Before a decision is made about taking the tree down, he is proposing for it to be turned into a piece of art or sculpture. As far as he knows, there are no other parks in the area that have any kind of natural art to enhance them. Minnetonka could be one of the first cities in the metro to successfully mix creative beauty, art and natural surroundings. He is suggesting a contest for chainsaw artists to design and carve an original tree trunk sculpture. Their design would be submitted to a panel of judges who would decide the winning design. To encourage and enhance submissions of their proposals, he is willing to personally provide a \$500 winning prize to the person who was chosen. He met with some city staff on April 6, 2023 to have a preliminary look at the tree. He recognizes that the cottonwood is a softer tree and it is probably on its last leg and won't last long as an art project. He hopes the park board sees this as a positive addition to the park that can bring a smile to visitor's faces.

Walick asked if there is a city ordinance regarding this or if it is something they can look into as a possibility.

Recreation Director Kelly O'Dea responded that when people come to the park board with something that is not on the agenda, staff is looking for the park board's direction on if it is something you want them to look into.

Park and Trail Project Manager Matt Kumka said they have been discussing a more coordinated Arts in the Parks program. They haven't had any reason to kick-off this process so if directed to look into Neal's concept, that could potentially be a catalyst for an Arts in the Parks program.

Ingraham thought it was an interesting idea. There are a fair number of dead trees in Kinsel Park that would lend themselves to artistic renovation. He's not looking for Neal to fund it but he was just wondering if that is something they would consider or not.

Kumka replied that they would have to assess it. He is familiar with the tree Neal is talking about and it is significantly a beast of a tree; it would probably lend itself a little more appropriately.

Walick thought it was a cool idea of making good use of the park and incorporating art. He was in favor of the city looking into Arts in the Parks and the tree project.

DiLorenzo asked if there could be any intentionality around maybe a theme within the art. She knows he is talking a lot about beautification of something that already exists but she wondered if they could tie the art in somehow so it relates to the reciprocal nature we have. They could also include something intentional that aligns with our values or somehow showcases Minnetonka and makes a statement about what we value as a community.

Neal says the thought behind this was how to beautify what is there and make it a contest. There is an oak tree in the center of the park that would also provide itself but they don't want people tromping through the bush. This tree he is suggesting is where anyone can see it. The intentionality would make perfect sense; they could include what they are looking for in the contest parameters.

Hanley said from a wildlife use of trees standpoint, she likes the idea of trying to encourage people to leave snags and pieces of dead trees standing wherever they are in the parks so that woodpeckers can make use of it. It sounds like this tree is big enough where woodpeckers can make some holes on the backside or something. She didn't want to be onboard with the idea that every dead tree had to be art.

Neal said it's not a big problem at this point because we don't have any in the community.

Walick appreciated Neal coming today and he said they will look into it.

Elsa Goll 16726 Prospect Place has been a teacher in Minnetonka for 18 years and teens are her passion, she will do anything to help them find their space, voice and their belonging in the community. She wanted the board to consider more of a teen center concept to go along with the skate park. Teenagers are not really welcome in many places without chaperones. This message is really unwelcoming especially during a time when they are at this developmentally appropriate age; they should be taking risks and gathering with their friends to have as many experiences as they possibly can to figure out their place in this world. She is proposing to have a more teen centered services element to the city. She would love to see a youth advisory board particularly for 13 to 23 year olds to really engage this younger population. She doesn't think it is having more things to sign up for, she thinks it is more spaces to be themselves. She looked at what summer activities her 15 year old son could sign up for and there were four activities for ages 13-18 years old. There were

120 programs for kids under 13 years old, 17 programs for ages over 18, and 76 programs for senior citizens. That sent a message to her son about how he is valued in the community and she thought it was pretty impactful. She feels like we have fallen into a blind spot and hopes you take interest in this. With the skate park already attracting teenagers, she thought it would be nice to have a place where they could hang out and have access to mentors and volunteer opportunities, etc. She probably doesn't need to tell you about the mental health needs but it is beyond what anyone could've seen coming in 2023. Having mental health support for kids would be another huge benefit. She knows you are doing a facilities review that includes the facility on the corner of Excelsior Boulevard, adjacent to the skate park. Glen Lake is such a vibrant area and it would be great to have a comprehensive and attractive place for young people to gather there.

Walick thanked Goll for her advocacy and working with that group. He works with high school aged kids and believes that mental health and development is very important. Engaging them in the community is hard but it doesn't mean that it isn't important. He recommended inviting them to come to a meeting. The mountain bike trail and the skate park design that is coming up were projects that were driven by the youth so he thinks their voice is making a big change. Staff would welcome any ideas they have regarding programming.

O'Dea added that staff is always looking for unique ideas and ways to engage teens. The advisory board part would probably be more of a city council item where they appoint boards like the Senior Advisory Board. If they are interested in that, he can connect with the city manager to talk a little more about it. We are definitely interested in hearing from folks about programming to make sure we can expand our program offerings and make sure we can engage them.

DiLorenzo thought being a teacher to these young people for such a long amount of time is so important to our community. She also wanted to highlight the importance of self-advocacy in the long-term and the version of self. There is a ton of research saying middle school up to about age 20 are huge pivotal years on when people identify by who they are, what they value and what their motivations are. It is super important to give opportunities to them to see if they are artistic, athletic, or see who they want to be. They are the investment if we look at our community long-term. She thinks it would be powerful moving forward to have it student-lead because the only way you are going to get by-in from that group of students is if they create it, do it themselves and have real authentic opportunities to try things. Jobs and volunteering can be helpful but they also need space to be kids.

6. Special Matters

There were none.

7. Business Items

A. Timberline Tennis Association Site – Land Donation

Kumka gave the report.

Hanley questioned if the city council approves this, would the tennis court and fence be removed and the lot would remain empty until 2025.

