

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COMMISSION
CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS

Regular Meeting Held January 16, 2012

Mayor Seibold called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the City Commission Chamber at the Community Center and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Commissioners Dills, Graham, Goebel, Johnson, Skaggs, Miller and Mayor Seibold

Absent: None

Also Present: City Attorney Huff; City Manager Donovan; Public Safety Director Herald; Public Works Director Feldt; Finance Director Dood; Parks & Recreation Director Bunn; Zoning Administrator Faasse; City Clerk Brower

2012-12. Dr. David Hamm, 1530 Andover, thanked the City for the legal determination regarding the vacant lot next to his home. He questioned whether he and surrounding properties would be notified of any appeal of this decision. Mayor Seibold confirmed properties within 300' would be notified of any zoning-related agenda item. Dr. Hamm also inquired about city regulations regarding the clean-up of leaves because the property next to his had not been picked up since it was sold. City Manager Donovan suggested Dr. Hamm contact Public Works Director Feldt for more information.

2012-13. Commissioner Dills reminded residents that property taxes are due on February 14th.

Mayor Seibold announced the ice hockey tournament on Reeds Lake had been postponed again due to weather conditions until February 23-26.

2012-14. City Clerk Brower administered the oath of office to 1st Ward Commissioner Phil Skaggs.

2012-15. A zoning variance hearing was held regarding the request of Fifth Third Bank Drive-Up Facility at 2145 Wealthy to allow the installation of a sign in the clear vision area.

Zoning Administrator Faasse explained this was a request for a variance from provisions of the sign ordinance to replace an existing nonconforming ground sign with a pedestal-mounted sign placed in the "clear-vision triangle." Mr. Faasse noted the driveway was primarily a one-way drive because of the drive-thru configuration, but there was the possibility of employee vehicles exiting onto Wealthy.

Sara Mier of Valley City Signs was present to explain the request and answer questions. She stated the sign height had been reduced from the initial height of 7' to 5' after discussions with staff members. She noted the bank had explored other locations for the sign, but were not pleased with the visibility or the need to remove landscaping.

Mayor Seibold questioned whether the bank would be willing to place landscaping around the base of the sign. Ms. Mier stated this could be done easily.

Commissioner Johnson asked what type of lighting the sign would have. Tom VanGessel of Fifth Third Bank answered the sign would be internally illuminated, the same as the current sign.

Mayor Seibold opened a public hearing. The following people were present to express their opinions:

- Chad Zagel, Gaslight Village Business Assn President Expressed support on behalf of the area businesses for the updated look of the sign that fit well in the business district and the idea of landscaping around the base of the sign.

The following communications were received at City Hall concerning this variance request:

- Kim VanDahm, 909 Floral Opposed to 7' sign.
- Constance Lord Wintruba, 2806 Maplewood Opposed to 7' pole-mounted sign.
- Ryan Minkus, 2114 Wealthy Concerned about visibility

No other public comment was received. Mayor Seibold closed the public hearing.

- A. Dills-Goebel. That the request of Fifth Third Bank Drive-Up Facility at 2145 Wealthy to allow the installation of a sign in the clear vision area be approved.

Commissioner Miller thanked the bank representatives for working with the city on the various concerns about the original proposal.

Mayor Seibold also thanked Fifth Third Bank and stated she supported the revised plan with the lower ground-type sign.

Yeas: Dills, Goebel, Graham, Johnson, Skaggs, Miller and Seibold – 7
Nays: -0-

- 2012-16. Consider request to approve the division of land at 2821 Elmwood.

Zoning Administrator Faasse explained a 20'-wide strip of land would be transferred from 2821 Elmwood to 2809 Elmwood, and a shed and fence would be moved. Both parcels remain conforming following the split.

Peter Faber, 2821 Elmwood, was present to explain the request and answer questions.

Mayor Seibold opened a public hearing. No other public comment was received. Mayor Seibold closed the public hearing.

- A. Graham-Miller. That the request of Peter Faber, owner of 2821 Elmwood, to transfer a 20-foot wide strip of land from 2821 Elmwood to 2809 Elmwood, be approved with the following conditions:

1. The split complies with the surveys presented in the land division application; and
2. The relevant deed(s) or land contract(s) be recorded with the Kent County Registrar of Deeds within 90 days of approval.

Commissioners Miller and Johnson spoke in support of the request as a nice enhancement for both properties.

Mayor Seibold noted the owners of 2809 Elmwood had made many improvements over the last several years and this additional property would add to the value of the home.

Yeas: Dills, Goebel, Graham, Johnson, Skaggs, Miller and Seibold – 7
Nays: -0-

- 2012-17. Public Hearing and request to adopt a resolution approving a Parks & Recreation Master Plan.

