



**Minutes
Minnetonka Park Board
Wednesday, November 4, 2020**

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

Park Board members present: James Durbin, Nelson Evenrud, Chris Gabler, Elena Imaretska, Ben Jacobs and Chris Walick. Student member: Elliot Berman.

City Council members present: Mayor, Brad Wiersum, Deb Calvert, Susan Carter, Kissy Coakley, Brian Kirk, Rebecca Schack and Bradley Schaeppi.

Excused: David Ingraham.

Staff members in attendance: Geralyn Barone, Ann, Davy, Jeff Dulac, Mike Funk, Carol HejlStone, Kathy Kline, Kelly O'Dea, Sara Woeste and Leslie Yetka.

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

3. Business Items

A. MRPA Award Presentation.

Recreation Director, Kelly O'Dea introduced Tracy Petersen from the city of Edina. She is a member of the Minnesota Recreation and Park Association awards committee. Petersen presented the Minnesota Recreation and Park Association's (MRPA) 2019 Award of Excellence to the city of Minnetonka's Recreation Services for the Burwell Spooktacular event. The awards of excellence program is an annual program that recognizes agencies and their staff for an exemplary project that was implemented in 2019. The committee appreciated Minnetonka's unique and fun approach to providing a new fall youth event and utilizing the historic Charles H. Burwell house as a venue. We also were impressed with your collaboration with other departments and with the local Boy Scout Troup in helping raise funds for the scholarship program and your emphasis on making the event free and accessible to all. The awards committee would like to recognize Recreation Superintendent, Ann Davy who nominated this project for an award, Recreation Assistant Director, Sara Woeste as well as the entire recreation services department, park board and city council for continuing to provide meaningful events to your community.

B. Progress Report from the Chair.

Evenrud welcomed the newer council members and gave the report.

O'Dea added that the report shows how busy the park board is.

C. Naming the New Park at Ridgedale.

Park and Trail Planner, Carol HejlStone introduced the new park. She showed them updated renderings for the new park that were also located on the park's project page.

HejlStone said this has been a really exciting project to be a part of. This is meant to be a signature new community level park in the Ridgedale area. Looking at the idea of naming this space is significant as well. Staff conducted a brief survey to the public on the project page and social media. Ridgedale Commons rose to the top and that is what we bringing forward tonight as the recommended name for this space.

Evenrud asked for input.

Imaretska commented that this park continues to be such an exciting project and she thinks it will be an amazing part of our city. She is so excited about the new ideas and details that HejlStone shared today. Imaretska thanked HejlStone for going to the community and getting some extra feedback on the names. Imaretska loves the word commons because she thinks it is a really wonderful word for this specific park. This park has so many different features and is so much more than just a park or plaza; it is a place to gather and to experience Minnetonka. Ridgedale is how that area is known so Ridgedale Commons seems like a very practical name for it which in some ways is part of who Minnetonka is. We are kind of practical in our approaches so she thinks she would support that name.

Carter appreciates Imaretska's comment. However, she wants to offer the group a challenge. That area is known as Ridgedale and it has been affectionately known as Ridgedale all through this project. Minnetonka is so much bigger and more special than a retail operation or shopping center. She encouraged everyone despite the proximity and the familiarity with Ridgedale to think about Crane Lake and to think about our natural resources. When citizens are asked what makes us special and why they move here, natural resources continues to climb to the top of their priorities. Carter encouraged everyone to think about tethering to a natural resource instead of a retail space. She likes commons but encouraged everyone to think about for all-time if we are naming a park. In the future, maybe Ridgedale will be there but maybe it won't. She would offer Crane Lake Commons or Crane Lake Park as options that maybe were quieter in the survey but resonates more.

Schack, appreciated what Carter said about Ridgedale. From her perspective and experience living in that area; she considers Ridgedale as a region and not just a mall. The government center is classified as Ridgedale, the Ridgedale YMCA is there and everything in that region is Ridgedale. Her concern about deviating too far from that is the fact that we really want the park to be a regional draw and also support the full experience of the area. Purgatory Park or Big Willow in her mind is more of a local draw. It does feels simple but she thinks if there are going to be big events than maybe it is ok for it to be tied to the region and she definitely likes commons. She isn't necessarily opposed to Crane Lake Commons but it's not Crane Lake. Crane Lake is going to be a different component of an adjacent park and that might create some confusion.