Kumka said that was correct.

Street and Park Operations Manager Darin Ellingson said it depends on the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and what year they choose to use the funds. The playground would be built between 2025 and 2028.

Hanley asked if they could use older play equipment from parks that are getting updated.

Ellingson replied no because the equipment that is getting replaced has reached its age.

Ingraham commented that last time this was discussed the association was wondering if the city was interested in the land. Now it sounds like we are in the situation where the association wants the city to take it.

Kumka answered yes.

Semersky asked if there were any reasons why this site might not be an attractive site for the city to add to the park system.

Ellingson responded that they don't see any reasons. It's all upland, there aren't wetland impacts, there are no real hindrances and the entire tennis court area is bigger than the playground area so you can reduce the amount of hard space. There is enough space that they use now where it wouldn't pose any obstacle to putting in a playground.

Jim Seim, 11201 Timberline Road lives directly adjacent to the park. The association was formed in 1979 and they made a repair to the tennis court in 1984 but it hasn't really been repaired since then and it is deteriorating. They discussed the idea of turning it into a wetland but Bassett Creek had no interest in doing that. He surveyed the neighborhood about the potential project and everyone that commented was in favor of the park area.

Jacobs asked if there was any consideration of putting in a speed bump or something to slow down traffic.

Ellingson replied that it is a low volume neighborhood and speed bumps aren't anything they do in the city. There is kind of a natural traffic control there with the narrow and curvy roads. During the design phase, they would look to see if there is anything they could put along the side of the park property such as a no parking sign.

Jacobs said it was a big concern and wanted to make sure it was heard.

Jacobs moved, Ingraham seconded a motion to recommended moving this item to the city council. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

B. Skate Park Feasibility Final Study – Revised Recommendations

Kumka gave the report.

Ingraham questioned with the upgrade if staff was willing to throw away the upgrades for the final design.

Kumka said yes, it would be ultimately a better design.

Ingraham asked if this is stop-gap until that happens.

Kumka answered yes.

Ingraham asked if the unstated part of the activity center site and the facility study is that it might allow for destruction of the activity center; it would create more space or having to work around that space for the skate park. He has always felt that the first design wasn't the optimal design because there were two small footprints. He knows there are issues with the building so he was wondering if destruction was a possibility.

Kumka thought there was a possibility of a redesign pending the results of the facility study.

Hanley imagines the size of the skate park without the building and it would probably be more than or about 10,000 square feet. If that is true, would there be a path to take you up to the playground area so there could be more stuff up there?

Kumka said it is hard for him to address that specifically because there are boulevards, parking, the building and the utilities associated with the building in the existing skate park. If you were to consider that space as a continuous corner of the park being considered for redesign, there are creative solutions to fit a useful building in there that would meet our needs and accommodate a regional destination style skate park and still connect more appropriately to the rest of the park. He feels like with good engineering and landscape architectures they could plan that quite well.

Hanley mentioned that it would be a really big space if the dog groomer moved.

Jacobs asked if there was a timeline on the new study.

Kumka said the results of the facility study will come out later this year. It will take some time to absorb the findings and recommendations so he thought we would be talking about this in February or March next year. The skate park would be delayed until 2025-2026.

Jacobs mentioned that Kumka said there were grants for a regional statewide destination skate park but he wondered if we would take ourselves out of contention by having such a small footprint.

Kumka responded that his understanding was that the grant was interested in a true regional destination style skate park, not a skate spot. They have very strict parameters in terms of using concrete, creating modern skate park facilities and not just dropping obstacles on asphalt.

Jacobs added that last Thursday he tried to go to the brewery but there was no parking because baseball games were going on. He is worried about doing a nice small skate park but not having any parking available.

Kumka said parking would be a concern.

Jacobs questioned what the cost would be if they update the existing skate park for the time being. Is it going to be repurposed or would it get moved?

Kumka responded that the number he was quoted from a local skate park builder would be about \$30,000 to accommodate weather proofed wooden ramps. It was indicated to him that there would be interest in the potential for buying back those ramps or relocating them to another spot in the city when the time comes.

Semersky questioned what the timing looked like for the new features.

Kumka replied that if they were to move ahead with the band aid solution, some new ramps could be built this summer, possibly in the next month.

Semersky commented that she was at the Shakopee Skate Park and they were selling their ramps to another city; there is a market for lightly used ramps. She remembered Goll coming in with a temporary solution for the skate park and she wondered if staff has been working with her.

Kumka said they have been in touch.

Hanley asked what other grants were available.

Kumka answered that the Hennepin County grant is from the Amateur Sports Commission and that is up to \$300,000. That grant will be made available or the details will be published later this year.

Hanley wanted to confirm that we wouldn't be cutting ourselves off from every grant if we had a smaller skate park; it would be just the big grant.

Kumka replied potentially.

Hanley was at the Ridgedale Commons ribbon cutting and there were people riding their bikes on the benches, through the plants and on some of the other features. She would be in favor of getting another skate park because they need to go somewhere. She wondered if Ridgedale Mall could give them a little corner of their parking lot to put a small one there.

Ingraham said the best site was Ridgedale Mall.

Hanley heard at the ribbon cutting that Ridgedale Mall likes partnerships. She would like to hear that we at least asked them.

Ingraham said the irony of Glen Lake is that it has the most parking but parking is a huge challenge. Every other site had virtually no parking other than Ridgedale Mall. Ridgedale also had the largest footprint for the skate park and a lot of adjacent parking other than at Christmas time probably.

Hanley added that there probably isn't a lot of skateboarding during the Christmas time. She is interested in knowing how full that space gets during the winter.

DiLorenzo questioned how connected would the potential accessible playground be to the potential skate park. Could a kid get from one place to the other or how comfortable would parents feel? Also, how strong would that partnership be?