Parks & Recreation Director Bunn reviewed the process involved in updating the Master Plan and the \$1.9 million in grants received in recent years from projects contained in earlier master plans. He then highlighted the concepts for improvements to various park properties:

- Waterfront Park Phase II – wetland restoration, pathways, decks, bridges and 422 new trees;
- Reeds Lake Blvd bridge over Reeds Lake/Fisk Lake channel – 12' wide bridge with a boardwalk above the flood level;
- Remington Park – walking paths with some ADA accessible portions;
- Schroder Property – continuing Reeds Lake Trail along frontage; walking paths and a memorial from the family;
- Steketee Property – paths with quiet seating areas and a patio;
- Griffiths Park – walking paths with some boardwalks over wet areas;

Tiffany Smith of MC Smith Associates reviewed the proposal to create a destination playground for 2-12 year

olds of all abilities at Manhattan Park, including new playground equipment and a splash pad area.

Mayor Seibold reminded everyone that these proposals are all in the concept phase and will require more research and design work as well as public input and securing funding sources. She noted that many of the concepts may not come to being for many years, but are included in the plan to show the planning capabilities and possibilities.

City Manager Donovan noted with current budget constraints, the City will be fortunate to be able to implement the top two priorities of Waterfront Park Phase II and the Reeds Lake Trail bridge in the next five years. Other projects will remain as future goals unless significant private or grant funding is secured.

Mayor Seibold opened a public hearing. The following people were present to express their opinions:

- Gordon Jones, 325 Rosewood
Urged the City to think strategically and long-term to achieve the best results for the least money. He cited the alternate bike trail bridge idea to combine the bridge with improvements to the roadway as an example of ways to make the most of the area and the available money. He asked that a kayak launch on the north or northwest side of the lake be considered and that the property lines of the Schroeder, Steketee and Griffiths properties be marked so residents could walk through the land without trespassing on neighboring properties.
- Jan Baxter, 180 Hodenpyl
Thanked the Parks & Recreation Commission for listening to neighbor's concerns on the concept plans.

No other public comment was received. Mayor Seibold closed the public hearing.

- A. Dills-Johnson. That a resolution adopting the Five-Year Community Parks and Recreation Plan as approved by the Parks & Recreation Commission be adopted as set forth in Exhibit "A" attached hereto.

Mayor Seibold thanked the Parks & Recreation Commission members and the staff and consultants who put so much time and effort into this plan. Commissioners Goebel and Graham echoed their appreciation for all who worked on the plan.

Commissioner Dills thanked all the citizens who took the initial survey about recreation in our area and those who participated in the public meetings on the preliminary plans.

Commissioner Johnson thanked the many citizens of East and the members of the Schroeder family for their input into the concept plan for the Schroeder property and the Master Plan and to the Parks and Recreation staff and commission, especially the leadership of Jim Weiss as chair.

Yeas: Dills, Goebel, Graham, Johnson, Skaggs, Miller and Seibold – 7
Nays: -0-

2012-18. Miller-Skaggs. Motion to approve the consent agenda as follows:

- A. Minutes of the regular meeting and special meetings held January 16, 2012.
- B. Payroll disbursements of \$225,760.45; county and school disbursements of \$565,913.04, and total remaining disbursements of \$442,854.74.
- C. The appointment of Aaron Smith of 1645 Laurel to the Interurban Transit Partnership Board for a partial term ending December 31, 2012.

- D. A resolution approving the proposed City Election Ward/Precinct Redistricting Plan as set forth in Exhibit "B" attached hereto.
- E. A resolution approving a change to the City's Flexible Benefit Plan as set forth in Exhibit "C" attached hereto.
- F. The purchase of 35 two-way mobile radios and one base station for the Public Works Department from Drew Wireless of Grand Rapids in the amount of \$9,978.00.
- G. The purchase of a new vehicle for the Public Safety Department from Garber Chevrolet of Midland in the amount of \$17,417.00, and a related budget amendment in the same amount from the General Fund Ending Balance.
- H. A contract with PLM Lake and Land Management of Caledonia to monitor and analyze the quality of Reeds Lake in the amount of \$4,530.00.

Yeas: Dills, Goebel, Graham, Johnson, Skaggs, Miller and Seibold – 7
Nays: -0-

- I. Johnson-Graham. Motion to enter into an executive session to discuss a collective bargaining agreement in accordance with Section 8(c) of the Open Meetings Act. A roll call vote was taken.

Yeas: Dills, Goebel, Graham, Johnson, Skaggs, Miller and Seibold – 7
Nays: -0-

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m., subject to the call of the Mayor until February 20, 2012.

Karen K. Brower, City Clerk

Attachments: A – Resolution approving Parks & Recreation Master Plan
B – Resolution approving redistricting map for city wards/precincts.
C – Resolution amending the City's Flexible Benefit Plan

Attachments listed above are available for inspection at the office of the City Clerk.