Calvert struggles with this also and she really appreciates what Carter, Schack and Imaretska said. One thing that struck her as she was going through the packet and the presentation is that we pay homage to the settlers; so kind of the white history of

Minnetonka. One of the things she has been thinking about all week is maybe a Native American name that relates to that area. It would be one more element to tie in that we tend to brush over especially in the metro communities. It is happening in other parks and some of the names are really beautiful. However, when people are making plans, they would just say let's meet at Ridgedale Park. Calvert thinks that is what people are going to call it and that is what it will end up being. She personally doesn't like the name commons. She thinks there were projects in Detroit that used the word commons and to her it has a different connotation. Calvert thinks if we could figure out some of the original Native American names of that area, it might be a really respectful and unique thing to do in our community.

Berman added that with the name Crane Lake that there will be another park going up on the Crane Lake side in the near future. Regarding commons, specifically for the local younger generation they refer to downtown Hopkins as The Commons. If you search The Commons on your phone the map will show downtown Hopkins. So if people want to meet at The Commons and they type that in their phone, it might bring them to downtown Hopkins. That is something to keep in mind.

Coakley explained that when she was looking at the diagram, she thought about circles. The name could be like Ridgedale Circles and that's because of how the park is laid out. When Calvert said the Native American name she thought that might resonate with the circle piece. She kind of likes that idea.

Jacobs thinks he agrees with Ridgedale just because 60 percent of people liked it. If you look through all the names submitted a lot of them included the word ridge in it. He thinks it does highlight the location. As far as commons or park, he doesn't have a strong preference on that. We put it out to the people and it seems pretty clear that Ridgedale something was kind of the front runner by far.

Durbin added that this is an interesting discussion and appreciates the community engagement because you see what everybody is thinking out there. It causes you to think, especially with the council input. For one, he thinks we have time to think about this. He was sold on Ridgedale Commons before this discussion began but he thinks it will have an official name that might be different from an unofficial name. Everybody is going to call this Ridgedale Park no matter what we call this. Durbin thinks we could be creative and can get some historical Native American names and make that a component. This is going to be Ridgedale Park in one fashion or another in his opinion but he thinks we have time to be creative and do more research into a really good permanent name. Durbin doesn't want this name to be changed in 10 years when a different park board and council come and want to revisit this. He thinks we should definitely take the time and get it right. He recommends putting Ridgedale somewhere into the final name because that is what people will call it.

Gabler asked what we want to accomplish with the name. He thinks if we figure out how we want to identify it, then it will lead us to a name from there.

Schaeppi thanked staff for all their work and spending their time in the parks, their openness to Futsal and reimagining possibly some of their uses. He looks forward to the feedback on the new park signage. He thinks Ridgedale Commons is good and doesn't think there is a natural alternative. It sounds like there might be some ideas and he

wouldn't be opposed if there is a consensus going towards an alternative. He thinks it seems to be supported by the community and that sounds good for him.

Kirk has been involved in naming locations and has had several opportunities to name locations. He's learned a few things about naming locations. One thing he has learned is that no matter what you name it, the predominant location is going to end up driving the name. He worked for the YMCA and when they tried naming branches something other than the names of their communities, the vendors, visitors and members all end up tagging that particular location so no matter what we name it, it will end up being followed by at Ridgedale. He appreciates the name commons. For him at the YMCA, they have always struggled with the word camp and what it means. To put it into context for tonight, what does the word park mean. In Minnetonka the word park in his mind brings up a lot of natural resources. We have beautiful parks, a lot of trees and trails. This area is not really what he would identify as a park. If you don't use park, he thinks commons is a great option. Ridgedale Commons in his mind sort of fits the venue and describes it as something greater than a park, which it really is. It's a gathering spot and an area for community and he really supports Ridgedale Commons. Regarding indigenous naming convention, we have done a great job in the last 120 years or so misappropriating Indian language and Indian names and trying to identify back in the 30's and 40's, it was very common. Now we are trying to undo some of that. So the learning for him is to make sure if we try to go down that path of using Native American language that would have to be very deliberate. We would have to make sure that the Native community was involved very heavily in how that was named and why it was named. It would be a very heavy lift to make sure we got it right. Because of that he would maybe steer from that. He loves the idea but it would be a sensitive issue that we would have to be very careful about how we address it.