Kumka didn't think they would be related. The Glen Lake Elementary site ended up being in their top three choices but some of the major drawbacks were that it is off Excelsior Boulevard a little ways and it is in a more residential neighborhood. Although we are reconsidering our ice rinks, it didn't seem appropriate in terms of its location.

Walick asked what sort of partnership opportunities were raised between the ongoing fundraising with the accessible playground and the city.

Kumka replied that the school has been very successful in their fundraising for the accessible playground. They were looking for some level of partnership but the details weren't flushed out.

Hanley asked if it would be appropriate for her to move that the city inquires whether or not Ridgedale Mall would be open to a small temporary skate park.

O'Dea said it is appropriate. During this delay, staff could reach out to Ridgedale Mall to see if they have any interest in any type of partnership.

Hanley suggested informing them that a small temporary skate park would be a way to divert attention from the nice new park with the expensive benches.

O'Dea said the community facilities studies will likely end in early 2024. Once we have the results and the recommendations from that, we can proceed with where we want to go with the skate park project.

Betsy Julien, 13604 James Road is the teacher at Glen Lake Elementary that has been spearheading the fundraiser for the accessible park. They just got the Hennepin County grant so they are at \$800,000 right now and they only need a little bit more. They have already signed the contract and they have developed a whole upper accessible playground that is beautiful. When you talked about people wanting to come from all over the state, she has gotten a lot of emails from people wanting to come to our playground and they don't have a way to really accommodate that. Their school is doing a lot of improvements such as a new parking lot, new bus ramp, new ramps to the upper and lower playgrounds and everything is getting resurfaced including the basketball court, which will have the ability to have a pickleball court. The Timberwolves partnered with them and the basketball court will be accessible too. If they do a referendum, they want to do the lower portion as well and that would be accessible. The students have big dreams and they are doing an accessible playground first but they also would like to do a small version of an accessible baseball field and accessible hockey rinks. They already have accessible tennis courts and a Futsal court. They would also like to have an accessible skate park. She loved how Goll mentioned teenagers because they need a place in the city to feel ok and hang out. Her students like the neighborhood because the neighbors can watch out for them and it feels safer than being on a busy road. Having an accessible skate park at Glen Lake Elementary was the student's idea. She doesn't know if that is the best place for it but their thought was that it could be accessible. The student's other thought was if you do something like that, their school doesn't have the ability for someone to change their child in a bathroom on their property so they would love if you could think about someday putting an accessible bathroom with a changing table in the warming house. Glen Lake Elementary is 100 percent in favor of hearing any ideas and they love the partnerships they have with you right now.

Ingraham wanted clarification that Julien is referring to the warming house at the skating rink when she is talking about an accessible warming house.

Julien said yes.

DiLorenzo asked what the benefits of the activity center were over the elementary school.

Kumka explained that there are benefits to both sites. The Glen Lake Activity Center site was listed as number one and the Glen Lake Elementary site was listed as number two. Barring a larger design process, some favorable items for the Glen Lake Activity Center were that it is centrally located, there is high visibility and from an urban planning perspective, it is in a hub rather than in the neighborhood.

Ingraham mentioned that the city also controls the property.

Kumka said yes.

Julien was curious why it needed to be a hub. St. Louis Park's skate park is right next to apartments and a baseball field. Her students wanted other people to be watching and having the neighbors walking by all the time. When the activity center is being utilized, it gets crowded and it is really tight; they were worried about safety and crossing the busy street. Her students really wanted you to consider the Glen Lake Elementary School because it is accessible and if the school is already doing an accessible playground, it seems like a great option to add onto that site. There is quite a bit of room and there would be parking after about 3 p.m. when school is done.

Jacobs questioned if parking wasn't going to be an issue at Glen Lake Elementary.

Kumka replied that it is hard for him to answer these questions without a more in depth feasibility study. It's hard to say beyond what the feasibility study has determined being short of some larger open house processes, robust detailed public feedback, traffic studies and those sorts of issues.

Jacobs asked what the available footprint was there.

Kumka couldn't remember but thought it was essentially the size of one skating rink.

Ingraham said 17,500 square feet according to the packet. It is larger than the combined separate spaces.

Walick thought it sounded like it could change given the results of the city facility study.

Hanley said there is also the idea of trying to wrap in some sort of building that could be a teen center, accessible restroom or whatever.

Elsa Goll 16726 Prospect Place was really excited of the idea of a temporary park. She has worked with 3rd Lair for so many years with the skate league. She thought partnering with someone like Mark at 3rd Lair would be a great idea. She supports the idea of having that modular wood ramp setup because it would be an amazing stop-gap in the interim. She think's Julien's point of having accessible ramps is a great idea and fully supports it. However, she explained that it is a very different design if you are trying to build a

regional or a high-end skate park for high-level skateboarders as well as beginners versus something that would be more geared towards elementary school kids on scooters. She would like to see a skate park that is geared towards a more high-level athlete in terms of skateboarding and draws people from all over. She thinks the idea of having an accessible skate park is fantastic and would help in any way she could with her skateboarding connections.

Evan Almelien 5535 Lakeland Road is here as a parent but also as the president of the Glen Lake Mighty Mites. He read through the report of the different locations that were studied and there are a lot of positives about the Glen Lake Activity Center area. He has concerns about removing the playground where it is currently. It is a tough situation because baseball season especially in Minnesota is a short season but during the season that playground is packed. There are two baseball games going on right now and it will be hard to find a parking spot and there will be at least a half dozen kids on the playground. There is a lot of traffic there with people walking around and kids running around on their own. It's a very family friendly community area and a lot of families feel safe letting their kids walk around on their own. There would be potential for accidents during the baseball season with having skateboarders moving between the two different sites and all the foot traffic. In addition, they use the Glen Lake Activity Center building for equipment storage year round as well as the meeting rooms for board meetings. They don't use it a ton but it would definitely impact their league if they needed to find other options for that. He brought up his concerns about more people using the parking lot, safety of kids and losing the playground to other parents and it was immediately a huge concern to them. They have 325 kids playing this year and almost all of them have younger siblings that use the playground at some point during the season. He's thought a lot about this since the skate park was proposed and he wondered if they could look into somewhere near The Marsh since the city owns that land now. There is a lot of open land between there and the city hall building that could be used to build a really big skate park with the bike trail really close by.

