

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the special meeting of the Brainerd Park Board was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Board President Yeager.

Upon roll call, the following members were noted as present: Rushmeyer, Schaefer and Yeager. Also present were City staff members Paul Sandy, Jennifer Bergman, Katie Kaufman and Troy Harris. Mike Angland and Ashley Martel from Widseth were also noted present. Board member Boeder was noted absent.

Approval of the Agenda - Approved

MOVED AND SECONDED BY MEMBERS RUSHMEYER AND SCHAEFER, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

Unfinished Business

Design Standards Workshop #2 – Discussion

Mr. Angland asked if board members had any thoughts or expectations on the design standards since the last meeting. He shared images from a walk-through of Gregory Park that looked at trees and landscaping, to establish some things to include or incorporate into the design standards. Suggestions include trimming trees to provide unobstructed sight-lines and eliminate collection of garbage at ground level, trimming overgrown bushes and removing dead branches from trees. Timber edging appears to be working well around playground equipment areas. It is recommended to establish ground cover as soon as possible in construction areas. Other design standard considerations might be parking areas and playground equipment. Garbage cans were another thing they noticed that were discussed at previous meetings. He said Gregory Park has a lot of great trees and open areas. Ms. Schaefer shared that they chose new playground equipment at the last Park Board meeting and Mr. Sandy added that the last two playgrounds have been the same colors from the same vendor, so the Board has established that style and type of playground. He will provide examples of the color scheme to Widseth. Mr. Sandy asked if there are certain types of bushes that would be more beneficial to establish. Mr. Rushmeyer noted that overgrown bushes can present a safety hazard for children in the park when sightlines are blocked. Mr. Harris agreed there are overgrown areas in Gregory Park that should be torn out. Board members concurred that establishing landscaping standards is beneficial from a public relations standpoint by giving the public consistent answers if inquiries arise when old landscaping is removed. Mr. Angland said habitat for bird-watching might be something to consider as well.

Board members directed staff to work on a press release that explains what the Park Board is working on if the public sees staff removing vegetation in the parks. Future design standard plantings will be incorporated throughout the park system in a more thoughtful and consistent manner, keeping the environment, park security and maintenance in mind. It was suggested to utilize the kiosks in the parks to share the design standards vision with park users. Mr. Angland will follow up with some landscaping concepts for the next meeting that can be incorporated into this.

Mr. Yeager suggested we implement larger trees in the design standards when replanting trees. Mr. Sandy and Mr. Harris already discussed a 2 ½" minimum diameter requirement, which not only adds immediate impact and value but has a much better chance of survival. Mr. Harris would like the same requirements for Memorial Tree plantings. The City Code has a list of trees

that are allowed to be planted in the City. Mr. Sandy asked if we could use that to formulate a list of preferred trees we want to see our parks, which could vary from park to park.

Ms. Schaefer asked if we wanted to establish a standard for bedding materials. ADA compliant engineered wood fibers are used for playgrounds. Trails and landscaping would use other materials, so it depends on the use.

Mr. Angland touched on the new park signage and branding, and deferred maintenance items such as the Kiwanis Park pavilion that would provide opportunities to incorporate the new design standards. He identified existing design precedents such as prominent park entrances, green roofs, stone and timber accents. They looked at the impact that flowers and park signage can have. Ms. Martel shared design concepts for the BPU project next to Rotary Park that will be going out for bid this year. Mr. Angland will keep the Board informed about that project and talked about the potential for collaboration between the Parks Department and BPU. Ms. Bergman said City Council has also talked about branding and how this project sets the stage for future Council discussion on a citywide identity. Discussion followed about design and maintenance aspects of signage, concrete pads for benches and picnic tables, and lighting. Ms. Bergman also mentioned tying in the design standards for the Lum Park Master Plan. Mr. Angland asked if there were any specific projects the Park Board would like Widseth to do renderings for as they work on populating the design standards with illustrations and schedules.

Widseth will bring back revised design standards to the next workshop, scheduled for August 10, 2021.

Adjourn

MOVED AND SECONDED AT 5:15 P.M. BY SCHAEFER AND RUSHMEYER, DULY CARRIED, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

Kim Finch

Kim Finch
Administrative Specialist