Calvert addressed Kirk's point, stating that of course she would not bemisappropriating names, if we were to go down that path of course we would be trying to do this appropriately and naming it a name of something that was there before, literally paying homage and reclaiming the space. Just because it is difficult, it's not necessarily something she would shy away from. If it is something that other people just feel more comfortable with and as she said before, she agrees with all the comments. She thinks people are basically going to call this Ridgedale Park or something along those lines but if we have an official name as well it was just a thought.

Wiersum expressed that the conversation has been good and helpful and he appreciates it. When he first heard Ridgedale Commons he thought that's alright but a bit pedestrian. He read the packet and the naming conventions tying it to history and location. Ridgedale is an area in Minnetonka that is well known and it is the primary retail destination within the city. It's the city's closest thing to a downtown and Ridgedale is not just a mall, it is an area. He thinks from a wayfinding and directional understanding, Kirk's point was if we take Ridgedale out we are going to live with Ridgedale anyway. He is good with having Ridgedale in the name. He doesn't have the negative connotations with commons that Calvert has. The word common works well for him but he thinks there could be a number of other words that could equally work as well. He thinks it will be called Ridgedale Park as Calvert said. That is what it will be referred to when people can't think of the name. He thinks for a location such as this and a park where people are not expecting a park, Ridgedale probably makes a lot of sense.

Walick wants to echo what others have commented on and says this has been a fascinating conversation. He thinks having it be either Ridgedale Park or Ridgedale Commons represents the area. A lot of people probably do associate it with the mall but with everything going up around there, having it be Ridgedale Park will be just another factor in the growing area. He thinks it is amazing that so many people were willing to vote on the park name. Walick added that Ridgedale Commons was the clear winner with community engagement. Having the people chose the name may make them feel more invested in this city. If we use that name and highlight the fact that they are the ones that picked it, it will feel more like their park.

Wiersum grew up in Green Bay and they have a football stadium there called Lambeau Field. What they did was sold naming rights to the gates. There is the Verizon Gate, and the Associated Bank Gate, etc... Lambeau Field will never sell their naming rights. He thinks that ties to this conversation because there are elements in the park that could be named. Maybe some of the ideas being discussed in terms of creative naming can be used to name elements within the park. Then a wayfinding convenient name such as Ridgedale Commons can be used to name the park.

Imaretska had the same idea as Wiersum and thinks there are more opportunities for naming elements of the park. She also wanted to bring up and talk about the idea of engaging the Native American community in a larger way. Maybe it isn't necessarily for naming this park but she thinks we should consider how we ask stewards of the parks in Minnetonka. How do we think about that relationship and learning more about it and how can we honor the Native American heritage for future projects? That is a bigger discussion and probably more work has to be done, but potentially a future topic for park board discussion.

Evenrud wanted to share some thoughts from our previous discussion. One of the first things that came up was wanting to separate the park from the mall. We wanted people to know this is a Minnetonka park and not part of Ridgedale Mall. His first feeling on the name Ridgedale Commons was not positive because he didn't want it to be thought of as a Ridgedale Mall park and it's not their park. Then we discussed the location and the history of the malls in Minnesota ending in dale. It is kind of an identification for people in that region. It is more of a function question for him that overrides a lot of the feeling that he had with the name Ridgedale Commons. He kind of changed his mind listening to everyone's comments tonight. He agrees with incorporating some sort of historical notes in there because he really enjoys looking at those types of things. Seeing the aerial view and seeing the rings makes him think that would also be a good aspect of it. Evenrud agrees that no matter what it is called, it will be known as that cool park by Ridgedale for a long time.

Gabler said while they have been talking he decided to google synonyms for the word park because he thinks that it is a little bit more than a park. Three words that stuck out to him were: refuge, promenade and preserve. If you think of all the different things going on there maybe it could be called The Refuge of Ridgedale or The Preserve of Ridgedale because that is more of what it is.

Evenrud mentioned that it is more of a passive park than a soccer field, it's a different sort of park.

Calvert loves the idea of having different elements of the park named. It gives different groups opportunities to take ownership of it or make parts of the park even more special. She thinks it is creative and could even help create new elements to the park so she really likes that idea.

O'Dea appreciates the discussion.