Semersky asked Almelien what months their season is.

Almelien replied that it depends on when the snow melts but they usually start using the fields in April. Their main season goes into July and they have a fall season where they don't use the fields as often but they are used in August, September and the beginning of October. Fields are used pretty much every night with multiple games during their main season May – July and the parking lots are pretty full.

Ingraham requested looking at Ridgedale again since we have time. While we are studying these facilities, he wondered if it would be worth looking more into Glen Lake Elementary school since they are willing to work with us. It has the biggest footprint and he doesn't want to prematurely close the door on that site.

DiLorenzo commented that most skateboarders are young and are in school during the day. Once school is out, the only people left there would be dedicated teachers. She would also like to propose looking at Glen Lake Elementary more. If we are already delaying the project, she would be interested to see if other board members are interested in pursuing that option. She slightly leans towards Glen Lake Elementary based on the parking, the goals and this idea of a regional attraction that will exist on multiple levels for multiple users. Being in a neighborhood could be more comfortable for kids to run around versus on the corner of a busy street.

Hanley doesn't want to abandon Glen Lake but she wants to look at Ridgedale again.

O'Dea explained that they budgeted dollars for the feasibility study in 2021-2022 and those dollars are gone. It is probably going to be on staff to follow up and see if they can find other dollars; they would have to amend the CIP to get those dollars. Also, he knows many board members have been involved with projects in the neighborhoods, most recently pickleball. Although there are neighbors watching out for kids, there are also neighbors who may not want this.

Ingraham added that the one possible good thing about the Glen Lake Elementary School is that there is a wetland buffer between the school and the houses to the south. They are already living with a hockey rink in their neighborhood. The closest homes are to the west of Woodridge Road. If he remembers correctly, the hockey rink is depressed elevation wise. There is more buffer here than there might be in other spaces or situations.

O'Dea doesn't disagree but he wanted to mention it because of what has historically happened in neighborhoods when they ask about projects.

Walick asked if there would be more rules given the fact that it is school district property such as the time of day it could be used. For example, if a school program goes until 6:30 p.m., would people have to wait until it is done to use it?

Kumka explained that there are a lot of considerations when requiring an agreement with the school district that could potentially inhibit grant dollars. With us not physically owning the land, it might be a red flag for any grant applications moving forward but he is just speculating.

Jacobs had a high-level motion to make and he makes it because he thinks they all really want to make this skate park happen but they also want to do it right. He keeps thinking more and more about it and all the things that are not lining up for the Glen Lake Activity Center. He's always had a bad feeling about removing the playground because he drives by two to three times a day and it is really busy when there are baseball games and parking is challenging. They have this great idea to have a destination park that brings people in but if they put it there, everything can't line up and work together. His motion would be to delay the current project to get more research, explore partnerships with the other two sites and see if there is any way to make one of those sites more attractive to them and also upgrade the current ramps to something more useable in the interim.

Betsy Julien 12604 James Road thought that people sometimes see skate parks as a nuisance but if you have ever had a teenager in your life, it is a really good thing because it keeps them occupied, safe, happy, outside and it is a growing sport. She would love for Minnetonka to have a destination park and not a small one. Her students have done a good job getting the community involved. They walked door to door with 500 neighbors and they delivered flyers and explained the importance of accessibility. She knows there are a few neighbors that wouldn't like the noise but she would say the neighbors might not talk about it because they want to support the kids. If they knew it was kid driven and they have gotten all the businesses and neighbors to support accessibility in general, she thinks that would trump a lot of issues they might have. They've talked to the neighbors on Woodridge and they have kids and fully understand, she thinks they would support it.

Regarding the question about the time it would be available, her students brought up the questions about what time the park would close and when lights would go off. Is there a time when the outdoor rinks close?

Ellingson replied that park hours are 5 a.m.–10 p.m.

Recreation Superintendent Ann Davy said the outdoor rinks close at 9 p.m.

Hanley added that people have their windows closed in the winter so the noise from the rinks might be less of an issue than in the summer. If it isn't lighted then people will go home when the sun goes down.

Walick mentioned that there are different components to this motion so he questioned if they needed to do separate motions or can make one motion that includes everything.

O'Dea said it can be in one motion. It sounds like there is support for this with the addition of staff researching Ridgedale Mall and Glen Lake Elementary School.

Hanley suggested putting new ramps at the existing site and something at Ridgedale Mall to protect the new park. She would prefer to do both if they are not too expensive.

Elsa Goll 16726 Prospect Place supports trying to find the best fit. Coming from the angle of skateboarders, skate parks, skate ramps and just the community of skate boarders she doesn't feel like an elementary school is an appropriate site for what we are trying to accomplish. For space and a widely serving skate park it might work but she suggested consulting with local skate park owners and managers to see what population they serve and what hours they are busy. She thinks trying to create something that works for the people you are trying to serve should be a higher priority than just the square footage. She supports the idea of exploring Ridgedale Mall because it is a huge footprint and if you give the kids something to ride on, they will leave your beautiful benches alone.

Hanley asked Goll to explain why it shouldn't be at an elementary school. She was thinking smoking and things like that would be the reason.

Goll hopes that having a chemical free space would be a goal. Part of her encouraging you to have some sort of a teen center with staffing is to have a chemical free inclusive space that is welcoming and clean. She thinks that would be a greater vision to carry forward.

