

Minutes
Committee of the Whole
August 23, 2021
7:00 p.m.

Council members in attendance: Thaddeus Hoffmeister, Al Delgado, Jim O'Reilly, Sarah Stankorb Taylor, Jeff LeRoy, and Nancy Averett

Staff members in attendance: Rusty Herzog – City Manager, Rob Nicolls – Public Works Director, Megan Statt Blake – Community Development Dept., Rachel Leininger – Recreation Dept., Tana Bere – Community Development Dept., Dennis Brown – Fire Chief, Jeremiah Caudill – Finance Director, Moriah McFarland - Police Clerk

Others Present: Jeff Kite – Resident

CRESCENT PARK PROJECT:

Mr. Herzog opened discussion about the Crescent Park Project. Playground enhancements and infrastructure plans were discussed.

Mr. Nicolls discussed increasing parking which will include two handicap van accessible parking spaces into the grassy area next to existing parking. He also discussed relocating street lights as necessary and stated the playground area would be approximately 100' x 100' in size.

Mr. Nicolls discussed the possible challenges of grating between the two soccer fields due to underground utilities. He also discussed plans for a knee wall in the planting area that would extend to the north as well as plans to establish a mound and landscaped area, maintaining the screening already present.

Mr. Herzog discussed plans to leave the bushes in place and possibly add a fence to maintain visual obstruction as well as to prevent kids from crossing over to the train tracks.

Mr. O'Reilly stated he had heard concerns from Mrs. Kite about children crossing onto the tracks.

Mr. Kite stated that information was incorrect; that his wife's concerns were not about children going onto the tracks.

Mr. Delgado asked whether the existing grass would remain on the mound. Mr. Herzog and Mr. Nicolls explained that the area would remain grassy along with plantings of trees.

Ms. Averett asked about the delay in putting up a fence until the trees had matured and asked how long that would take. Mr. Herzog discussed the timeline depended on what can be done within the budget.

Mrs. Stankorb Taylor asked about number of spaces would be available for handicap access and if there would be level areas leading from those spaces to the playground, and if there would be sidewalks to accommodate. Mr. Herzog stated there are plans for two van accessible spaces. Mrs. Leininger stated there are plans for van accessible parking as well as sidewalks. Mr. Herzog stated the playground would be level to ground for accessibility.

Mrs. Stankorb Taylor asked about irrigation and water flow. Mr. Nicolls explained that water drains to the east and there wouldn't be any additional water issues.

Mrs. Leininger stated there is a two foot difference in elevation between the soccer fields.

Mr. Nicolls stated that raised area would be grated and leveled and an irrigation system is in place that will keep grass healthy and free from mud.

Discussion about cost estimates (parking 160K, site irrigation and landscaping 210K).

Mr. Herzog discussed fund raising efforts and stated they were 90K away from reaching goal and there would be another push for donations in upcoming months.

Mr. Kite addressed council about his concerns about the city's plans to put up a fence. He feels it will drop his property value and would be "furious" if a fence goes up. Mr. Kite requested to see drawings/renderings of what the playground will look like. Mr. Kite stated his concerns are not that kids will venture onto the tracks but rather that the park will be used as a teen hangout.

Mr. Herzog recommended entering design phase and go out to bid. Council supported Mr. Herzog's recommendation.

STREET LIGHTS:

Mr. Herzog opened discussion about switching over the street lights to LEDs, Mr. Nicolls presented. Per Duke Energy Light Agreement Option D, 5 year agreement equals \$206K upfront cost then \$675/mo. which is a reduction from the \$5k/mo. current cost while using 50% less energy.

Discussion about the possibility of complaints due to brighter lights. Discussion about how far the lighting would cast. Timeline for completion is still unknown. 507 lights to be replaced, which does not include the lights in the business district.

Mr. Herzog requested support to move forward, council gave their support.

CIP:

Discussion opened by Mr. Herzog about the CIP. Projects already in the works as well as those still in the planning stages were discussed along with discussion about city funds and fund raising efforts. Mr. Herzog stated he wanted to bring all of the projects to the attention of council and requested their input and/or additional project ideas. Discussion about moving sidewalk maintenance from the CIP to the General Maintenance fund, tabled for a later date.

Discussion about street repair projects and how streets are rated to determine which streets are repaired before others.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Mr. LeRoy opened discussion about repeated absences of Zach Green.

Mr. Hoffmeister made motion to adjourn. Mr. LeRoy seconded motion. Meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Moriah McFarland, Police Clerk