D. Trail Prioritization Criteria and Resident Trail Request Process.

O'Dea introduced this business item and said we want to talk about trails and we want to talk about two different things in regards to our trails. We want to talk about the prioritization criteria and then also a process that we are looking at for the resident request. As many of you are aware, we are getting requests from residents to move these segments up or down depending on whatever reason they may have. O'Dea introduced HejlStone and she gave the report.

Calvert asked how common it is for another governmental jurisdiction to change their prioritization. Calvert questioned if it is common to affect our trail priority list and how staff would incorporate that new set of circumstances into our list.

HejlStone answered that we coordinate pretty closely with Hennepin County staff, Met Council and other partner agencies. A good example is coordination with the Three Rivers Park District around their West Metro Regional Trail study. For instance, Baker Road has risen to the top of our trail improvement plan but using our knowledge of the West Metro Regional Trail study, we slowed down to better collaborate with that partner agency. Generally we coordinate pretty heavily with the county because a number of our segments are along county roads. We do submit what our priorities are to partner agencies and then they submit what their priorities are to us as well. It's looking at where those efficiencies can happen. That is kind of an annual coordination item.

Calvert wondered if sometimes things comes up that are a little out of the ordinary and hard to incorporate.

Schaeppi received an email late in the day from a resident, Luke Van Santen. Van Santen is one of our more active cyclists in the city. He hopes staff can take a look at Van Santen's comments. Schaeppi thinks this is exciting and he appreciates the city coming to the park board and the city council to solicit feedback. He is also excited about the new trails webpage. The more that we can communicate what we are doing is fantastic. Schaeppi explained that Van Santen had comments specifically about increasing points potentially for schools and business connections. His focus would be making transportation a little bit higher than just for recreational use. Van Santen questioned how many users result in a determination of whether a segment would be high use or not. He thinks Van Santen is getting to the point in the criteria of how do we know in that prioritization how much use it will get. For example, in Ward 3 there was just a conversation where we talked about a community lead interest to have a swap within five spaces. Both segments equally had schools so they had equal credit. He thinks that is a fair discussion because what if an elementary school has 800 students and maybe half of them are walking or biking to school then compare that to a charter school that may only have 10 percent biking or walking to school. He thinks Van Santen's point about the potential use should be considered. The last major point Van Santen made was about looking for the priorities to be reviewed more frequently than just five or 10 years. He

mentioned maybe viewing every two to three years but less in depth. Schaeppi suggested that staff reach out to Van Santen because he knows trails, roads and signs probably better than anyone here. Schaeppi also commented that his family went for a run around Cedar Lake in Minneapolis recently. There was a park that was under consideration for review and they had a sign listing that. He recommended if the city is doing some type of trail planning, it would be great if there were community signs near the trail to let people know we would like their feedback so when we have those major review processes, it may make more sense. He thinks Van Santen's point also was is when we do these reviews that there is more of a process. Perhaps an open house or something. His request would be more than the standard Thursday to Monday timeframe of staff reporting a decision.

Durbin has been on the board for several years and every year they review the plan. He thinks the criteria works. He recalls making one change due to a technical issue to reprioritize a trail pathway by Groveland Elementary this year. We are having these conversations and he is looking at the list and we have done four segments and there are still 67 left to do. We are completing about one a year. In 2019, the annual community survey said that 85 percent supported the franchise fee so it was adopted. Now we have a dedicated source of funding to do these trails. The Imagine Minnetonka survey went out a few years ago and people liked the parks and trails system. What Durbin thinks is that we are coming up with residents saying they want the trail by their house or school reprioritized. He thinks the resources they are dealing with aren't large enough to accommodate. At our rate of going one trail a year, it is going to be 67 more years until we are done. He thinks there is enough will in the community to support increasing the funding by whatever means to accelerate the construction of these trails. The priority is great; what he thinks we need to do is half the time. We are a city that doesn't have very many sidewalks and we are in a brand new COVID-19 era where kids are learning from home. More adults are working from home and we are seeing an increase of people walking in neighborhoods, using trails and getting to the parks. He thinks that the priority should be considered to increase all of this and be able to do it in a faster manor.