Hanley asked what makes an elementary school incompatible with teen skateboarders.

Goll asked how often they see teenagers playing with elementary school kids or mixing those worlds seamlessly.

Hanley asked if it just isn't cool.

Goll said an elementary school is a space that is attractive and is designed to serve a certain age demographic. There are also problems around hours of use because skate parks are used all day, every day. If it is only accessible certain hours of the day that is very prohibitive and you just spent all this money to essentially serve one elementary school for the bulk of the day versus the afternoons and evenings. She thinks there will

be people hanging out there and lingering around and she works in a school and you generally don't want that to necessarily be a gathering place after hours. A lot of adults skateboard and she thinks having adults wanting to have access to the elementary school could be problematic. She thinks there is a difference between properties owned by the school district versus an open city park.

Ingraham asked if she would be more interested in an 11,000 square foot skating area or a 7,000 square foot area.

Goll would love to see a big park but it also has to be the right fit.

Ingraham was reluctant the last time they voted because he thought that we were going to have a small park, which would be pretty basic. If you are going to have 11,000 square feet you can try and do something pretty neat. He could see adults not wanting to go to the Glen Lake Activity Center to skate because it wouldn't be very big. He never thought of the Glen Lake Elementary School as a skate park, he was viewing it as space, which was the largest space other than Ridgedale Mall that also has contiguous parking. The parking is not 24 hours and it could be problematic with the school district and whether people could skate during the day during the school year. If that is a problem, you would be eliminating a lot of hours. He is very concerned that unless something happens to the Glen Lake Activity Center building, they won't have what they originally were trying to achieve.

Jacobs asked if they put in better equipment at the existing space if that would serve what our community needs for a skate park.

Goll said you will have people show up the day that is done. It would check all the boxes but she thought it was brought up at a previous meeting that this could be the start of a multi-park project. She thought pausing on the feasibility and exploring more ideas was a great idea. Her personal opinion is that local skate park owners and managers would probably say an elementary school is not the right fit for the general skating community. People would still go but it might not have the same response than if it was in a city park where there is foot traffic, is visible, has energy and there is an urban park element. With the new apartment buildings going in across the street from Glen Lake, this would give people more space to come out of their apartment and engage in a park without having to play baseball.

DiLorenzo appreciates Goll's perspective as a skateboarder because she is not in that culture so she didn't know this information. She also appreciated her bringing up the blind spots because even now she is rethinking some things. This is a really important project and we want to make sure it is done in the best, most effective way. However, she is feeling a little confused now on what is the best choice at this point.

Jacobs feels the same as DiLorenzo because you say you want it to be a high-level competitive park but if the Glen Lake Activity Center is chosen as the location, it will be a very small space. It is just hard to reconcile the two and maybe we just need to let go of the idea of it being a draw and say we are trying to serve Minnetonka. Parking would be an issue and people may have to walk or skateboard into the park. He thinks the board's perspective is that they want to do a nice big skate park that is a community draw and highly competitive but he thinks they are not compatible and they may have to change their way of thinking.

Goll said she would encourage you to consult with skate park owners and find out who their demographics are, what hours are they busy, what their traffic is like and their answers will give you a better sense of who you are serving. If you aren't experienced or familiar with skateboarding she thinks that would be a great place to start. Mark Rodriguez owns 3rd Lair and has said many times that there are more Minnetonka residents that fill out waivers at 3rd Lair than any other city in the twin cities. Minnetonka has the biggest population in the metro attending 3rd Lair so the numbers support that this is worth doing right. She encourages you to get as much information from the people you are serving before getting too far down the line.

Hanley said that could happen during the feasibility study. Then we could even look at Opus unless that is already off the table.

Ingraham said it would be a big reach.

Kumka said they are looking into the future and having a big park associated with the light rail stop at Opus. Potentially there could be a future skate park there but that wouldn't be until 2028-2029.

Walick gets where Goll is coming from with the atmosphere. The moto is, "if you build it, they will come." He isn't familiar with skateboarding but he knows teens and they go to places where you have a good feeling. Not that elementary schools don't give you that but it is a different vibe and it's not going to draw the same level of socialness that you would probably get at a park that is near Lund's and the baseball fields. He gets the draw at both locations and that is why he appreciates the motion.

Jacobs moved, Hanley seconded a motion to delay until we get further information from this new study, to explore the other two options of potential partnerships, upgrade the current skate park with better ramps that are more useable in the interim, do extended research with other existing skate parks about what the needs are and how to serve our Minnetonka residents, and explore a temporary skate park at Ridgedale Mall. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

C. Review of the 2024-2028 Capital Improvement Program

O'Dea gave the report.

Hanley asked if these are only items that we would spend money on.

O'Dea asked for an example.

Hanley said dogs, dog parks and off-leash dogs. She thinks there would be some expenses such as staff time but there may not be a physical building unless there is a fenced dog park.

Assistant Recreation Director Sara Woeste said master planning is one of our CIP pages. We'll go through the master planning process and there will be expenses to follow after we master plan a park. That is where it would fall under and you may see that in next year's CIP. Dogs would be part of something that would come out of the master planning process of Purgatory Park.

O'Dea said some of these are studies so we are studying now and out of the studies come recommendations that lead to future capital expenditures.

Natural Resources Manager Leslie Yetka explained that the Plant Pest Program is really what they refer to our program about managing tree diseases, examples are Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), Oak Wilt and Dutch Elm. This is the money that is used to basically pay expenses related to diseased tree removal. It was initiated as part of the recognition that EAB was going to be coming. Some of the initial dollars actually came out of the settlement that the city reached on the misuse of Imprelis that caused quite a bit of damage near Lone Lake Park. There was a settlement agreement and the city received funds that were put into this plant pest program category. Staff recognized it would be coming and the council wanted to make sure that we had funds available to deal with all of the diseased trees that would have to be removed; this is from city property or right-of-way areas so not private property. It is also is used to fund a forestry technician staff position that was hired specifically to address EAB concerns in the city. This money is primarily spent on EAB management, Dutch Elm, Oak Wilt and other tree diseases that we have.

DiLorenzo said she had EAB at her house and staff came and they were very helpful.

O'Dea said another example would be if we go to RecF-24207, which is the skate park. We moved those dollars because they were initially in 2024. We had \$100,000 in 2022 for design and we had the construction in 2024. We bumped those out to 2025 so there still is \$900,000 of which \$300,000 were estimated for grant funding.

Semersky said the skate park page is outdated and it should be updated before it goes to council. The description needs to be updated and any information regarding decisions they make tonight should be included.

Walick asked if they would need to include the \$30,000 for the upgraded equipment.

O'Dea said that would be an operational expenditure.

Hanley had a question about trail rehabilitation Park-24306. It talks about rebuilding and resurfacing trails so she asked if that was repaving and resurfacing.

Ellingson said it is resurfacing or rebuilding, and rehabbing existing trails that are in the city, which are primarily the asphalt trails. They maintain gravel trails on a yearly basis but they pretty much take care of themselves. The concrete sidewalks have a much longer service life so generally it is the asphalt trails throughout the city.

Hanley said fixing the bumps and the potholes.

Ellingson responded that each identified segment is roughly a mile and a half to two miles long.

Hanley was pleased to see that it was a lot less to repave than make new ones.

O'Dea added that there is a page on park master planning. In 2024, it includes Big Willow Park and Cullen Nature Preserve. In 2025, it includes Meadow Park and Jidana Park.

Ingraham said the trail segments portion referenced a map and a list but it wasn't in the packet.

O'Dea replied that staff can get that to you.

Semersky asked if these projects incorporated everything that we want them to incorporate with the POST Plan and Natural Resources Master Plan (NRMP) for the next few years. Did you have to make any sacrifices when it came to the budget and dollars?

Yetka said no for the NRMP. This is really still tracking what we had outlined in the NRMP related to habitat restoration. One of the update items is related to a Community Forest Management Plan and those dollars actually were in the 2023 CIP so we will be working on that. You aren't seeing it for next year because it will already be completed.

Woeste replied that some of our highest priority items in the POST Plan are in the master planning of the parks. We will be looking at our high priority issues in the master plan as we look at our future CIP. We're not necessarily doing all of them but we are working through the high priorities first.

O'Dea said Hanley mentioned earlier that master plans can lead to more expenditures if there are things that come up. Once the master planning gets done, there could be potentially more CIP projects for future years.

Hanley asked if they could talk about the Opus Area Park Improvements Park-TBD2432. She was confused because we are talking about five years and she sees \$15 million dollars but it is zero dollars in 2027. Knowing how much Ridgedale Commons cost, she is sure that is not an unreasonable number.

O'Dea answered that they had to put in a dollar amount due to the software they use so that is why they put a zero in for 2027. This does not have any funding but we know that Ridgedale Commons was expensive and we know Opus is going to be expensive. That project is likely more than five years out but we wanted it on the radar.

Hanley added that this is more of a heads up that it is coming.

O'Dea explained that there is a recreational pool listed in here that is also unfunded and a high-dollar value. In the community facility study we are studying The Marsh and it has two pools that seem to be meeting our needs now. If those pools remain, we could be eliminating that page in the future if we don't need the pool space.

Hanley asked if the pool need was resolved by The Marsh.

O'Dea said as of right now it is but we don't know what is going to be suggested with the facility study at The Marsh. The study could say to take the pools out, which would not be our preference as recreation folks who needs space. We did want to keep this in though until the study was done.

Hanley said that was a big dollar amount.

O'Dea said that is part of it because it is about acquiring land; it's tough to get land and get different options to lease space. We were struggling to find pool space a few years ago and the dollar figure was very high.

Semersky appreciated the three page memo at the beginning. It really helped the mindset and the strategy behind it all. It was a great way to summarize everything and put it all into perspective.

DiLorenzo said the one thing she didn't see in this was pickleball. Is it still going to be on the table as tennis courts are resurfaced? She went to Lone Lake Park the other day and it was terribly busy. There were like 30 people waiting to play on a Tuesday night. She didn't see it in here and wasn't sure if it was an appropriate use of these funds. She wanted to note that there is definitely an interest in the community but nowhere to play it.

Hanley asked if the new pickleball place on Highway 7 and County Road 101 open.

O'Dea didn't think that facility has opened. The plan is to continue looking at the tennis courts for potential multi-use or a different use as they get resurfaced. The Park Investment Plan lists the schedule of improvements to parks.

Diana Houston 12201 Minnetonka Boulevard was focused on the Park-24309 page that is the Park Habitat Stewardship Plan. She is one of the volunteers who is a part of the Habitat Stewardship Program and works in Big Willow Park. Moving into the second year of dramatic changes in the park after the snow melt they could finally have some open area. In the spring, the ephemerals were like a carpet there and she has never seen as many trilliums in so many colors. This comes after just a year or so ago working in the park and removing so much buckthorn. We are focusing on the south side of the park, between Minnetonka Boulevard and the creek, it is the highest priority area. Once you remove all the buckthorn surrounding the trees all you have is dirt; they seed it and the next year you see the sedges coming up and other elements. It turns that habitat into something very positive and welcoming. In Meadow Park, they were working there one morning for three hours. They were working in a dense area of buckthorn and it was complete shade there. When they were done, you could see the sun coming through the canopy of the oaks. She just wanted to take a moment to recognize the work being done and point out some of the dramatic changes you are seeing thus far in just a short period of time. She thanked everyone for their support of the city in all regards.