Schack replied by saying those that made the tough vote to pass the franchise fee, their blood pressure just went up quite a bit with the idea of doubling the fee. Of course we would love to do it but they are feeling the financial pressure particularly due to COVID-19 in a way that is unprecedented. She loves the idea but doesn't know in practice if there is an appetite or ability within the community to take that financial leap. Schack thinks we have shown over the course of the past few years that we are leveraging as a city in every opportunity that we can with partnerships with the county with grants. Staff has done a tremendous job trying to make every dollar stretch as far as possible on the Plymouth Road project and on the Excelsior project. She would love to see it accelerate but at least right now she doesn't see that as a realistic possibility because it would probably result in staff cuts. We just financially can't make it work. Schack added that she thinks much of what was referenced does show up on the criteria such as the nature of use, the connectivity and access or if it is used for passive use or transportation. So we're really trying to quantify and we've done a really good job of that. She can appreciate a review every five to 10 years. It may seem like some things can change such as locations of schools are moving. There are things that happen that maybe influence this more frequently than every 5-10 years and so she doesn't know if there is something that we can do that's like a quick review or something or a review of the next 10 to make sure they are in an accurate priority and do that a little more frequently. The idea that staff would take the time to go through all 70 every two years seems unrealistic to her. The

short of it is, she thinks the priorities now and the criteria is appropriate. She really likes the process outline. She thinks it will be very helpful. She thinks about projects they look at and community will really appreciate having the trail webpage because they'll be able to look and envision what is coming their way and maybe put some things together. She thinks everything that staff has done here is great. She thinks we could maybe add some kind of mini review or something that would take into account some of just the changing demographics or anything that has happened in the more recent past.

Calvert concurs with Schack's comments including the unfortunate fiscal considerations that would make it very difficult for us to raise more funds at this particular time. She feels like 10 years is a long time for reviews but she also feels like it can't be annually or even biannually. She thinks that is what she was getting at when she asked her question earlier about other governments or other pressures that have us re-evaluating the order of some of our trail priorities. With all the development going on at Opus, she thinks a lot of changes are being anticipated and planned for but she thinks there will be some unanticipated changes. To her, 10 years is too long, maybe five years at least to take a look at the next 10 or 20 trail segments. It might end up being more useful because we are growing and she thinks we will have to accommodate some of that. Calvert appreciates this packet and thinks having a trails page is a great idea. She agrees with everything that Schack said about the outline being really good and the priorities being appropriate. Calvert wants to make sure that we are listening very carefully to our residents and if something is really of their concern, we have to take their concerns under consideration. We have to be careful about upending a process and a system and a set of priorities that are there for a reason and have really good criteria to put them in that order. Calvert thinks that we need to listen to our residents but also have to have some amount of consideration for not only staff but just for the processes that we put in place. If you start working around our processes, it just creates a big mess and more work in the end.

Wiersum has been involved with the trail prioritization system for a long time. A number of years ago there was a suggestion to increase the priority of the transit aspect of trails in Minnetonka. That created some concern just because the trail prioritization criteria had been recently updated at no small amount of work. He wants to be mindful that the system we have in place works but it is complex and changing it frequently is going to be a challenge. He agrees with the criteria that we use but he isn't going to say the waiting is perfect but he doesn't have a better recommendation for that. He does agree that maybe every two to three years, we look at the top 10 and see if there are any changes that could be done. That would simplify things but would allow us to keep current. Wiersum also likes a good deal and when we partner the cost of the project goes down. He would like it if we go with the priority list but if a project comes up and there is an opportunity to do the project at 20 percent of the cost, he would like to accelerate that. Let's accelerate that project not because it's at the top of the priority list but because it is a good deal. To Durbin's suggestion, clearly you would like to have more money but another way to getting more trails is to pay less per mile. He is sure staff does that to a certain degree now but he thinks we should have a position on doing that. The rest he agrees with, he thinks the outline looks great and the visibility and importance of trails is something that will invite a lot of input from residents. He asked if there is any chance for us to get our trail projects into a state bonding bill. Minnetonka is a city that doesn't ask the state for much but he does know that we have neighboring communities that asks the state for things. Wiersum is kind of proud of the fact that we don't do it but at the same time our

trails are so vital and so much of a part of who we are that if there is a way to step up and get some state money for our trails, he would like to at least advance that notion.