Walick thanked her for everything they do.

Jacobs moved, Hanley seconded a motion to move the CIP to the city council. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

8. Park Board Member Reports

Walick asked if the dock went in at Libbs Lake.

Davy said it went in on Monday.

Ellingson mentioned the swimming area and the dock are all set up.

Walick commented that a resident was asking about potential places to store kayaks and canoes. There aren't a lot of places to launch them in the city and they wondered what the possibility was of having a place for residents to store them at some of the launch areas.

O'Dea asked if it was storing their own or looking to rent. Staff has been approached by companies that do rental kiosks where you can rent it by the hour, day or half day.

Walick thought it was storing your own but he thinks the rental would be great too because people launch from Libbs Lake a lot.

Kumka said at Hiawatha or Minnehaha Creek there is often a lottery system to have a spot on a canoe or kayak rack.

Hanley asked if they are just open metal racks.

Kumka said yes.

Semersky said Deephaven Beach has that. You pay a little bit to keep your canoe on a rack.

Hanley has seen them on the Mississippi River when she was biking. You might put your credit card somewhere and open the door and pull out a kayak. They take up a fair amount of space but she has seen people using them.

Semersky was driving through Wayzata and they converted one of their ice rinks to a dog park, it was on Wayzata Boulevard north of downtown. She thought that was a potentially easy and creative use of space that is not being used in the summer. She wasn't sure if anyone has tried that here in the city but it got her attention.

Woeste asked if that was in a neighborhood.

Semersky said no, it was on Wayzata Boulevard.

Woeste said the key is being away from neighborhoods.

Hanley added that it wouldn't be a regional draw so theoretically it would just be the people walking their dogs. Maybe that would help sell the idea to the neighbors.

O'Dea said we have not tried that.

Woeste said Golden Valley has tested it out in some of the neighborhoods but she would have to see how that went.

Ingraham doesn't think it addresses the dog issue at Purgatory Park though.

Hanley commented that in Eden Prairie at Miller Park there is a small handicap accessible wheelchair friendly piece of equipment. She's not sure if it is similar to what the school is interested in but you could see what it looks like.

Ingraham wanted to congratulate staff and everyone involved with Ridgedale Commons. The park looked great and he thought O'Dea did a great job emceeding the grand opening.

DiLorenzo said she hung out at Ridgedale Commons this morning and it was lovely. She really enjoyed it and the farmers market was awesome.

9. Information Items

Warming House Summary

Davy gave the report. She mentioned that they struggled to hire seasonal staff so staff would visit multiple sites during their shift.

Hanley asked if that worked because they were essentially covering two places.

Davy said it was an efficient use of staff. Recreation Program Manager Jesse Izquierdo is looking into ways to increase usage of the parks in the winter; one idea he is implementing next year is doing a sauna at Shady Oak Beach. We are testing it there because we have open water due to it being aerated around the dock. It has taken off at other cities so they want to see how it goes in Minnetonka.

Hanley asked if the city would rent a sauna.

Davy responded that we are going to rent one for a couple of weeks. If it works well at Shady Oak Beach they might put one at a neighborhood park where people can use the warming house to change clothes. Curling is another activity that they are always interested in trying.

Hanley asked if curling would happen on the hockey rink or on a separate surface.

Davy replied that it would probably be on a separate surface. They have looked at spaces in Hopkins where it was a little more open. There are pleasure rinks that they could incorporate curling on or potentially at Ridgedale down the road.

Hanley asked if the city would provide the stones.

Davy responded that the city would provide those.

Ingraham asked if we have ever had broomball leagues.

Davy replied that we have one.

O'Dea thanked the public works staff on getting the rinks ready for winter. They are always flooding overnight and they put in a lot of hours getting those ready.

Purgatory Park Master Plan

Kumka gave the report.

Hanley asked if park board should be at the kick-off meeting on June 14.

Kumka said council and park board members are invited.

Ingraham asked if there was a quorum issue.

O'Dea said there is not.

Ingraham asked if Bolton and Menk can do a dive into Nextdoor.

Kumka replied that our city staff reviews items on Nextdoor.

Ingraham mentioned that there are a lot of comments on Nextdoor that are on all sides of the issue around dogs.

Kumka replied that our communication staff would be better to answer this question but we do engage on Nextdoor. We are going to advertise this event on there.

Ingraham doesn't think that they can incorporate comments from Nextdoor into the official feedback process though.

O'Dea said we don't know what our capabilities are on Nextdoor. He thought residents have sent snapshots to staff of positive and negative comments from Nextdoor. There has been a lot of feedback out there and they want to make sure they gather as much as they can.

Community Forest Management Plan

Yetka gave the report.

Xcel Energy Pole Replacement

Yetka gave the report.

Hanley questioned if it is the area that is north of what she thinks of as the ridge; it's that circular trail that goes around the wetland and not the south part of the park.

Yetka thought they would work with them to determine if there are parts they can maintain as open versus what would actually be closed. There will be disruption to the park during this time. Their primary concern is safety and they don't want anyone around. They'll have very large equipment and large poles that they are going to bring in there.

Hanley asked if they should start telling the public sooner.

Yetka said she thinks they could certainly work with our communications staff to make sure the word gets out. However, right now would probably be too soon because a lot of things could happen and we don't know exactly when this will happen. She would hate to do it too far in advance but they would certainly try and communicate as much as possible to the public.

Hanley asked what size the poles are.

Yetka replied that they are big poles. The existing poles will get removed and that ground will be restored. They say the new poles will be within 10 feet of the existing poles. When it is in a wetland area, which is the shaded portion, they put in a bigger culvert to create a stabilizing base. That whole area will be impacted to support the large poles going in.