Imaretska is also a big fan of using partnerships, which staff already does so well to decrease the cost. Part of our criteria is cost effectiveness, so couldn't we include partnership as part of the criteria to do exactly what the Mayor was talking about. That way if there is an opportunity for a partnership, the criteria would show the cost effectiveness of the segment which would allow it to move up. There are a lot of segments and everyone wants a trail next to their house; it makes sense so that's why it would have to be so transparent with the criteria and unbiased with these decisions. The other thing she thinks is not currently reflected in the criteria is safety. There are people using certain segments right now without protection of a trail or barriers. Certain segments are more dangerous than others due to a curve or blind spot. That is not reflected right now but that is something to consider. We want to make sure people are safe and prevent any sort of terrible accidents or tragedies.

Durbin apologized if he raised anyone's blood pressure earlier with his comment about raising the franchise fee. He appreciates just letting everyone know he thinks the will is there but he's not sure on the means of getting it. Durbin has done a little research and he doesn't think that any of our major county arteries are having major construction in the foreseeable future. Durbin thinks the residents would appreciate getting the trail system that he thinks has been designed really well to fruition. He thinks there is the desire from the residents and he leaves it up to city staff and council to figure out how to do that.

Schaeppi added that there would be difficult political climate for costs but perhaps he would suggest a new question in one of the surveys. To the residents he would ask about given our new realities with COVID-19, are you more or less willing to increase funding for walking and biking trails. Some type of gaging the community at large perhaps would be a starting point where we have data to go forward and get it.

O'Dea said they got some great feedback. He thanked the park board and city council because they have made some hard decisions to support parks and trails. He thinks it is really this pandemic that has proven that the parks and trails are important to our residents.

4. Information Items

Lone Lake Park Multi-Use Mountain Bike Trail

Woeste gave the report. She thanked Recreation Program Manager, Jesse Izquierdo. He's been onsite from morning till night managing the contractor, the volunteers and he helped site that trail so thank him if you see him.

O'Dea appreciates the support of the city council and park board. He also thanked staff and volunteers for their dedication.

Calvert commented that we are such a special city. It just seems so par for the course that when we have our first ever online joint meeting that the first thing is an award for our parks and recreation staff. We have such great staff and she is very appreciative of all the work staff did to put the packet together. She is also appreciative of the work of the park board. It's been a really challenging few years for people on our boards and commissions and on

the council for a variety of reasons. Calvert just wanted to thank everyone for their wonderful service and the work they do because it really helps the council make better informed decisions and makes our job a lot easier.

Wiersum also thanked all the park board members and city council. The item that Woeste just reviewed, was challenging for both the council and park board. He wanted to thank them for the hard work they did and let them know he appreciated their courage because it was challenging. He thinks it is an amenity that will benefit our city tremendously and it shows we listen to our residents. We did it in an environmentally sensitive way so that he thinks really everyone wins. Congratulations and thank you for the hard work that everyone did, staff, park board and city council. Challenging issue but we got some place and it's very exciting to see this come to reality.

Evenrud thanked everyone for coming and for all they did.

5. Adjournment

Walick moved, Carter seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 p.m. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Kline

Kathy Kline
Recreation Administrative Coordinator

From: Luke Van Santen
Sent: Wednesday, November 4, 2020 6:20 PM
To: Bradley Schaeppi
Subject: Fwd: LVS Council park board meeting comments

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Luke Van Santen**
Date: Wed, Nov 4, 2020, 16:42
Subject: Council park board meeting comments
To:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback!

I am happy to hear that a more robust trails webpage / interactive map is being planned. This will significantly help people understand how any planned / proposed segments interact with the existing system and the timeframes associated with any new or proposed segments. I hope the new map will include the ability to toggle layers on and off (planned/programmed segments by year, maintenance / clearing prioritization, trail type (gravel, paved, etc), width, village centers, etc), and will include existing infrastructure? Another great feature would be the ability to subscribe so that any additions or changes could have an automatic announcement based on the users' geographic preferences. A nice corresponding feature would be to see what other requests have been made, especially if there were a method of "voting" for proposed segments.

I hope that outlining of the prioritization process will include more info about how segments are assessed under each of the criteria? For example, how many users result in a determination of whether a segment will be high-use or not? Or, is the perceived level of difficulty of a proposed trail segment (hills) what determines the likelihood of use as a recreational trail? In trying to find examples of this, I did a brief search on the City website for the tabular presentation of all segments in the TIP in one table but was unable to find it. Could any work done as part of prioritization be sure to include this format of output in the future?