Ingraham asked if the Tour de Tonka is during this time period because he thought one of their shorter courses went through the park.

Yetka answered that their goal is August but we don't know exactly when that will be. We can monitor that and make sure that is getting communicated.

Kumka added that Tour de Tonka is on August 5, 2023.

Ellingson doesn't believe they go through the park. Staff prepares several streets for routes and he doesn't recall doing any prep work through the park.

10. Upcoming Park Board Agenda Items

O'Dea gave the report.

11. Adjournment

Jacobs moved, Semersky seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 p.m. All voted "yes."
Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Kline

Kathy Kline
Recreation Administrative Coordinator

**Minnetonka Park Board 7A
Meeting of August 2, 2023**

Subject:	Purgatory Park Master Planning – Project Update
Park Board related goal:	To protect renew and maintain parks and trails
Park Board related objectives:	Review conditions of park facilities, fields, amenities and natural resources to inform park investment plan projects and priorities.
Brief Description:	Presentation on the current status of the Purgatory Park Master Plan process

Background

The Minnetonka City Council approved the updated Parks, Open Space and Trail (POST) System Plan at its April 25, 2022 meeting. The plan was developed over the course of 14 months with consultation from the Park Board and community engagement through extensive public outreach, surveys and feedback.

[Parks, Open Space and Trail \(POST\) System Plan](#)

The POST Plan provides a 15-to-20-year road map for planning and implementing park improvements. The plan helps the park board, city council and city staff prioritize park improvements and ensure that changes and investments to parks, trails and open spaces continue to serve the needs of the entire community. It offers guiding principles, recommendations, priorities and tools to help the city, its residents and partners keep Minnetonka’s parks, open space and trail system relevant and functional into the future. Key recommendations from the POST Plan include creating comprehensive master plans for all major community parks, beginning with Purgatory Park.

Purgatory Park Master Planning has begun in 2023. City staff has contracted with Bolton & Menk and their team of park planners, landscape architects, outreach specialists, and engineers to engage with residents and use those findings to create a comprehensive master plan outlining future park improvements to pursue.

Summary

The first stage of master planning began in the spring. Through the summer, the team will be collecting input from residents and park users to inform future recommendations. No park improvements will be recommended until the draft master plan is provided for public comment in the fall of 2023.

Working with Bolton & Menk, City Staff including Communications staff, helped create an Outreach and Engagement Plan for the Purgatory Park Master Planning Process. This plan outlines a series of engagement opportunities ranging from formal in-person events, “pop-ups” in the park, and a thorough online engagement process including surveys. The engagement process began on June 14 at the Purgatory Park Planning Open House. This kick-off event allowed over 120 residents to share their feedback with consultants and staff on hand. The open house was held at the Minnetonka Community Center from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. and featured a variety of background information to peruse and facilitate conversation. Key areas of interest for feedback included “how do you use

the park?”, “what do you value about the park?”, and “what concerns about the park do you have?”

Currently scheduled future outreach events include:

- Minnetonka Farmer’s Market – August 15, 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.
- Unmapped Brewing/Base Camp Coffee and Provisions – August 30, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The City is hosting a project website on Minnetonka Matters where project updates will be listed. Residents can sign up for project updates and be provided access to the survey.

More information available here:

[Purgatory Park Master Plan | Minnetonka Matters](#)

A draft master plan will be made available for public comment and presented to the Park Board in the fall of 2023. This plan will outline short-term and long-term recommendations for potential park improvements. A final master plan document will be created in the winter of 2023/24 and any future park improvements will be incorporated into future Capital Improvement Plans.

Recommended Park Board Action

Receive presentation and provide feedback to Staff

**Minnetonka Park Board Item 9
Meeting of August 2, 2023**

Subject:	Information Items
Park Board related goal:	N/A
Park Board related objective:	N/A
Brief Description:	The following are informational items and developments that have occurred since the last park board meeting.

Summer Fest

Minnetonka Summer Fest took place on Saturday, June 24 on the Civic Center grounds. Attendance was approximately 3,600 which is below average. The lower attendance is likely due to the unpredictable weather and constant threat of rain that day. Attendees participated in the kids tot trot, inflatables, arts and crafts and enjoyed a variety of food vendors, musical entertainment and fireworks. This event is a team effort coordinated by the Recreation Services department and supported by public works, police, fire, and environmental health.



Glen Lake Skate Park Improvements

New skateboarding ramps are being installed at the existing Glen Lake Skatepark. These new ramps will replace the older ones and increase accessibility for newer skaters while providing various obstacles for more experienced shredders. The footprint of the skatepark will not change, only the layout of ramps within the fence.

Staff has contracted with 3rd Lair Ramp Co. out of Golden Valley and ramps will be completed in August.

**Minnetonka Park Board Item 10
Meeting of August 2, 2023**

Upcoming Meeting Schedule				
Day	Date	Meeting Type	Agenda Business Items	Special Notes
Wed	9/6/23	Regular	• Joint Study Session w/Council & Tour	5:30 pm start
Wed	10/4/23	Regular	• Cullen Nature Preserve Habitat Management Plan	
Wed	11/1/23	Regular	•	No meeting
Wed	12/6/23	Regular	• Strategic Plan	
Wed	1/3/24	Regular	•	
Wed	2/7/24	Regular	•	

Other meetings and activities to note:

Day	Date	Description	Special Notes
Tuesdays	Thru Aug. 29	Music in the Park	Amphitheater
Thursday	Aug. 31	Movie in the Park	Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile
Friday	Sept. 8	Movies in the Park	Puss In Boots:The Last Wish
Friday	Sept. 15	Movies in the Park	Minions: The Rise of Gru
Tuesdays	Thru Sept. 26	Farmers Market	Ridgedale Commons

Items to be scheduled:

Climate Action & Adaptation Plan Update (Park Board Member Report)