In regards to periodically reviewing the TIP, I suggest it be reviewed every 2-3 years but would accept annual minor review with in-depth review every 5 years. Reviewing it every 10 years is way too infrequent, though.

Last general comment - is there a way someone from the public who is very interested in furthering biking in Minnetonka could be more involved with discussions about and evaluation of new criteria and or trail segments? And receive more info, further ahead of time than 3 days before a meeting?

Criteria-Specific Recommendations

- 1) Please increase the prioritization of transportation from 10% to at least 15% and preferably 20% (with the additional "points" coming from the recreational use criteria). I feel this is appropriate because any transportation-focused trail will still be completely usable for recreational purposes, and it will make it easier for more Minnetonkans and other regional trail users to use methods besides automobiles for short (or even longer) trips.
- 2) Please increase the prioritization for whether new segments connect to schools or businesses. This could possibly be accomplished by combining the Business (5 points) / School (5 points) / Place of Worship, Library, or Government Center (5 points) criteria into one criteria worth 15 points where meeting any one of the three results in full points. It seems doing so would more accurately reflect the importance of enabling transportation to and from schools and businesses.
- 3) Please add a criteria that awards points for establishing a more complete network. There is an existing criteria that asks whether the proposed segment "completes a route" that seems to get at this point but maybe doesn't fully recognize the difference between connecting two separate segments and connecting an existing segment to the larger network. Adding this criteria would be in holding with the CROW Manual principles of Directness and Cohesion. A good example of this would be the section of Tonkawood Rd from the Lake Minnetonka Regional trail to Minnetonka Blvd, especially in light of the newly reprioritized segment on Minnetonka Blvd being extended to Tonkawood Rd.
- 4) Please add Mitigation as a "subcriteria" under Degree of Difficulty / Minimal Tree Loss. I completely agree with minimizing tree loss but mitigating any such loss with new plantings would seem an appropriate method of addressing any potential issues around tree loss. Maybe this is already addressed in the Cost Effectiveness criteria though?
- 5) This may actually fall outside the scope of evaluating proposed trail segments, but it seems Maintainability is an important factor that should be considered. For a purely recreational (in the traditional May-September sense) trail, there likely won't be any new maintenance needs. But for a more transportation-focused trail, or a previously recreation-focused trail that has become more of a transportation asset (like the boardwalk at the dam), not having year-round maintenance drastically diminishes its value. And even for some recreation trails, their use could be extended to year-round use (especially important this coming winter!)
- 6) Last - at the risk of making the assessment of new trail segments more complex - does it make sense to have partial scores within criteria?

Non-Criteria Specific Requests / Comments

- 1) Please reconsider the types of trails being designed / built as this could very easily have an impact on other criteria in a manner similar to the discussed "Complementary Projects" item - both could significantly reduce cost. While fully separated trails have definite benefits (and some disbenefits), having a road-adjacent trail (still with separation) could reduce the amount of new impervious surface (leading to full-width trails without running afoul of (or at least minimizing impact due to) watershed rules), could reduce the need for additional easements or right-of-way, and could minimize the need for utility relocation. Several existing planned segments (Minnetonka Blvd, Tonkawood Rd) run along roads that are already signed as bike routes and would seem to readily lend themselves to either paint or delineator separation. In addition, road-adjacent segments lead to more visibility of bicyclists, both from a safety

perspective and from a "hey, that person is biking with panniers full of groceries - maybe I could try that" perspective.

2) Please reconsider (or continue to consider) narrowing adjacent lane widths as part of any trail segments design and construction. I understand there are certain roads where larger vehicles more frequently travel, and that there are roads outside the jurisdiction of City staff where lane width reduction is less achievable, but there are also several roads (Woodland Rd, for example) where there is a very wide shoulder already in place immediately adjacent to two 12 foot wide lanes.

3) Please add wayfinding signage (maybe business supported?) at important junctions in the trail network.

4) Last, and probably outside the scope of this discussion, but could the decision (and the posted signs) forbidding bicycling at various locations be revoked or at least reconsidered? Having the agenda set for a trail by one subset of "valid" (in as much as informal non-maintained trails can have "valid" users) trail users to the exclusion of another, just as "valid", subset of trail users seems exceptionally unfair.